

## A GRACIOUS HEART

*“Wake at dawn with a winged heart and give thanks for another day of loving.”*

— Kahlil Gibran

Feeling gratitude toward all that we have and all that we are leads to a gracious heart. Being gracious toward others and ourselves speaks of a rich spirit, abundant mind, and inner power that can heal relationships and create inner peace that extends throughout the world. Being expansive validates our worth and reminds us that we deserve to experience all that our heart desires.

Further, graciousness allows us to forgive ourselves and others for past mistakes. Awakening and healing requires forgiveness. Without forgiveness we end up distorted with guilt. Forgiveness gently connects to us our deepest self — love — and the love within another. It inspires us to relish all the wonderful aspects of our life, which in turn, allows more love to pour forth, creating a consistent wellspring of balance, happiness and peace.

As we enter into the time of thanksgiving, let us be reminded to give thanks for all of the love we have received as well as the love we have given. I’m reminded of a story I once read involving a group of geography students who were studying the Seven Wonders of the World. At the end of the lesson, the students were asked to list what they considered to be the Seven Wonders of the World. Though there was some disagreement, the following got the most votes:

1. Egypt’s Great Pyramids, 2. Taj Mahal, 3. Grand Canyon, 4. Panama Canal, 5. Empire State Building, 6. St. Peter’s Basilica, 7. China’s Great Wall.

While gathering the votes, the teacher noted that one student, a quiet girl, hadn’t turned in her paper yet. She asked the girl if she was having trouble with her list. The quiet girl replied,

“Yes, a little. I couldn’t quite make up my mind because there were so many.”

The teacher said, “Well, tell us what you have, and maybe we can help.”

The girl hesitated, then read, “I think the Seven Wonders of the World are: 1. To touch, 2. To taste, 3. To see, 4. To hear.”

She hesitated a little, and then said: “5. To run, 6. To laugh, and 7. To love.”

Love is the greatest force of all and has the power to heal and transform the smallest challenge in your life to the world’s largest crisis. Right now is an important time to remember that we are joined not through our bodies, but through our thoughts. Every thought we have either causes feelings of separateness or connectedness to the whole. Love does not distinguish between the people living in America, Afghanistan, or North Korea. Love only recognizes itself and knows it exists in every living thing, everywhere.

Never underestimate the effect of your gratitude. Simply telling someone “thank you” or “I appreciate you being in my life,” has the power to open someone’s heart. I know in my own life, it is the loving feedback and gratitude I receive that keeps me motivated to do my healing work and to be of service as much as possible. Hearing “thank you, you made a difference in my life,” reminds me that we are all connected and affected by each other’s thoughts, words and actions.

Each of us is a “wonder of the world” every bit as much as nature’s wonders. And as we join our minds, remain centered on the light, and appreciate our life, we become miracle workers capable of creating wondrous results.

A gracious heart makes a meaningful difference to those closest to us and to those throughout the world. May your gracious heart be reminded today of those things which are truly wondrous.