

A THOUGHT ABOUT THANKSGIVING

Are we thoughtful and thankful on Thanksgiving 2021?

Today many American families gather to reunite, celebrate and share a Thanksgiving meals together.

The event that Americans commonly call the "First Thanksgiving" was celebrated by the Pilgrims after their first harvest in the New World in October 1621.

This feast lasted three days, and —as recounted by attendee Edward Winslow— was attended by 90 Wampanoag and 53 Pilgrims, according to Wikipedia.

But, do we as Americans have something to celebrate after a long time dealing with the Covid crisis, losing a family member or friend, or have an illness?

I believe the answer is a resounding yes! Sure there's always something that we as people feel needs adjusting. I have one sentence that I know everyone, and I mean everyone will agreed to. It's simple. Change is necessary!

Most of all people have a wish list. Regardless of our age, education or socio-economic situation a wish list exists. Depending on your situation in life our dreams, aspirations and hopes exists for most everyone.

In general, is that a question of need? Or is it more a question of hope and aspirations. The older we get the shorter the list. How does this remark get reconciled in our daily life? Perhaps the answer got to do with the perspective we have on our specific life and life in general.

Let's take a look at our genuine Thanksgiving feeling.

The Thanksgiving feeling is a matter of perception about ourselves and our families. Of course, the obvious is generally wrapped up in our gratitude and appreciation of our circumstance, opportunities, needs, desires, and aspirations.

As children Thanksgiving historically meant the gathering of family sharing of food, friendship around a table of plenty. Of course, for many that table is more away than reality. The holiday season is in many cases more of wishes that a reality. And we are daily confronted with that wish or perhaps, fantasy of what this season means.

The old Saturday Evening Post cover shows families together, celebrating that togetherness and love around the table of plenty



turning a collective dream into a tangible reality.

As a psychotherapist for many years the holiday season was one of my most busy times when people came to my office and confessed their truth. They did not feel happy, hopeful or optimistic about the life they were living and in the future they saw ahead.

Much of what I heard over the years was a varying degrees of laments, complaints and anxieties about the fears and pressures my clients experienced at this time of the year. The anxieties generally focused around the perceived inability to live up to the expectations that surround us all as we celebrate the holiday season.

Of course, many say that the spirit of this season that counts. Love, friendship, and the commonality we have as children of God. That is to say, for those who believe that God exists.

For many it is difficult to believe in an Almighty God when you feel you are struggling to just have the necessities for daily survival. Add to this the expectations that is thrust upon us by the media, filled with happy young children, (grand) parents sharing love and happiness. The sense of togetherness that exists more with marketing mania than the reality that most experience as they try to manage the hopes, aspirations, and unrealistic wishes.

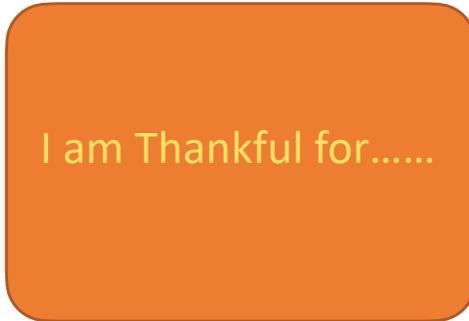
This may sound cynical but in fact it is not! It simply is a cry for perspective, understanding, and genuinely goodwill as we all go through another time of the confrontation between unrealistic expectations and the realities of our lives.

If we are to have a wonderful and happy holiday season we can begin with a Thanksgiving Day predicated on the genuine wish, and belief that we as people have much about which to be grateful.

Perhaps it's a good idea at this time of the year to review of our expectations, needs and desires. Thanksgiving is just that! It is time to give thanks for all the blessings that we have and will have as free people, with hope and opportunity in our future.

The only question in that regard is, will I take the time, to take the time to give thanks on this 2021 Thanksgiving Day? My answer is simple. Everybody has something to which they can be thankful! In all of the hustle and bustle of this holiday season perhaps, it would be really wise, and I believe it would, to sit down

by yourself and spend a few minutes with yourself reflecting on all the blessings that we have here and now.



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