

Gratitude

turns
what we *have*
into
enough

and Unlocks the **FULLNESS** of *Life*



Gratitude Unlocks Life's Fullness

When I practice Gratitude...

It turns what I already have into enough...and more.

It turns denial into acceptance,

Chaos into order,

Confusion into clarity.

It turns a meal into a feast,

A house into a home,

A stranger into a friend.

Gratitude makes sense of our past,

Brings Peace for today,

and hope for tomorrow.

-Melody Beattie, Author

Overview

It is important at this point that we share our disclaimer.

DISCLAIMER: The following coaching techniques and methods are rooted in the belief in an Intelligent Design. Through years of clinical observation, trial, and research, we have seen clearly that determining “*Whose*” we are is primary to discovering “*Who*” we are. It is only through determining where we came from that we can determine where we are going and can draft a focused and workable game plan for our students. This being stated, we do not reject other findings and opinions and do not attempt to change the findings and opinions of contrarians. We operate solely from a position of attraction - *not promotion or opposition*. Experience has shown there are many who want what we offer making it unnecessary to debate the pundits.

Want to live a full life? Build your Gratitude List Daily. When asked what his secret or formula for success, Gary Player responded, "Gratitude." "The Rhythm of the Game - Like the Rhythm of Life." Gratitude is a choice which shapes a winning rhythm and develops into a spiritual reflex if practiced daily. You do not have to let things upset you. You do not have to be anxious and worried. YOU can set and control your rhythm in life by how incurably grateful your attitude is. The word peace means "to set at one again." When you set your heart at one with God and His Word, you will automatically have peace. When you have peace, you cannot help but be grateful!

Horatio Gates Spafford was a prominent American lawyer and Presbyterian church elder. He is best known for penning the Christian hymn "It Is Well With My Soul" following a family tragedy in which his four daughters died aboard the S.S. Ville du Havre on a transatlantic voyage. Following are some of the lyrics...

*"When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul."*

Gratitude leads to Joy - NOT HAPPINESS. Why? Happiness is a sort of atmosphere (or high if you will) you can "exist" in for a while. Happiness is attached to externals and seems to ebb and flow as circumstances and whims come and go. Happiness requires more and more of itself in order to maintain levels of existence. Joy on the other hand is a step beyond happiness. Joy is a "Light" that fills you with hope, faith, and love. Joy is a constant since it is tethered to the heart by Spirit and Gratitude. *"The JOY of the Lord is my strength."* -**Nehemiah 8:10**

Brother Lawrence served as a lay brother in the kitchen of a Carmelite monastery in Paris. Christians fondly remember him as the minister of pots and pans and for the intimacy he expressed concerning his relationship to God as recorded in a book compiled after his death, the classic Christian text, "The Practice of the Presence of God." Following is a quote from Brother Lawrence...

"We ought to give ourselves up to God, with regard to things temporal and spiritual, and seek our satisfaction only in the fulfilling of God's will, whether God leads us by suffering or by consolation, for both would be equal to a soul truly resigned."

Maintaining A Gracious Perspective

Here is the fact. Life is 10 percent what you make it and 90 percent how you take it. While playing competitive golf, the most dangerous competitors were those who did not have country club grooming but convinced themselves they could play. Watch out! Everyone of us has something we got ourselves to believe, positive or negative which has shaped our perspective on life.

Perspective: a particular attitude toward or way of regarding something; a point of view.

Training Drill: There are times in life when everything seems to go our way, and then there are those times when we hit a slump. During both times it is critical to step back and visit our Gratitude Lists. This keeps us out of our heads, maintains a gracious perspective, and keeps life in rhythm and balance.

How To Build The Gratitude List?

1. Be specific.
2. Elaborate in detail for a person, place, or thing you are grateful for.
3. Focusing on people, places, and things you are grateful for is more beneficial than focusing on your resentments or so-called "Bad Breaks."
4. Try subtractions as well as additions. Consider what your life would be like without certain people, places, and things rather than just tallying up all the good.
5. See good things as gifts. Thinking of good things as gifts guards against taking them for granted or as entitlements. When thinking about things as luck or happenstance, there is no reason for gratitude. Afterall, they just happened by chance.
6. Savor surprises. Record those surprises as these tend to elicit stronger levels of gratitude.
7. For Best Results - BE CONSISTENT REVIEWING and BUILDING YOUR LIST.

Game Plan: Environment and Influences (Positive and Negative) Shape our Beliefs, Reflexes Shape our which affect our Response which in turn Shapes our Perspective.

Our environments shape us. Depending on how we responded to them, we will either adopt our experience or rebel against it. Environments shape us.

- Find a group of people who practice gratitude. Church or recovery groups are a good place to start.
- Participate in a community outreach group where you can share your grateful heart with others going through a similar experience to yours.
- Keep It Green, it is best to keep a 'beginner's mind' no matter how advanced or sophisticated you might think you are. Jesus told his followers to, "*have the faith of a child.*"

Know When To H.A.L.T., Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired

Satan, The Devil, Lucifer, do they actually roam our world today? When polled, an overwhelming number of people felt the thought of a devil was fictitious, a Disney like character. Yet, when Osama Bin Laden was killed an overwhelming number of people polled felt he was in hell. How could this be?

EVIL IN THE WORLD IS REAL! Evil too will set a rhythm to life. This type of rhythm is the kind that causes us "to make the choice" to throw the towel in and become a statistic of just hoe unfair life is.

A Pre-Shot Routine in golf is a *systematic* and *consistent* (two very key words), sequence of thoughts and checkpoints that are executed by a golfer prior to hitting a golf shot. A Pre-Shot Routine assists a golfer in keeping rhythm and focus. Do you have a Pre-Day Routine that assists you in keeping rhythm and focus? Is it as *systematic* and *consistent* as brushing your teeth in the morning?

The main reason many of us S.L.I.P. (**S**ober-Living **L**oses **I**ts **P**riority) or seem to be losing in "*The Battlefield of the Mind War*," is we have lost our rhythm and focus in life and are games are filled with inconsistencies. We are playing life outside of God's design for living thinking we are bullet proof because we have deceptively subscribed to the gospel according to "*me*".

H.A.L.T. Check-Up

Following is a *systematic* and *consistent* sequence of thoughts and checkpoints to be applied to everyday life using the acronym **H.A.L.T. REVIEWING THIS ASSESSMENT WITH ACCOUNTABILITY WEEKLY IS ESSENTIAL**. After each category, score yourself from 1 to 5 (*1 Being “Not Affected” and 5 Being “Highly Affected”*).

Hungry: While proper nutrition is important for our performance, we are made for community. We also hunger for attention, comfort, understanding, approval, love, companionship, etc. Most important, our hearts and souls need food, and God's word is food for the heart and soul.

Solution: *Community, God’s Word*

Score _____

Angry: This is a bit more complex and the solution is much more challenging. Anger is normal to a degree unless it is turned against us or others. When it turns into a repeated loop, **that’s resentment**, and that is profoundly serious since it begins to eat at our spirit and turns into righteous bitterness which eventually destroys us.

Solution: *Pray sincerely for the person, place, or things you are angry about. If prayer does not work, seek professional help. This could be as difficult as finding a golf ball in the heavy rough, and we all know how difficult that is without help.*

Score _____

Lonely: While like hunger, loneliness usually stems from isolation fine tuned as a child as a survival mechanism. Loneliness has difficulty reaching out.

Solution: *Stop isolating and begin insulating through God’s Word, small groups, and accountable relationships. If loneliness continues to be a frequent companion, it is most likely a clinical issue and requires professional attention.*

Score _____

Tired: Tiredness, Burnout, Overload, Taking on Too Much in an attempt to fill our voids, while most prevalent, accepted and expected, these symptoms are the most ignored and carries with them the most bullet proof and dangerous of attitudes today.

Solution: Attempt to prioritize and balance your life. If you are unable to do so, first seek the training of a life coach. If you are still unsuccessful, you may need to seek clinical help since excessive busyness is a numbing mechanism via “action” rather than numbing through the “ingestion” of food or some other substance.

Score _____

TOTALS _____

SCORING SCALE

4 – 8	Normal
9 - 15	Out of Normal Range
16 - 20	Seek Help

Those of us who have gone without power for several days – or longer, should have learned volumes about our mental games. I certainly have! As the days went by and my schedule was limited due to lack of electricity, my compulsion to control life was getting unnerving. I came to the realization that my private world needs much time on the practice tee and the quality of my trust in God under pressure is right on the cut line.

Whether on the course or in life the elements are there to show us whose boss and how little control we have in either game. Real champions master the basics which allows them to keep a piercing focus and winning attitude both on and off the course.

Always keep in mind; we can H.A.L.T. and restart our attitudes any time during a round or day.

Notes:

Choose today to let the peace of God rule in your heart. Have an attitude of gratitude. Even if you have things that are upsetting you, take a step of faith and thank God for His goodness in your life. Thank Him for working behind the scenes on your behalf. Choose to be thankful and embrace the peace and joy God has for you.

The other choice? BE A MISERABLE VICTIM!

*Father God, grant me the Serenity
To accept the things, I cannot change...
Courage to change the things I can,
And Wisdom to know the difference.*

*Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as the pathway to peace.
Taking, as You did, this sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it.
Trusting that You will make all things right
if I surrender to Your will.
That I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy with You forever in the next.*

-Amen

