

## BALANCING TOMORROW, TODAY™

by Dr. Stacie



As the last leaves fall from the trees and our long winter starts to descend upon us, I realized how much I appreciate the longer days of summer sunlight and the shelter of all those green leaves. I then started wondering, "How often do we fail to appreciate what we have until it's gone?" The answer is, "Far too often." I fear. So I thought we could all get a jump on Thanksgiving by looking at how we could balance tomorrow's *gratitude*, today – at home!

I am grateful for so many things, but I have learned that I pretty much keep all of my gratitude to myself. That doesn't make much sense, does it? It's funny how so many of us can weave the gentle art of whining or complaining into our everyday conversations so effortlessly and so seamlessly that we eventually forget that we are even doing it!

Have you ever heard someone complaining away about this thing or that when you know that they are really pretty happy? Have you ever found yourself having a great day, but when asked how things are going you manage to find two or three things to complain about? What is so amazing to me is that we can turn negativity into a habit, or even a cultural norm. It is so ingrained in our psyche and behavior to speak from the "poor me" persona that we feel uncomfortable being positive and we may even fear a lack of acceptance for being happy and sharing it. That's nuts!

We have each arrived at this place of insanity from our own separate journey. I can still hear my great grandmother in her desperate search for the down side of everything, yet living the independent life she always wanted. I think about my beloved grandfather who had a fabulous life but was wrought with grief over not being able to leave his grandchildren and great grandchildren lots of money. I began to ponder the question, "What purpose does our regret serve?"

To me, regret signifies the absence of gratitude. If you are experiencing regret you knock gratitude right out of your life—they can't happen at the same time. I say ditch regret altogether and start appreciating everything. I believe everything that happens in your life has a positive lesson. I dare you to find it!

Being grateful for everything—finding a good parking space, the way the sunlight shines through a window and makes a pattern on the floor, your loved ones, food, shelter, your means of support, your country, the world, et cetera—and *sharing* this gratitude, can change how you experience each moment and each day. Think about it. If you share the things for which *you* are grateful, it helps you enjoy your life and it helps others realize those things for which *they* are grateful. Your gratitude spreads as you show others, and especially our young people, how great life is all on its own. Even without certain material possessions such as an X-Box, or those pricey sneakers, or without the social status of hanging with the "cool" kids, living in a fancy house, or in a trendy neighborhood, we all have something to be grateful for, no matter what our circumstances are today.

Just think about all of the joy you can experience today, and how you can increase all of your happiness for tomorrow if you acknowledge, share, and cultivate tomorrow's gratitude, today.

Let's look at some helpful hints for balancing tomorrow's gratitude, today – at home:

- Before you enter into a conversation with *anyone*, think of at least one thing for which you are grateful.
- Make a point to share some of your gratitude in all conversations. This means saying "Thank you for..." or "I appreciate..." or "I'm grateful..." Try it! It may be awkward at first, but you'll get used to it and it will start catching on.
- Teach the young people around you to share their gratitude and help them start thinking about it more. Ask them what they are most grateful for this morning, this afternoon, or today. If you keep asking, they'll start thinking about their gratitude today and tomorrow. Watch what happens!
- Don't be afraid to be happy and let other people know it. We can battle our negative-speak one grateful moment at a time.

We don't have to store our gratitude up for one good November dump! We also don't need to sit around the Thanksgiving table in fear of sharing the many things for which we are grateful. Take a risk, enjoy your day and share that experience with someone else.

Balancing tomorrow's *gratitude* is a process best begun today!

*Next time: Is there more to be grateful for at work than the 5 o'clock whistle? ...STAY TUNED.*

Dr. Stacie Morgan is an international speaker, consultant, and media personality. She is the author of **Balancing Tomorrow, Today – AT HOME**, (New Strategy Press). For more information visit her website at [www.balancedmanagement.com](http://www.balancedmanagement.com) or e-mail her at [stacie@balancedmanagement.com](mailto:stacie@balancedmanagement.com).