



Are You Truly Free?

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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The Oxford Living Dictionary defines freedom as: "The state of not being imprisoned or enslaved".

As we near Remembrance Day we often think about military members who risked their own lives with threats of being imprisoned, enslaved or worse so that we could experience freedom from foreign domination or despotic governments. Most return from their tour of duty with haunting memories of what they saw and did. Many have physical problems that are service-related. All of them realize that they have precious missed time with family and friends as well as the "normalcy" of life at home.

It is sad to realize that so many sacrificed so much for us without our full understanding of what that means. Sadder still to witness the ways in which we often imprison ourselves with our own negative choices.

The couple who continually argues over insignificant daily chores is imprisoned in ongoing conflict that ruins their health, destroys their relationship and alienates others who don't want to watch.

The person who disrespects his/her employer, does less than what is expected and spends more than what is earned, becomes trapped in a financial prison that limits future choices and brings on stress from debt collectors.

Those who use substances or activities to the point of addiction, become enslaved in a culture that kills accountability, fosters deceit, melts self-respect, and destroys physical and mental well-being.

Individuals who invest most of their time watching television, researching the internet or checking their messages lose track of the beauty that silence can offer, the feeling of rest and the opportunity to live in the present with real relationships and conversations.

And those who focus on the past, regretting things that cannot be changed or worrying about the future even though it hasn't arrived yet can be imprisoned over time by depression and anxiety that steals their peace of mind.

Imagine being offered a beautifully wrapped present. Will you open it? Will you value and use the gift that is inside? Or will you discount it by continuing on with your own harmful choices.

The military gift to us is freedom. Do you honour, respect and incorporate it into your life with thanksgiving? Do you make personal choices that will preserve the peace?

It is time to open the gift! And take action!

Have a thoughtful Remembrance Day!