

Feeling Less Than Thankful? Check Out This Thanksgiving Hack

The word "hack" is a popular term.

So, what is a hack? A hack is a creative shortcut that increases productivity, brings improvement and enhances efficiency.

I love hacking because it creates a different way to see life. Hacking shifts perspective and brings change. There is always room to improve our experience and learn how to do life better.

Learning to use "lifehacks" is a no-brainer—many hacks work great and cost little. Other hacks need improvement.

The life hack of gratitude for ingratitude needs no improvement.

Gratitude always works.

Lifehacks

One useful lifehack is when you are choking or coughing uncontrollably, raise your hands above your head, and the coughing will stop. It works.

Another lifehack is when you get a telemarketer call, push the numeral nine on your phone. Pressing the numeral nine automatically adds you to the "don't call" list—a great life hack for sure.

A final life hack—when you pick up your pizza, turn on your seat warmers, and they will keep your pizza hot until you get home—this one works great.

Life in 2020

2020 is a challenging year. Life would be more comfortable if we could snap our fingers and change things. That would be an epic hack. If we did possess the ability to change something instantly, we wouldn't learn much.

There are many ways to change our lives. The first way is to seek creative ways to solve real problems. The next step is to take action.

Lifehacks are practical. Let's look at a super lifehack—gratitude for ingratitude. Gratitude is defined as the act of being thankful, the readiness to show appreciation, a return to kindness.

Life moves fast. In the hustle and bustle, we miss the obvious and give our attention to the urgent. When is the last time you thanked your spouse for folding your clothes or the company janitor for cleaning the office?

It's Easy to Overlook What We Appreciate

When we fail to express our thanks, we miss the opportunity to be grateful. The attitude of being thankful (internal) and saying thanks (external) are never equal. The adage that an "attitude of gratitude" is enough is only partially true.

Gratitude does its best work in the open.

Melody Beattie said, "Gratitude turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos into order, confusion into clarity, it makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow."

Expressed gratitude is better than silent appreciation. When we fail to express our gratitude, we are equal to those without gratitude.

William George Jordan says, "Ingratitude is a crime more

despicable than revenge, which is only returning evil for evil, while ingratitude returns evil for good.”

Ingratitude may not be ultimately evil, but it surely is not God’s best.

God’s Word provides explicit instruction about how and when to show gratitude.

“Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1 Thess. 5:16-18).

This verse has a rhythm and a rhyme—it’s easy to memorize. Like a lot of the Bible, it’s easy to read and hard to live.

To always rejoice is no easy feat. The verse is not a suggestion. Truth told is, none of us can live that verse well without the help of the Holy Spirit.

We can agree this portion of Scripture is challenging. But in the challenge, God directs us to live a life of gratitude and praise. God knows a life of “giving thanks” is the best way for the believer to live. And God has given us the power to “give thanks” in the hard times.

Gratitude Shifts Our Focus

We have unlimited opportunities to be grateful even in the most challenging circumstances.

“For it is better, if it is the will of God, that you suffer for doing good than for doing evil” (1 Pet. 3:17).

Are we reading this right? Are we to think God means it when He says it’s better to suffer for doing good than when we do evil?

Yes, He means it. God knows hardship can work in our favor. God always leads us to take the high road. And gratitude does

just that.

As believers, the “lifehack of gratitude” takes us higher, shifts our thinking, elevates our awareness and changes the cellular structure of our happy endorphins.

Gratitude Makes Everything Better

“It’s a funny thing about life; once you begin to take note of the things you are grateful for, you begin to lose sight of the things that you lack,” said Germany Kent.

Life is like a cake. It’s not a great idea to separate ingredients in a cake and eat it. The flour portion is dry and chalky. The salt is bitter, and the butter is not so tasty. But when we mix the entire cake, it is delicious. And then we add the icing, and we have a delicacy.

Similar to the cake, life can be challenging. If we separate the negatives away from the positive, we become bitter. But when we count both the worries and blessings together, we find life more palatable.

God works all things together for our good. We forget that God is working. Knowing God is working is the reason we can be grateful in hard times.

Epicurus said, “Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not; remember that what you now have was once among the things you only hoped for.”

Have you ever missed expressing gratitude for what you have because you wanted something better?

Habakkuk displayed a grateful heart like no other.

“Though the fig tree does not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the yield of the olive fails, and the fields produce no food; though the flocks are cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls—yet I will rejoice in the

Lord; I will exult in the God of my salvation" (Hab. 3:17-18).

Today, the verse is equal to this: The garden is dried up; the fields have no harvests; the cows and horses are all sold—"yet I will rejoice in the Lord."

As someone said, "Many want joy, but few choose to rejoice."

The hack of gratitude still works if you work it.

Give it a try. {eoa}