

Clarke Counseling Center

Monthly Newsletter

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Greetings!

It is once again time to remember everything for which we are grateful. Not only is it a healthy thing to do around Thanksgiving time, it's even more important every other day of the year.



Developing a "gratitude attitude" can really help us have better emotional health. It is natural to concentrate on our problems, but when we focus on everything going right in our lives we actually create new neuro pathways and life goes better.

I am grateful for opportunities I have to help people change their lives. I am ready to speak to you.

My experience and training are in the following areas:

- [Life Coaching](#)
- [Adult AD/HD](#)
- [Marriage and Family Therapy](#)

Please contact me to discuss how I might be able to help. Sincerely,

Sherry Clarke MA, LCMFT

A Common Malady in Long-Term Relationships



Ashley came home from her night class to find Ryan and their small son sitting in the middle of a mess so extreme she first thought a bomb had gone off. Then, realizing they had made the mess and simply neglected to pick it up, she looked around and said loudly,

"Ryan, how could you do this to me?" Ashley was truly hurt. She saw the mess as a disappointing sign that Ryan was not supportive of her desire to finish her education.

A destructive "disease" creeps into the lives of people who have been around each other a long time: "assumption-itis." Couples, siblings, parents and even friends are afflicted. People who interact with each other every day become extremely familiar with each other's behaviors. They get to know every quirk, every habit and every routine. Because they know so much about each other, in fact, they make the mistake of thinking they know the other's motivations. Contrary to what some might believe, a long

relationship does not turn people into mind readers.

We tend to assume motivations and then react to our own assumptions. Sadly, this disease can lead to dissatisfaction, bickering and even broken relationships. How can we avoid "assumption-itis?" To help answer that question, let's examine Ryan's side of the story -

When Ashley applied for night school, Ryan was thrilled for her. He knew she needed to be more fulfilled, to flex her intellectual muscles a bit more. He even looked forward to the stimulating conversations they would have as Ashley attended her classes. When she received her schedule and they both realized Ryan would have to spend many evenings watching the baby, he was happy to do it.

That first night, after Ashley had gone to class, Ryan pulled out all of little Jason's toys. As the night progressed, he lost himself in playtime with Jason. He was determined to support his wife in her educational pursuits and realized the added benefit of spending more alone time with his son. In fact, he had so much fun he neglected to keep track of the time. He had planned to pick up the mess before Ashley came home, but she returned too quickly. His mood changed, however, when he saw how Ashley reacted to the mess. It was obvious to Ryan that Ashley had no appreciation for his efforts.

Incredibly, even though Ryan and Ashley were on the same page, pursuing the same goals, they were struggling in their relationship. That is the power of "assumption-itis." The best relationships can fall prey to it and unless the parties recognize its hold on them, they are doomed to continue in it. A few simple steps could help Ryan and Ashley avoid the disease:

- **Step Back.** Focus on all the positive aspects of the situation. See the good and notice everything that is going right. This will shift your thinking to appreciation.
- **Admit you can't read minds.** Not only do we assume we know the other's motivations, we also believe they should know ours. Recognize and admit that it isn't possible. It takes communication to convey those important thoughts.
- **Remind yourselves.** If you are pursuing or supporting each other in intense, common pursuits (a common hobby, volunteer work, raising children, going to school, getting promoted, starting a business, etc.), remind each other of your commitment to those objectives. This might be done in a weekly or monthly planning session.
- **Commit to withhold judgment.** Recognize how easy it is to make a quick judgment without knowing motivations. Commit to each other to discuss before reacting negatively to behaviors.
- **Don't be a victim.** Even if you are misjudged, don't play the victim. Calmly discuss your true motivations.

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Counselor's Corner

Proclamation of Thanksgiving

Washington, D.C.

October 3, 1863

This is the proclamation which set the precedent for America's national day of Thanksgiving.

During his administration, President Lincoln issued many orders like this. For example, on November 28, 1861, he ordered government departments closed for a local day of thanksgiving.



Sarah Josepha Hale, a prominent magazine editor, wrote a letter to Lincoln on 28, 1863, urging him to have the "day of our annual Thanksgiving made a National and fixed Union Festival." She wrote, "You may have observed that, for some years past, there has been an increasing interest felt in our land to have the Thanksgiving held on the same day, in all the States; it now needs National recognition and authoritative fixation, only, to become permanently, an American custom and institution." The document below sets apart the last Thursday of November "as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise."

According to an April 1, 1864, letter from John Nicolay, one of President Lincoln's secretaries, this document was written by Secretary of State William Seward, and the original was in his handwriting. On October 3, 1863, fellow Cabinet member Gideon Welles recorded in his diary that he complimented Seward on his work. A year later the manuscript was sold to benefit Union troops.

By the President of the United States of America.

A Proclamation.

The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God. In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign States to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict; while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union. Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defence, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle or the ship; the axe has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this Third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the Unites States the Eighty-eighth.

By the President: Abraham Lincoln
William H. Seward,
Secretary of State

Interesting Quotes About Relationships

"Basically, the only thing we need is a hand that rests on our own, that wishes it well, that sometimes guides us." - Hector Bianciotti



"No road is long with good company." - Turkish Proverb

"There are times when two people need to step apart from one another, but there is no rule that says they have to turn and fire." - Robert Brault

"People change and forget to tell each other." - Lillian Hellman

"A friend is one of the nicest things you can have, and one of the best things you can be." - Douglas Pagels

"Friendship isn't a big thing - it's a million little things." - Author Unknown

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