

## Thanks and Giving

As the holidays arrive we are reminded once again of the season of thanks and giving. Let us pause and appreciate the many gifts in our lives and to think of others more often than we might ordinarily do. May we extend a helping hand to those in need while remembering to give thanks for our own abundance. Good health, secure jobs, loving families, supportive friends, enough food to eat and a warm place to live are things many of us take for granted yet right here on Long Island there are many not quite so fortunate.

There are more individuals and families that are homeless, among them: women with children and scores of service men and women who have fallen on hard times since returning from active duty service to our country. Drug overdose has surpassed automobile crashes as the number one cause of accidental death in America, devastating families everywhere. Surely most of us can donate canned goods and other food items to help feed those that are hungry right here in our own back yard or share job opportunities with those in need. Some of our neighbors will need warm clothing as the winter approaches especially coats, gloves and hats; there are many churches and other ministries that work to meet these needs so please check locally in your own community to see how you might donate or be of service to others.

Despite situational hardships recognizing that life is filled with many blessings often helps to improve mood and motivate people to get out there and help make a difference. For those who believe they can't do something extraordinary, we can all do ordinary things in extraordinary ways! Consider visiting seniors in nursing homes just to sit and chat or donate your time at a local not for profit human service organization or perhaps an animal shelter and consider donating pet food items as well. Make a donation to a local charity and support your own local merchants by shopping and spending at home too.

It has been said that one of life's greatest gifts is to do a kind deed for someone else anonymously and then have it be found out by accident. It is a spiritual axiom that when you help someone else it is really you, the giver who benefits most as the receiver of the spiritual rewards for doing the kind deed, while the recipient benefits as well.

Please be mindful that half of all the alcohol consumed in the United States for a year occurs during the period from Thanksgiving to New Years during the holiday season.

Happy Thanksgiving!

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