

GRATITUDE: WHAT DOES THAT FEEL LIKE?!?!

As an Inter-Faith Minister, I have studied many of what are called the major religions of the world. From ALL, and I do mean, all of the different sects/demonstrations of what is defined as "Christianity". Everyone of them speaks of, and, gives directions to "**being**" thankful and grateful; of being and having gratitude.

Examples from other religious text would be, from the Islamic Quran, chapter 28; Al-Qasas; "**And whatever of the things of this world you are given is only a temporary enjoyment of the present life, and an adornment there of. And of Allah's mercy, he has made for you the night and the day, that you may rest therein, and that you may seek of Allah's bounty, and that you be grateful**".

There are many examples in the Bible, and one that really got my attention was, First Timothy, 4;4 "**For everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with gratitude**".

However, few, of the spiritual text, religious scriptures, and writings, give us, what gratitude "**FEELS**" like.

Now this includes one of the dictionary sources I use, which defines gratitude as,
"**the quality of being grateful or thankful**".

Ted said last Sunday, and I hope I am quoting him correctly,

"We are feeling beings who also think, not thinking beings who feel".

My personal experiences on what gratitude **"feels"** like, are not all the "feel-good, hankie-dorie, positive-spiritual-enlightenment" experiences.

As I prepared myself to writing this talk, I held in my prayer and meditations that I would find in my heart to be grateful no matter what. That I would feel gratitude for what I can do and gratitude in spite of what I can't.

We just moved to Sheridan. I have been doing rearrangement of furniture, clothing, where the bird cage should go, AND, preparing for the start of working at the VA. I am having a few added aches and pains. Feeling pain within and though my body has brought me to a greater appreciation of taking better care of my total health and well being. When I "feel" pain, I am grateful that I have been given knowledge and resources to relieve whatever pain I may be experiencing.

Everyone has different perceptions, as to what OR how gratitude feels like for them. To show an example, I have asked 4 people to reach in this bag, NO LOOKING, and to write what they "felt". I'm pretty sure whatever they felt, they are grateful that nothing caused them pain. At least I hope not. If they are willing, I would like for them to tell us what they felt, and phrase it by saying, **"gratitude feels like..."**

[allow each person a couple of minutes]

More often than not, our lives shift in oh-so-subtle ways, that we do not even notice on a day-to-day basis. However, when we take time to review and we pay attention to what and how we feel about the aspects of our lives that have changed and expanded, we find, that although we may not be exactly where we want to be, gratefully we're not where we use to be.

As Ted spoke on last Sunday, that gratitude informs and enhances; it's a feeling of AWE and responsibilities; and that gratitude is love.

As you reflect on what gratitude "**feels**" like for you, what is and what isn't, for what is going well and for what is not, **Feel** grateful for what brings us joy and even for that which brings us grief, for if our grief testifies to anything, it testifies to the depths of our love.

In closing, I would like to read from the Baha'i World Faith, selected writings; [read from book]

i don't forgive people
because i'm weak. i
forgive them because
i'm strong enough to
know people make
mistakes.

CHAKRA	LOCATION	COLOR	TONE	PHYSICAL BODY	MENTAL BODY	EMOTIONAL BODY
Crown	Top of head	Violet	B (Ti)	Pineal Gland Brain	Understanding Awareness Consciousness	Spiritual Connection Unity
Brow/ Third Eye	Forehead	Indigo	A (La)	Pituitary Gland Carotid Nerve Plexus	Insight Clarity	Intuition Imagination
Throat	Throat	Blue	G (So)	Thyroid/Para- thyroid Glands Cervical Nerve Plexus	Communication Listening	Self-Expression Truth
Heart	Middle of chest	Green	F (Fa)	Thymus Gland Cardiac Nerve Plexus	Self- Acceptance Relationships	Love of Self Love of Others Grief Attachment
Solar Plexus	Above naval	Yellow	E (Mi)	Pancreas Solar Nerve Plexus	Personal power Self-Mastery Strength of Will	Self-Esteem Shame
Sacral	Below naval	Orange	D (Re)	Ovaries/Testes Lumbar Nerve Plexus	Relationship to food Sexual identity Creativity	Sexuality Pleasure Guilt
Root	Bottom of spine	Red	C (Do)	Adrenals Glands Sacral Nerve Plexus Skeletal Lymph Elimination	Finances Work Family Trust Security	Fear Self-Preservation Anger Aggression