

Yes, I've been in a funk lately. There. For a number of reasons and no reason at all. Can't put my finger on it. But it has stalled my writing in the most frustrating of ways. I've received e-mails and Facebook messages from some of you about Rx for the Soul's silence, which comments I totally appreciate, really. But I just haven't been able to put two words down on paper if my life depended on it. UGH! And if I do I'm afraid it won't be any good. *[Sigh…….]* Heyyyy, maybe I'll just write under another name to reduce any expectations out there, even my own, just in case. Yup…okay no that's ridiculous, who am I kidding, I'm no professional writer, who's gonna care if my thoughts make any sense? I think I just need to give myself permission to write I don't know, whatever, even if it's crappy. Yes. Fine, I'll do that. Umm…maybe later. Geeze, I gotta snap out of it! What's going on?! *** *[Don't you just love self-chatter?]*

The winds of change have been blowing around me lately on many levels and I've been sort of resisting their force. That's what's going on. And I hate change. Did I mention I hate change? I was told once by a close friend that I can't change venues without altering my white blood count. [Funny I know]. That sums it up though. So this whirlwind as of late has my thoughts all knotted. A while back I started writing about gratitude. My daughter and I had touched on the subject of attitudes one night during one of our heart-to-hearts, and I thought to write about their connection. But the words and desire to put them down eluded me. Still do. There have been nights when I've laid awake and formed almost coherent thoughts, but I've been too lazy to get up and turn on the computer. I've done the notepad-and-pen-by-the-bedside thing, but the last time I tried that in the middle of the night I woke up with ink marks on me and not much on the notepad. Nevertheless, because I love to write I've prayed for a bit of divine inspiration or something like that, and was actually starting to make some progress when my already suffering writing came to a total halt upon hearing some hard news about an old friend. Some of you know who I'm referring to. Our old friend.

When you are in the middle of a piece about gratitude and you hear that someone you know gets hit with a potentially life-ending disease, you can't help but want to throw up, and then you stop writing, especially about gratitude. At the time it read something like this [apologies

to my editor (you know who you are) as I write all this with the least bit of attention to any grammatical correctness. Just want to get it out there]:

> "We get all caught up in our daily rush and we start to lose focus of what's important; our pessimistic thoughts influence our actions and we begin to constantly snip and nitpick at every little thing — a flat tire, a document lost before saving, the washing machine breaks, something doesn't go our way — all reasons why we label a day, in whole or in part, a bad day. Pessimistic thoughts that handicap our attitudes and, more importantly, our spirituality. In contrast, it is said that grateful people experience higher levels of positive emotions like joy, love, and happiness, and that practicing gratitude protects a person from negative impulses of envy, resentment, greed and bitterness. That is why it serves us best to be grateful for the good, the bad, and the ugly, and not forget that there is someone up there who watches out for us, and that it may not always seem so, but there is a bigger plan at work. An attitude of gratitude should be a way of living."

It went something like that. Then the news about our old friend reminded me that bad things happen to good people; that this potholed life can really suck sometimes. I'm sure it does for her right now. And the writing stopped. And I started to wonder for what, if anything, is our old friend grateful today. Although knowing she is a person of faith leads me to believe that she will define such things in due time. Our daily prayers are with her I can assure you.
Her circumstances disheartened me. Confused me. And tangled my thoughts further. But, perspective? Yeah you could say it gave me some of that. Enough to put my fingers to the keyboard and tell you this. That I am thankful for my job; for a co-worker who makes me laugh throughout the day. That I am thankful for my church family; for showing me how special it is to have God in common. That I am thankful for my childhood friend; for being there even when she's not there. That I am thankful for my Sunday school students; for what they have taught *me* the last 33 years. That I am thankful for my close friends; for their loyalty and time. That I am thankful for every soul the Lord has seen fit to link with mine; for the marks they've left in my heart. That I am thankful for my tight family; for caring about me and supporting me every step of the way. That I am thankful for a husband who doesn't just say but shows me "I love you" day after day. That I am thankful for two kids who warm my soul with hugs and kisses everyday. That I am thankful for He who forgives me with His mercy and graces me with His love. That I am thankful. I am thankful. Less confused now and

much more thankful.

> “Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos into order, confusion into clarity….It turns problems into gifts, failures into success, the unexpected into perfect timing, and mistakes into important events. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow.”
> – M. Beattie

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