

Gratitude: Life's Key to Abundance with Reference to *The Magic* by Rhonda Byrne

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Men in the cult of modern life find happiness as an elusive term unable to tap out life's bestowed blessings. The relation between to be grateful for and finding happiness can puzzle everybody in the present scenario. The term 'Gratitude' is significant and the Gratitude Movement has become pivotal in the world today to spill the beans of unhappiness.

Discussion: This life on the earth is a rare privilege. It is a blessed gift. For this one owes a gratitude to Almighty who has given a beautiful life to cherish, to feel around love, beauty, nature, thoughts, emotions, feelings, the visible and the invisible things of the universe. Rhonda Byrne in her book 'The Magic' gives a wonderful insight into life's key to abundance which lies in the practice of gratitude. 'Gratitude' is an act of thankfulness or an art of conveying thanks to someone who has benefitted one in any manner. It emerges from the heart of one's being and at times expressed through words or through gestures or actions.

Conclusion: The present paper is an attempt to put forth the principles discussed by Rhonda Byrne in 'The Magic' and through her ideologies suggest that the world needs more positivity out of everyone rather than wasting time on negative things.

KEY WORDS: Gratitude, abundance, positivity, thoughts, action

INTRODUCTION

Our life on this earth is a rare privilege. It is a blessed gift of God. For this, one owes a gratitude to Almighty who has given a beautiful life to cherish, to feel around love, beauty, nature, thoughts, emotions, feelings, the visible and the invisible things of the universe. As Louise L. Hay and Friends in the book *Gratitude a Way of Life* says: "Life is a gift, and what you do with yours is completely up to you, be thankful for this gift and use it to heal this beautiful planet we live on, our mother Earth"(101). Human beings crave for aesthetic pleasure and experiences which can be felt at deep level. The term gratitude holds a great significance. 'Gratitude' is an act of thankfulness or an art of conveying thanks to someone who has benefitted one by any means. It emerges from the heart of one's being and at times expressed through words or through gestures or actions. It is a core of one's life. It gives one a way of life. As Daniel T. Peralta asserts the significance of gratitude as: "I think the words *thank you* are two of the more beautiful words in the language. They can light up someone's face and help the other person

know that he or she is appreciated. It opens the door to our hearts and allows us to feel connected” (203).

The Magic by Rhonda Byrne is a self help book published in the year 2012. She gives a wonderful insight into key to abundance which lies in the practice of gratitude. She lays out an incredible twenty eight days practice of gratitude of which first twelve days were for gratitude that one has now and in the past, next ten days were about dreams and desires and the last six days included improving a negative situation and dissolving problems. She has stunned readers by revelation of law of attraction which works through the power of gratitude. She brings out that if one feels grateful for what one already possesses, the law of attraction will attract more of that and bring to one’s life. It helps in shedding off thoughts of jealousy, resentment, dissatisfaction and feelings of insufficient. Abundance is seen and felt in money, health, career, relationships, personal desires and material things and altogether a new world is experienced. This book has emerged out as an immense help to readers to pursue their life’s journey.

DISCUSSION

Life is a mixed blessing. A child is happy and satisfied in his childhood. In fact the happiest of times of one’s life is one’s childhood where every day brings new promises, thrill and is filled with excitement. Nothing can snatch joy from a child. But with the passage of time when the child grows into an adult he is entrusted with many responsibilities and gets clouded by difficulties and problems. He has to fulfill the aspirations of the materialistic world and he craves for satiating desires of money, wealth, happiness, relationship. He gets deluded by the fact that one who owes great wealth in fact gets it more, there is no stoppage. And one who is already at shrink of wealth in fact loses that also. Rhonda Byrne opens up the magic for her readers. She says that life’s riddle is solved in this one word ‘gratitude’. As Rhonda Byrne in *The Magic* reveals: “The answer to the mystery that has deluded so many for centuries is in one hidden word: gratitude.” (5). She says one who always conveys “thanks” from the core of his heart for the things he possesses, everything adds more to his side and one who always complains about the things he does not possess and is not thankful for the things he possesses, he loses that which he thinks is too little for him. As Rhonda Byrne in *The Magic* reveals: “Whoever has gratitude will be given more, and he or she will have abundance. Whoever does not have gratitude, even what he or she has will be taken away from him or her.” (6)

Most of the people in today’s world concentrate on what they don’t have rather than what they have. They form misaligned thoughts that act as a hindrance to their relationship, success, money, health. The energy of gratitude is one of the most powerful attracting forces in the universe. It can significantly change lives around and enhance well being of each one. The key to abundance lies in concentrating on what one has rather than what one lacks or do not want. Susan Jeffers, the new age author whose thoughts are in seminal with Byrne states: “When we focus on abundance, our life feels abundant; when we focus on lack, our life feels lacking. It is purely a matter of focus” (132). The secret of two words “Thank You” cannot be seen but can be

felt. It releases a current of spiritual energy that has an impact not only in the outer world but inner world. It has the power to transform challenges into possibilities, problems into solutions and losses into gains. It helps in eliminating negative thought pattern in the subconscious mind and act as a link to every possible source of goodness. One just needs to invoke gratitude from the invisible source to add to its abundance. That source of good is none other than but the Divine. Through a feeling of gratitude one can put himself in right alignment of energy that heals the spirit from within. As Rhonda Byrne in *The Magic* comments:

But if you think about what you're grateful for, like. "I love my job." "My family is supportive." "I had the best vacation," I feel amazing today, " "I got the biggest tax refund ever," or "I had a great weekend camping with my son, " and you sincerely feel the gratitude, the law of attraction says you must attract more of those things into your life. It works in the same way as metal being drawn to a magnet; your gratitude is magnetic, and the more gratitude you have, the more abundance you magnetize. It is Universal law! (7).

Gratitude holds optimism whereas ingratitude can have shades of negativity. Rhonda Byrne says that ingratitude has great restrictive powers. As she reveals:

It's a simple fact: when you're not grateful you cannot receive more in return. You've stopped the magic from continuing in your life. When you're not grateful you stop the flow of better health, better relationships, more joy, more money, and the advancement of your job, career, or business. To *receive* you have to *give*. It's the law. Gratitude is *giving* thanks, and without it you cut yourself off from the magic and from *receiving* everything you want in life (17).

Human beings of twenty first century finds reason to be unhappy rather than what can make them happier. They get shrouded in stress, trauma, and depression. The reasons could be so many. They fail to count the wonderful things which life has offered them. The negative approach toward life shuns all the possibilities. As Byrne in the *Magic* says:

The flipside is that we're not counting our blessings, we can fall into the trap of unintentionally counting negative things. We count negative things when we count about the things we don't have. We count negative things when we criticize or find fault with other people, we complain about traffic, waiting in lines, delays, the government, not enough money, or the weather. When we count negative things they increase too, but on top of that, with every negative thing we count, we cancel out blessings that were on their way (30).

Rhonda Byrne opens up the magic for the people of the world. She says if one becomes grateful even for the small things one owes then the resources open up automatically for the bigger things as it opens up the channel for goodness. As she opines: "---- and I can assure you that counting your blessings is the only way to have abundance in your life" (30). She suggests the

appreciation for the things one possesses helps in coming above the petty condition and it adds to one's level of happiness. Whenever at times one feels unappreciated about the things happened in life then one must count up all the wonderful things happened in life. It alleviates stress and trauma and evokes joy. The sense of loss agitates one but being grateful can effectively fret off even a sense of loss. Gratitude helps us to live without guilt, remorse and resentment. It should be part of our lives now more than ever because the feeling of being thankful for what we have or receive helps us relax in stressful times. Susan Jeffers an eminent author whose thoughts are in sync with Byrne shares her experience about how focusing on blessings can transform one's life. She says:

I remember sitting with my mom in her living room on a cold, dreary winter day just months before she died. She was in much pain and was feeling very weak. At one point when I was in pain about her pain, she looked at me and said, "It's cold outside...I'm warm and cozy inside. My daughter is here...sometimes you get lucky."

Wow! I was focusing on her pain. She was focusing on her blessings. Thanks, Mom, for that beautiful lesson! (135).

Emmett E. Miller has twenty five years of enriching experience teaching people the art of healing. He states " In my medical practice (mind/body medicine), the importance of gratitude is strikingly clear in a psychophysiological way-grateful people heal faster; they are able to eliminate harmful behaviors from their lives with greater ease; they are happier" (175). Alan Cohen is a New Thought Movement author whose columns appear in many newspapers and magazines. He gives the example of Sarah whose life transformed by practicing gratitude. He reveals:

I heard of a woman named Sarah who lay in a hospital bed after an accident, deeply depressed, unable to move any part of her body except the little finger on one hand. Then Sarah decided she would make use of what she *did* have rather than bemoan what she was missing. She began to bless the one finger that could move, and she developed a system of "yes" and "no" communication with the little finger. Sarah became grateful that she could communicate, and she felt happier. As she blessed the movement, her flexibility increased. Soon Sarah could move her hand, then her arm, and eventually her whole body. It all started with the critical shift from complaining to blessing (32-33).

Things gets tricky when one goes through rough patches that come by their life, when a situation becomes difficult, when one is hit by tragedy then also one should always offer thanks to Almighty for such situation. The Bible says: "Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances." (April 1, 2016, Times of India, Marguerite Theophil." All the lessons, circumstances or situations should be seen as an opportunity to see an old, negative pattern, that lies within all and the secret is to learn, to transform those negative patterns, to heal it. This will lead to betterment of one's life. As Rhonda Byrne *Magic* comments: "First, as difficult it may be,

you have to look for things to be grateful for in the negative situation. No matter how bad things are, you can always find something to be grateful for, especially when you know that your gratitude will magically transform every negative circumstance”(7). Gratitude changes perception of one’s lives. Difficult situation that seems intolerable and stuck could be transformed by feel of gratitude. It begins to lighten any situation or trauma or any event. One should see this as an opportunity to create change. When this happens depression dissolves, conflicts turn to harmony and stress is alleviated leading peace. When one offers thanks for the challenging situation or a circumstance he is in, and see it as a reason for imbibing wisdom and knowledge, the very act of gratitude transforms the negative experience into positive one. It makes one conscious and energizes one to take right decision. One needs to take out the best out of worst. Sharon Huffman one of the eminent authors of the twenty first says “As soon as we feel gratitude, everything changes. It can transform a situation where you feel sadness and loss that, in turn, draws more sadness and loss to you, to one of joy and happiness. The *very same* situation is immediately transformed when viewed with a heart filled with gratitude (114).

People face turmoil in their lives when they face a difficult or broken relationship. It could be with anyone husband or wife, brother or sister, son or daughter, parent or brother, friend, partner, boss, business client and so on. In such a daunting circumstance one holds total ungratefulness for the other person. One cannot show an iota of gratitude for the other person. There exists blame, resentment, grudge, ill feelings, and hatred against each person. One blames the other person for various reasons. This blame game never improves any relationship but it only worsens the situation.

CONCLUSION

Gratitude can transform any negative situation or circumstance into positive. For instance it can heal the turmoil relationship of the past. Rhonda Byrne gives the example of a son who has a troubled relationship with his father. She suggests that for every negative circumstance or a situation one should look for ten things to be grateful about the person. A son can count ten good reasons to be grateful about like school education, support, care, encouragement, hard work, learning the trait of compassion and so on. It also feels one’s heart with joy when one holds on the thoughts of gratitude and becomes nostalgic about the past events and the people. The more gratitude one shows towards the past events, the present state also becomes happier. Although it may be difficult to express the sense of gratitude for the people who may have hurt one, but it is an effective tool of healing the past. This may be called as unconditional gratitude that is the gratitude given to the person even though he is not worth receiving it. One should always note good things or always search positive in a person. By doing this one can let go all the other negative thoughts. As Lee Coit says: “Being grateful for those who think have hurt us may be harder but it is very effective for healing the past. I call unconditional gratitude. *Unconditional gratitude* that we give gratitude to everyone regardless of whether we think they deserve it or not” (38).

The word gratitude is ingrained in many great civilizations of the world. It is also the core of many religions like Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism Sikhism and Hinduism. This is something which can give not only on a tangible level, but it is something which one can ultimately pour from his heart and soul to other fellow beings without expecting anything in return. It can heal the mother earth. September 21 has been designated as world's Gratitude day. It holds ethics and values of the countries of the world and is also important in forging ties at domestic, social, national, and international level.

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