FEATURE | ATTITUDE | MOTIVATION | PERSONAL GROWTH

The Power of Appreciation

Begin practicing the habit of showing appreciation. You will make the world a better place by something that costs you nothing except a little awareness and a simple act of gratitude

by **Michael Murphy**

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One of the most amazing and essential personal development books of all times is the Dale Carnegie classic, *'How To Win Friends and Influence People'*. This book should be required reading for every high school graduate. It would transform the world.

After my first reading of this book over 30 years ago, I knew that this was one book I needed to adopt in my way of thinking and adapt to my 'life habits'.

> ***One illustration of 'winning friends' and having a positive influence over others is the chosen habit of showing gratitude and appreciation.***

I made it my practice (with effort at first) to express appreciation to waiters, waitresses and wait staff in restaurants. In business, I found myself eating out almost on a daily basis. It was the perfect training camp for developing this 'life practice'.

Living here in the warm climate of Texas, one quickly learns to savor the exquisite refreshment we call, 'ice tea'. (Actually the proper pronunciation should be 'iced tea', but again, this is the south :). Through high school athletics and through almost any outdoor activity in the summer time, you learn quickly to have something cold to drink on hand most of the time.

So, in frequenting restaurants, I found myself consuming several glasses of 'ice tea' with every meal. The opportunity to have my glass constantly refilled, gave me the perfect laboratory for expressing and honing my skills of appreciation to others.

For some unknown reason, the temptation in a restaurant to almost ignore those who serve you is greater than most other places you would go. However, after Mr. Carnegie's lessons, I learned to say, 'Thank you' a lot. In fact, during one meal, I might express appreciation a half of a dozen or more times to those who serve me.

Moreover, appreciation is more than the habit of saying, 'Thank you'. It is an attitude. It is an attitude that when one expresses genuinely, comes from the heart.

> ***It requires an awareness of people and your environment. It certainly makes you more 'awake' and aware, to the presence and needs of other people.***

When you develop the habits and skills of showing true appreciation, you set yourself apart from what most people are used to. Just start being more aware of others and how they respond to restaurant wait staff, cashiers, bank tellers, parking attendants and others who serve you in your daily life.

About a week ago, I happened to be getting out of my car when the sanitation truck arrived at my home (in southern lingo, we call them, 'garbage trucks'). After the driver engaged the robotic arms, picked my garbage containers up and emptied them into the storage bin on his truck, I waved at him and mouthed the words, 'Thank You!'

When he saw that I was saying something to him, though he couldn't hear me, he shifted his truck into park, opened his door and halfway stepped out of the cab to find out what I was saying. I repeated the words, 'Thank You' to him again and he looked a bit confused not knowing what to say. He simply got back into his truck and drove away.

A few days later, I was getting in to my car on my driveway and found a note attached to my car. The note read, "Sir, I don't know what I did wrong, but please give me a call and I will take care of it. Please don't call the city office and complain. John" And then he left his phone number. I immediately called him and this very deep, rough voice said 'hello'. I asked, 'Is this John?' In his deep Texas drawl he said, 'Yep, you got 'im'. I said, 'John, this is Michael Murphy. I'm the guy down on Sunset that waved at you the other day.' He said, 'Oh yeah. I remember. I left you a note. What did I do wrong?'

I said, 'John, you didn't do anything wrong. I was just saying thank you for all of your hard work and for doing your magic of making my garbage disappear each Monday.' He was shocked. He said, 'I've never had anyone tell me that before, sir.' I said,

'Well, John, as far as I am concerned, you're the greatest magician in the world. I get to experience watching you do your magic every week.' He laughed and said, 'Well, sir, I never thought about it that way.'

The very next Monday morning, I was actually waiting for John when he drove up. After he had stopped in front of my garbage containers, he waved and held up a cardboard, home-made sign that said, *'John, the magician'.*

I told several of my neighbors about 'John, the magician.' They too are now 'in on it'. Several have since shared stories with me about them being outside when John comes. They've also expressed their gratitude to him and told him that I had shared with them about, 'John, the Magician'. John is loving all of the new attention.

> ***One simple act of kindness and the show of appreciation can set off a chain of events.***

With John, he's not 'just the garbage man' any more. He is a magician. My guess is, he feels better and at least certainly different about his job.

Begin practicing the habit of showing appreciation. You will gain friends and affect someone's life. You will make the world a better place by

something that costs you nothing except a little awareness and a simple act of gratitude.

Michael Murphy, author, empowerment coach, transformational speaker and Internet 'guru' marketer. Michael is the author of 'Powerful Attitudes. Dr. Harold H. Bloomfield, NY Times best selling author, says, 'Powerful Attitudes is a treasure trove of true success strategies. Beyond a self help book, Powerful Attitudes brings about total transformation in it readers.' Dr. Alicia Ghiragossian, world renowned poet and Nobel Prize candidate says, *'As you read Michael's book, you will sense a dynamic shift in your brain chemistry. Michael Murphy, through this book, becomes your life coach and best friend*.'

Michael is also the creator/author of the only completely personalized, self empowerment book for adults, on the planet, PowerFirmations. Michael is honored to have several celebrities, best selling author's and success experts as his clients. His personalized PowerFirmations book is owned by 5 teachers of the world famous *'The Secret'* DVD and book. Michael is an inspirational, spiritual, motivational, personal empowerment speaker. He has given over 2,000 presentations in 9 countries around the world. He also hosts his own, 'Power Points for Successful Living' through radio syndications.
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