

Thank You For All You Have Done and All That You Do

By
Chuck Jumpeter

The month of November brings us many reasons to say the two most appreciated, and often overlooked, words – ***Thank You!***

During the first part of November we pay tribute to our veterans, those brave men and women who have served and are currently serving to protect our way of life, our values, our freedom and our great nation. To all of the veterans out there I want to add my personal and heartfelt thanks for your heroism and patriotism. You are truly and deeply appreciated.

The last part of November brings us the opportunity to give thanks for all the blessings we have in our lives with the celebration of my personal favorite holiday, Thanksgiving. This holiday provides the opportunity to share food, remembrances, good times and bad, with our families and friends. I sincerely hope that all of you will take advantage of this time of thanks to forget about any hard feelings or any bad times you may have had and focus on all the goodness and warmth of your relationships and share those feelings throughout your circle of family and friends. To all of you I say, Happy Thanksgiving! And, if you're wondering how to allow yourself that extra piece of homemade pumpkin pie, just check out my last month's article on planning and you'll be all set.

As I was drafting this article, I had planned on just keeping it as a short thank you. Then, during this week, three stories captured my attention that I felt needed to be addressed. The first was a story headlined in most of the national newspapers that Merck agreed to settle for \$4.85 Billion – yes, that's right, BILLION dollars – so that the 45,000 to 50,000 law suits over their pain killer Vioxx would go away. The second story that struck me was on the MRSA virus. This deadly bug is resisting most antibiotics and killing people. Doctors are calling it an epidemic. The third storyline was of the new generation of workers, those in their 20's and 30's who are only concerned about themselves. Their reaction to most things is that everything is replaceable. If I don't like my job, I'll get a new one. If I don't like my spouse (or significant other) I'll get a new one. If something on my body fails, I'll simply replace it. I am sure that all of you have heard or read about these issues so I won't go into any detail or specifics. However, what strikes me is that these issues do have something in common, something that you might not notice, something I call the "me syndrome."

Just what is the "me syndrome?" Well, it fits into the season of thanks perfectly and goes something like this. *"Because of all the benefits and blessings I have available, life is all about me. I can do whatever I want, whenever I want, however I want and why ever I want. If something breaks, then someone else will fix it for me. I will bear no consequences."* Oh if only life were that simple.

With respect to health and wellness, all these current stories share that principle, too. Believing that we can eat whatever we want because, "I like it," not exercise, "Because it makes me tired or I don't have time," use drugs, drink excessively or whatever else because and if I get sick or hurt, then the doctor will fix me. This "me syndrome" also rears its ugly head when parents, who don't want to be bothered with responsibility of children would rather load their kids up with antibiotics and other drugs to quiet them down and thereby do measurable, and sometimes irreparable damage, to their developing immune systems.

Today's medical professionals truly can work miracles. The science, the medicine, the ability to replace vital organs and all the other wonderful life-saving techniques have added years to our lives and allowed us to recover from diseases and conditions that were certainly fatal just a few short years ago. However, that is no reason to believe we are totally replaceable. It is extremely irresponsible to expect that no matter what we do to ourselves, someone out there will be able to fix it. You may be able to replace the fuel injection on your car over and over again, but your heart? Needing someone else to die so we can get the "parts" we need to make up for our extravagant lifestyle is not what Thanksgiving is about.

We will never know how serious the MRSA epidemic would have been if those being affected had done more to ensure their immune systems were working at full capacity. Arthritis, the primary reason so many people used Vioxx, also is affected by the immune system. Again, we'll never know if those so afflicted would have been less so had they taken better care of themselves. However, my guess is that they certainly would have. I know that the better I maintain my car, my home heating system, and everything else that I own, the more efficiently it performs and the longer it lasts. Why then shouldn't I believe the same for my health? I've always believed and professed that it is easier to stay well than to get better. I try to live my life that way and for my current good health I am very thankful.

If you want to know more about how to bolster your immune system, go to <http://federaljobs.net/retire> and scroll down to the **Health Awareness Forum** and read my 2-part article, "**I'm Not Sick Again, Am I?**" which was posted in October and November of 2006.

Finally, one last word on thanks and our veterans. I recently came across a suggestion that I believe is a wonderful idea. When you're writing out your Christmas cards this year, simply add one name. Help bring a little joy into the life of someone who truly needs and deserves it. Here is the name:

A Recovering American Soldier
c/o Walter Reed Army Medical Center
6900 Georgia Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20307-5001

Thank You and Have A Wonderful & Healthy Thanksgiving,

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