



Blessings at Thanksgiving

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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It can be very deceiving to think that we need to have a large bank account and fulfillment of all our hopes and dreams in order to be thankful. The greatest blessings usually don't have a price tag. Unfortunately, the things that enrich our lives are often not valued until they we lose them.

Alexander Chambers (1759 to 1834) was a Scottish writer who gave up his career in medicine in order to become a journalist. He is credited for a quotation in which he states that there are three grand essentials of happiness:

1. Something to do - We all need a reason to get out of bed in the morning! Those do not have a daily routine are usually less satisfied with life and can even end up in relationship conflicts with others who have expectations of them. You don't need to have a career or even a part-time job in order to feel and give value. You can become a volunteer, find unique ways to enrich the lives of others and learn how to ward off loneliness and neediness by developing personal hobbies. I find, as a therapist, that people who are bored usually become boring. Do not wait for others to plan activities for you. Think about things that you like to do or want to learn to do and take the first step towards becoming active.
2. Someone to love - Disappointments come when our expectations are unrealistic. If you think that the family members you love should spend more time with you, you may be setting yourself up for hurt. The world is a very busy place and even though your family cares about you, they have demands in their own lives to fulfill, At the same time, however, there are lots of people in your community who would be so thankful for some of your time and attention. Reaching out can result in close friendships. If you can name a confidante with whom you can communicate in an honest manner, you are truly blessed. Having a pet can also provide you with a mutually-beneficial connection.
3. Something to hope for - Many people think that hope is a spiritual concept only and look forward to seeing heaven. But hope can also be attached to the idea of realizing a dream or achieving a goal. You might have a plan to learn how to play a musical instrument, complete a family tree or help another person grow.

This Thanksgiving weekend go beyond your usual traditions. Think of at least one new and creative thing you can do. Reach out to someone who needs your kind and unconditional love. Identify something and make a plan that will give you positive hope for the future.

Blessings are not just things that come to us without effort. They need to be pursued, grasped and acknowledged.

Happy Thanksgiving, everyone!