

November 19, 2015
Taos News Article
A Day of Gratitude

The Taos News has committed to implement a weekly column to help educate our community about emotional healing through grief. People may write questions to Golden Willow Retreat and they will be answered privately to you and possibly as a future article for others. Please list a first name that grants permission for printing.

Dear Readers:

This week many of us will be celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday and for those cultures and individuals who do not recognize or celebrate this holiday, there is a message for all of us to remember the importance of gratitude. As emotional losses enter our lives, fear and abandonment seem overwhelming and the art of gratitude can be pushed out of our consciousness. Healing from these losses can become more difficult as the pain can become compounded and complicated. There is an overabundance of information from mass media, advertisements and other sources of information that tell us what is missing in our lives as well as what has gone wrong.

This negative movement has similar characteristics of addict behavior: searching and scouring for the next motive to be angry or feel without. Wants become needs and basic needs are ignored.

After my wife, 2 daughters, mother-in-law, and brother had all died in a short period of time, I found it difficult to even think of gratitude. Everything was hollow and I was stripped. My heart shattered and I could not find emotional nutrients anywhere. It was easy to find the negative in anything as well as myself. The isolation bubble of anguish and misery consumed me and in this, I pushed people away while silently screaming for help.

As healing began, I could find gratitude in areas such as the sun coming up, a meal, nature, a helping hand, or a quiet moment of serenity of heart. I noticed my heart started to open once again. With room to reach out, I found there was room for others to reach in and rebuild community. I found more and more reasons for gratitude. I noticed healing began and I could start celebrating the lives of my family rather than just their deaths. This allowed me to move out of the past and into the present with less energy going to towards judging and second guessing events and situations that I was powerless to change.

The more time I spent recognizing the wonders and miracles of life and the power of healing and transformation of negatives into positive motivation, the more I was freed from the misery trap I had created. Today, I'm grateful for my life and am happy to be alive. My story has very tragic and sad moments and yet I am grateful for those people and events as they have helped me become who I am today. I'm appreciative of the wonders of this life with the ability to continue

to grow, and learn as well as connect with others in service, community, friendship and family. I am also grateful for all of you readers as well as the Taos News that allow this article to happen. Honoring gratitude will help allow abundance to enter in your life in the form of emotional healing and growth. Take care and Blessings during this time of honoring the gifts of life.

Golden Willow Retreat is a nonprofit organization focused on emotional healing and recovery from any type of loss. Direct any questions to Ted Wiard, LPCC, CGC, Founder of Golden Willow Retreat at (575) 776-2024 or GWR@newmex.com