

It's been a great year!

We come to the end of another year and I hope you feel your life is better this year than last. I wanted to take a break in our series on values to talk about some of the things I've been learning and working on this year that have made my life better. Perhaps they will resonate with you, too.

You've heard the saying that when the student is ready the teacher(s) will come. Wayne Dyer says we're all students and we're all teachers and we're all exactly where we're supposed to be at all times.

I'm getting better at noticing when I get messages that I need to heed. Here are some I've gotten from various sources this year which have helped me to grow and appreciate life more.

Gratitude is everything.

A cyber friend whom I've never met but with whom I share common interests sent me to a website to download a book by Don Ginn, "The Principle." It changed my life. To be honest I was at a point where I was seeing a lot of lack, especially with a very bad investment I made that turned to disaster. (It wasn't in the stock market but had an even worse outcome.) When I read this free E-book, I changed my outlook and began thanking God every day for the blessings I have. There were times when I couldn't even enjoy the woods behind my house, which is one of my most obvious blessings. But after reading this book, the trees took on a new glow. Ginn says, "No matter how little you have in your life right now, if you will fill it with gratitude and appreciation, it will increase." He's right.

Intention is important for a successful outcome.

I kept hearing the word "intention" used a lot by people. I began to see that sometimes my goals were fuzzy and realized that having clear intention about what I want is important in achieving results. I also learned that we should never say "I will" but rather "I intend." For example, if you know you need to exercise more, have the intention but don't say, "I will walk thirty minutes today." What happens is your subconscious holds on to the promise and if you don't walk you stay drained of energy until you do it. Say, "I intend to walk today." Then if you don't do it, you won't have that stress hanging over you imbedded in your subconscious mind. It is a powerful thing and it pays attention to what we tell it.

Don't be attached to outcomes.

Closely related to intention is taking the action I feel necessary in achieving my desires, yet not being attached to the outcome. That means accepting what happens even if it's not what I wanted. It's not easy but I've been working on that and I can say it takes a lot of pressure off. We've heard the expression "Let go and let God." I remember a conversation I had with Jane Robelot when we both worked at WSPA-TV7. We agreed that we give a problem to God but then we take it back. Non-attachment means letting it go and accepting that whatever happens is always for the best.

Leggo my ego.

Don't steal that phrase; I intend to write a column and a speech with that title soon. I've been learning that it's my ego that causes me to be attached to worldly things and gets in the way of living my highest and best. A spiritual workshop leader explained that the more we listen to spirit, the more our ego fights to maintain control because it knows if spirit takes over, then ego has to die. That explains why sometimes the more spiritual we become, the more we are tested by temptation. My goal is truly to be "in the world but not of the world." Letting go of ego is the way to accomplish that.

The present moment is perfect.

This is a hard one when things aren't going well, but it relates to the other attitudes I've mentioned. When we realize that we *are* at the right place, that what's happening *is* for the best, and we're all doing the best we can even when we know we're not, then life goes much easier. When we can take it easy, take it as it comes, we get into the flow and life gets better.

I am thankful for The Easley Progress and all of you readers. Next time we continue our series looking at the High Individualistic value.

Happy Holidays!

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