

Appreciation, Please

Try telling someone today how much you appreciate him or her. It's a marvelous gesture. People are always hungry for a warm smile, a kind word or some action of love or kindness from a fellow human being – probably because those expressions are in such short supply nowadays.

Why is that?

Perhaps it is because of the pace we have allowed to be set for us by the technology of the day – inventions, ironically, that were developed to save us time. We are forced to run, run, run to keep up with our machines.

Possibly it is because of the bleakness of the world we see when we peer out from under the bedcovers. Gremlins – high gasoline prices and concern over potential shortages thereof, a constant anxiety over terrorism as world events ebb and flow, the reports of casualties to our troops fighting for freedom in Iraq, Afghanistan and other hot spots around the world, dread diseases such as heart attack, cancer and strokes – all dance about us. It's little wonder we want to pull in our heads and lie still under the bed sheets.

Or maybe it is because of our own personal failures. We don't always measure up to the standards we set for ourselves, so we carry the disappointment and guilt heavily on our shoulders. Our confidence in our own abilities can rise and fall.

Then along comes a friend with an encouraging word:

- “Thanks for helping me on that project. You don't know how much that meant to me.”
- “Here's a cake I baked especially for you, because you're a special person.”
- “I heard your son is in the hospital, and I want you to know I'm praying for his quick recovery.”
- “I found your newspaper down the street. Some dog must have carried it off, but I'm pleased to bring it back to you.”
- “I heard you were under the weather, so I've made a hot vegetable soup for you.”
- “That's a beautiful dress. Wow, how I wish I could look that good in it.”
- “You seem preoccupied or concerned. Let's go to lunch and talk.”
- “I've always thought you are such a good cook. Would you mind sharing that recipe with me? It's one of my favorite dishes.”
- “Your house is always so spotless. How do you find the time to keep it in such good shape?”
- “I thought this bouquet of daisies I picked awhile ago might brighten your day.”

With such thoughtfulness, the clouds of frustration and fear draw back to reveal the sunshine of a really beautiful day.

--Beecher Hunter