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Once a Day

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Once a Day

Some of us take at least one medication every day. Some have habits of coffee every morning, or exercise or quiet time; some have one radio or TV program that is as regular for them as getting a night's sleep. Whether we take a vitamin, drink a beverage, or engage in an activity once each day, we initiated at some time in the past what has by now become a habit. We might not have consciously decided to create some of our consistent patterns of behavior when we began them, but we all have personal customs, routines and practices that we have found worth continuing.

Reflecting on some of our once-a-day routines can be revealing. Not only might we admire and be grateful for some of the beneficial habits which we may have been taking for granted, but we might also recognize that we have a need that is not yet being met. We continue to grow as humans as a result of our interactions with other people and the effects upon us of the ups and downs of our life experiences. We might become aware, especially if we take a little quiet time to look within, that we "want something more" than what comes to us through our present every-day customs.

If we do not have a once a day practice of noting some of the causes for gratitude in our experiences, we might be limiting our healthy spiritual growth as much as failing to drink enough water negatively affects our physical health. At any time we choose, we can begin building a habit that will further enhance our lives. And we can start "small," as people do when they decide that they need at least a little physical exercise. If walking a few blocks is better than not walking at all, taking a few minutes a day to enjoy, savor, or be thankful for a few of the ordinary but real gifts, graces, accomplishments, pleasant encounters, inspired thoughts and actions that have been part of our lived experience is certainly better than letting a day go by without noting a single thing that has gone well.

Gratitude is not only related to interactions with persons, including God, but also to all the answers that we learn to some of the important questions in life; answers to questions about meaning and purpose, about life and even about death that are occasioned by our observations and experiences. When we accept a new responsibility, for example, and find that we rise to the challenge, and when we reflect, and so come to recognize that what we have chosen to say and do were worth our efforts, we are at the same time answering those important questions – a cause for gratitude.

Once a day, we can take some time to notice at least one thing we did or said that our inner values-monitor identifies as bringing even a little light, life, or love into the world, and that evokes thankfulness. Without putting a

burden on our minds or imaginations, we can surely find something in our day that, upon reflection, manifests in some way, that we were adding to, not subtracting from, human society. Such a practice provides incremental answers to life's important questions, and is cause for thankfulness.

Once a day gratitude: an easy and significant spiritual exercise.