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Editor's Letter



Abundance

SOMETIMES YOU FIND inspiration in the most unexpected places. For me, it was 35,000 feet in the air, in seat 18E, on a recent flight from Phoenix to Seattle. Usually, when I am on a plane, I'll smile and say hello to the person I am seated next to, but I'm not one to launch into conversation with a total stranger.

On this particular flight, though, I was pleasantly surprised with a great conversation. The gentleman in seat 18E asked me where I was going, which led to a conversation about Spokane and my job. It turned out one of his family members works for a city magazine in another state, so it was interesting to compare notes. After talking about city magazines, Spokane and my life, the conversation shifted to him, his life and his work.

As the CEO of a company based out of Seattle and with offices across the country, as well as in Paris, it was fascinating to talk with him about his work, the corporate culture of his company, what he seeks for his company and employees, and what inspires him in life. I was inspired when he said that one thing he thinks is important to focus on, both in life and work, and what he tries to encourage other people to realize, is the abundance they have in their lives and how blessed they are.

We do live lives of such incredible abundance. While it is good to keep this in mind all the time, it seems like this is the perfect time of year to pause and reflect on all that we have. Too often our lives are focused on the things we want, not the things we have. We want to trade in our mid-90s car for something faster and shinier, we want to move to a bigger

house or add onto what we have, we want a better paying job and a better boss. We'd like more change in our pocket, more money in the bank and more recognition. Oftentimes, though, in wanting, we overlook what we already have and that for which we should be thankful.

Does the job that takes all of your time mean as much when you don't have anyone to come home to? Does the faster car help you escape your problems any easier? Does a bigger house guarantee loved ones with whom to fill it? Does a bigger paycheck guarantee smooth sailing in life? Alas, not so much. Sometimes, recognizing how blessed we already are, with what we already have, is a greater gift than anything we could put on a wish list.

As those wish lists are being made at this time of year, the mailbox also starts filling up with Christmas cards from friends and family. I look forward to reading the cards and letters that accompany them, full of tales of the joys each family has experienced over the past year. I like reading them because I am thankful for these people who have added to the abundance of my life, and it makes me happy to hear their good news.

In an effort to maintain my personal crusade to not let Thanksgiving get trampled in the race toward Christmas, I am continuing my recently-started practice of sending out homemade Thanksgiving cards to those I love, care about and for whom I am most thankful. They may not be the most beautiful cards, but they were made with a bit of love, and as I made them, it gave me time to reflect on why I am so thankful for each of the recipients. It is because of all they have given to me. Whether they have made me laugh, brightened my day or so changed my life that they are a part of who I am, having these people in my world has given me a much more abundant, blessed life than I could ever hope for.

I know I won't get to be with some of those I love the most this holiday season. I wish I could wrap them up and put them under the tree. Instead of wrapping them in paper though, if there are people dear to you, I hope you take the opportunity to wrap them in love, and appreciate the abundance in your own life, being thankful for those who bless it with their presence, which is so much better than any present.

May this holiday season be one of great abundance for you, warming your hearts and lifting your spirits - to at least 35,000 feet.

Blythe