

A MIND FULL OF GRATITUDE HAS NO ROOM FOR COMPLAINT

Where our attention goes our energy flows...What does this mean? Our attention could be compared to a magnifying glass, and the energy that flows in the direction of the magnifying glass could be seen as the sun. We all know that when you hold a magnifying glass over a piece of paper, having captured the rays of the sun, as long as you keep the magnifying glass still, allowing the concentration of the sun's rays to remain in that spot, the paper will begin to burn. This is an accurate metaphor for understanding the principle that wherever we focus our attention our energy will eventually flow in that direction. The more we maintain that focus the more our energies will conspire to create an outcome that matches our focus. This is such a wonderful feature of being human because it enables us, when we really focus to do the impossible. However, it's important to note that when our focus is negative the flow of our energy also becomes negative.

This is why we urge you to use this great insight to serve your needs and deepest desires. Fill your mind with gratitude and appreciation and you will discover it is hard to feel anything but happy and fulfilled. Beware of the 'culture of complaint' for it will foster bitterness, jealousy and narrow-mindedness. It will lock you into a self-righteousness that sees what is wrong with everyone else and then blames the world for its own misfortunes. This position never allows one to take responsibility. Why would it? It leads one to believe it is perfect and free from making mistakes – such is the arrogance of this stance. So, whilst your attention (your focus) remains in a place of blaming and complaining, the intensity of this destructive posture increases, leading you to be slowly devoured by the flames of this illusion. This is why we must fiercely avoid focusing on the negative; otherwise, we will be consumed by its destructive power. Unless our intellect and discrimination are active, our negative focus will eventually override everything else, which is also why, conversely, when we are holding our magnifying glass in the right position, we can achieve anything! As we harness the awesome power of the sun (the sun in this instance is all our untapped power) we can become all we are capable of being.

Why not cultivate a mind that is full of gratitude, a mind that is saturated in 'thank you'? Such a position creates true mental health; a mind and a life that matters on the inside and is not defined by its possessions, postcode, kudos, bank balance etc. These things may well be there and can be appreciated, but such a mind does not depend on the external for its self-esteem and self-respect. It understands that it is one's own thoughts and feelings that truly instil value in one's life and so it busies itself cultivating the right thoughts and feelings. There is no more worthwhile pastime than giving thanks, counting one's blessings both great and small.

Find some time everyday to truly dwell on something in your life that you take for granted. It might help, at first, to write it down, or to talk about it to some one who's willing to listen. In the end the aim is to give thanks to such an extent that your appreciation melts your heart and takes you away from looking at this thing from 'outside' and instead has you standing 'inside' looking out. This means delving so deep within that you truly feel the great debt you owe this blessing. It is not just a matter of saying thank you: that is only the first step. This is about heartfelt contemplation and genuine appreciation (see *The Art of Appreciation*). Saying thank you in this way is an emotional experience, as one's heart and mind are moved beyond an intellectual appreciation into a place of awe and wonder. Choose something or someone you take for granted and spend 15 to 20 minutes focusing kindly on your choice, then watch what happens....