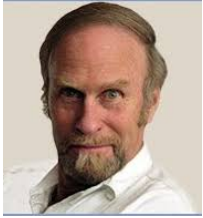


Deep Gratitude: The Energy for Your Life



By Frosty Wooldridge

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In this special season of “Thanksgiving”, you may feel different vibrations from your friends, people you meet, people walking past you, and, maybe, just maybe, you feel a Deep Gratitude for your life.

We Americans enjoy some of the most incredible freedoms on the face of the Earth. We can speak our minds. We can choose which church to attend. We may dress as we please. We may choose our friends. Most of us enjoyed a high school education where we learned to read, write, spell, biology, math, science, computers, art, sports, clubs and dozens of other activities. We may opt for a job that satisfies our purpose in life. Most of us enjoy good health and wellness. Over 98 percent of Americans enjoy a home or an apartment in which to live. Just to enjoy a hot shower, toilet and lavatory puts you into the top 40 percent of the world’s people.

You enjoy travel in your car or public transportation. You may own a dog or a cat or a parrot. You enjoy hundreds of clubs and civic organizations that satisfy your needs both socially, spiritually and athletically. You enjoy your local stores and restaurants where you dine or shop.

How about most Americans enjoy a recreation center where they can run, swim, cycle, lift weights, row, climb and chat with friends. With every season, you may race your bicycle, 10 K,

canoeing, sailing, and another dozen activities that keep you fit.

On weekends, you might camp out under the stars. You might go climbing or para-sailing or tennis or putt-putt.

In America, you enjoy more choices than millions if not billions of people around the world. For instance, in China or North Korea, dictators define and mandate your choices. In poor countries, most people lack any choices.

In places like Africa, you face starvation, wars, religious killings, AIDS, and dozens of other life-threatening situations brought about by Nature or humans. If you live in India, you deal with poverty, trash, environmental degradation, poor nutrition and few choices among those 1.44 billion other souls.

That's why, during this "Season of Thanksgiving", I am grateful for my life as an American citizen. So thankful for being born at the Naval Hospital in Great Lakes, Illinois. Very thankful that my father was a kind, good and solid man. My Daddy was a U.S. Marine. I am proud of him. My mother was a farm girl. Both of them grew up poor. Both of them gave our family a good life-start in this world. Glad my mother attended to my growing up with good values and self-worth. She fed my siblings and me good food. Of course, the dishes awaited us after dinner! I am thankful that my Dad, when I faced challenges at school or sports, said, "Son, if anyone can do that, you can do it." Dad gave me self-confidence to deal with this very confusing, challenging and sometimes volatile world, and the people in it.

So, this "Season of Thanksgiving" which leads to Christmas, I want to share with you some of the gratitudes and thankfulness that inspire me through the day.

When I wake up in the morning, I look to all the pictures on our picture shelf as the sun pours through our windows. We

don't have a big house, yet it's cozy, quiet and sets on the side of a mountain. We've got pine and aspen trees in the front and back of our modest home. I've got shots of Sandi and me on our motorcycle. More shots of us at Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in Sturgis, South Dakota...the largest Block Party in the world! I enjoy pictures of us sailing, canoeing, camping with campfires, skiing and riding our bicycles. That shelf shows Sandi and me competing in West Coast Swing dance contests. Those pictures make me instantly joyful and thankful. Great way to start the days!

We enjoy a nice bathroom with shower, toilet and lavatories for her and for me. I am so thankful because I grew up with an outhouse 100 feet from the back door in LeRoy, Michigan. In winter, I froze my butt off as I walked to the outhouse in freezing weather. We took baths in a steel tub. On a farm, you take nothing for granted.

When I reach the kitchen, we've got more 4X6 pictures of all our friends, and all the places we have visited. There's nothing more inspiring than standing on the Great Wall of China. Or, standing in front of the Coliseum in Rome. One of my favorite pictures is holding up the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Also, standing on the Parthenon in Greece! Another shows me in a snowbank in Antarctica. Also, scuba diving in the Galapagos Islands. Also, standing alongside a 100-year-old Tortuga!

One of my best pictures is finishing the 100 Mile, 4- 12,000 foot passes, and 1 - 13,000 foot pass of the Leadville 100 Mountain Bike Race. One hell of a brutal race! Also, shots of my triathlon days! I raced in 81 of them. Ah, yes, shots on the tennis courts and racquetball. I am SO GRATEFUL that a farm boy who worked his butt off his whole life was able to enjoy this world in his life time.

And now, in the twilight of my years, I still bicycle. I love to down- hill ski and XC ski. Love climbing those 14,000-foot

peaks! Love that I am able to walk, see, hear, smell, speak, touch and feel. I am thankful to dance with Sandi in the kitchen to Elvis Presley's "Can't help falling in love with you."

And yes, we have our challenges with this horrifying Alzheimer's Disease. We try everything each day to give Sandi the best life possible. I adore her. She has been the light of my life for 31 years. Wouldn't trade a minute of my life with Sandi. Her sparkle, her energy, her joy, her love of life.

With Sandi's and my challenges, I always go back to my father's telling me, "Son, if anyone can do this, you can."

And so, I will care for her with love, tenderness, attentiveness, warmth, kind words, kisses and endless hugs to show that she is the love of my life. My goal is to outlive her so that her sons won't place her in an assisted living facility where she would die among strangers. That won't happen during my watch.

So, what about you? What about your life? Do you enjoy those same pictures on your picture shelf in your bedroom? Is your refrigerator loaded with pictures of you, your spouse and your kids enjoying the American Dream?

Yes, if you look out over the political landscape, you find:

"Nihilism is a philosophical viewpoint that asserts life is without inherent meaning, purpose, or intrinsic value. It is a family of beliefs that rejects certain aspects of existence, including the validity of traditional values, moral truths, and objective knowledge. Key forms include existential nihilism, which finds life meaningless, and moral nihilism, which rejects objective morality."

To that I say, BALDERDASH! In our free country, you define your life. You choose your path. You can be happy, sad, right,

wrong, learning every day of your life, not learning and choose to be illiterate, eat well, eat poorly, get fat, stay lean, do drugs, not do drugs, become an alcoholic, pursue life's finest avenues...all by your personal choices. For much of the rest of the world, and I am speaking about places like Africa, India and China—that hold over four billion people—not too many positive choices.

So, this “Season of Thanksgiving” that leads up to Christmas, and the birth of the Christ-Child...the renewal of humanity...may you count your blessings no matter what your spiritual path. May you enjoy your good health...or if you suffer poor health...work toward correcting your health by nutrition, exercise and spiritual balance. I've just read a book by Dr. Peter Attia, *Outlive*. He shows a path whereby you may enjoy a long, healthy and productive life by what you eat, how you exercise, how you socialize, and how you pursue your life purpose. There's another book out there by a longtime friend of mine: Dan Millman—*The Life You Were Born to Live*. Along that same line, I have read Elizabeth Gilbert's book dozens of times, *Big Magic—Creative Living Beyond Fear*. These brilliant authors give you pathways toward your own chosen destiny. I would even throw my own book in there that gives you 12 concepts and practices for living a spectacular life: [Living Your Spectacular Life by Frosty Wooldridge. Amazon features all these books and more.](#)

The one thing I discovered as a teacher stems from the fact that most people graduate from high school without a clue as to their purpose in life. They stumble and stagger into the future. With the aforementioned books, you will find road maps for your spectacular and enjoyable life. Design your life on your own terms.

So, this “Season of Thanksgiving”, Sandi and I wish you well on your magnificent journey through life. Watch for the road signs. Keep quality friends so their energy rubs off on you, and your energy rubs off on them. Deep Gratitude: It's the

energy of your life.

Happy Thanksgiving from Sandi and Frosty Wooldridge

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