

THANKSGIVING and GIVING THANKS

Russell Delman November 2009

"If the only prayer you say in your life is 'thank you,' that would suffice." ~Meister Eckhart

Reflections on Gratitude for you to consider and to question:

*Humans seem to offer gratitude spontaneously when touched by life; I wonder if we can feel touched by life simply by offering gratitude?

*Is it true that every moment has qualities that invite our thanks when we pause and reflect?

*In "big" moments when something important works out well "thank you" emerges instinctively in our hearts and often on our lips. Notice if something similar arises in subtle ways during smaller moments- when the warmth from the sun graces your face or a door is held for you.

*Is it true that any moment of connectedness -to Self, to life- has gratitude implicitly built into it? I am suggesting that gratitude is not added after, rather that it is already there in the background when touched by living. IF this is so then might it be very valuable to consciously invite this background sense of gratitude forward?

*Like all virtues, gratitude is destroyed when imposed as a "should", "must" or "have to".

*Expressing gratitude, even when it is not consciously felt, can have positive effects. For example, when sad, hurt or upset, notice what happens if, in addition to honestly acknowledging that part of your experience, you say "AND I am grateful for....."

*What happens when you choose to cultivate gratitude as an intentional practice? Try this experiment daily for two weeks. Before bed and at other times, review the previous hours and notice anything for which you feel thanks. Sense that thankfulness in a bodily, inner way not just as a thought.

*As Thanksgiving approaches, I wish you a fulfilling day/year/lifetime of Thanks.....