

BEHAVIORAL & FINANCIAL INSIGHTS

Gratitude

Easy to Lose Focus

'Tis the season of gratitude! Thanksgiving is perhaps one of the most needed yet underappreciated holidays. Since Thanksgiving is less marketable than other “Hallmark Holidays,” there is little publicity focusing on the essence of it. Instead, the message is now more about consumerism. The focus tends not to be on giving thanks, but rather on getting a good deal on some product – with retailers now starting their “Black Friday” sales *before* Thanksgiving. Unless we are intentional with our thoughts, we too may spend the Thanksgiving season thinking of things we *want* rather than things we are *grateful* for.

Gratitude doesn't mean ignoring difficulties or pretending everything is perfect. It simply shifts our focus from what's missing to what exists that is good. It reminds us that peace and joy aren't found in circumstances, but in perspective. We can't control what happens in the world or what the markets do, but we can control how we respond – and gratitude helps us respond with greater clarity and less anxiety.

Gratitude by Choice

With so much to be thankful for, most of us probably don't spend enough time consciously counting our blessings. There is no doubt that when things go our way, when we get our desired outcome, it is easy to feel grateful and be content. And while we may even do our best to be thankful, it is often short-lived, overshadowed by our daily to-do list. With every decision, every life event, it is our choice to see the good. Even bad outcomes and poor decisions can become significant positives if we learn from them and become better individuals as a result, yet we must choose to do that.

There are people who are thankful for the smallest things – you probably know a few. They are like magnets. We want to be around them because they exude positivity, love, and joy. Then there are those who are impossible to please, those we can't wait to get away from. They drain our energy. Choose wisely who you are around. Like it or not, we all have a finite reservoir of emotional energy. Furthermore, we tend to take on traits of those we surround ourselves with. Want to be more grateful? To get a natural “recharge” or emotional boost? Spend more time with people who practice gratitude routinely.

Thank You

I'm grateful to have the opportunity to share my thoughts on gratitude with you. I'll be doubly grateful if you share your thoughts or experiences on this topic back with me.

Warmest wishes for a happy and fulfilling Thanksgiving holiday!