

The Gift of Giving

By Karen Mehringer

Are you someone who gives on a regular basis? Are you conscious of how and when you give? After reading Cami Walker's book, ***29 Gifts: How a Month of Giving Can Change your Life***, I felt inspired to participate in the Giving

Challenge...giving away 29 gifts in 29 days. In the book, Cami chronicles her return to health and happiness through her own 29-day giving process. Diagnosed with multiple sclerosis at the age of thirty three, just one month after getting married, her disease progressed rapidly. She frequently visited the emergency room and was barely able to walk. Addicted to medications, she was depressed and stressed out when an African medicine woman recommended she give away 29 gifts in 29 days. Within that month, her life changed dramatically.

Participating in the Giving Challenge, I have become more aware of the benefits of giving for myself and others. So far, as of day 12, I've noticed that when I give a heart-felt gift, it transforms me. I feel joyful and alive inside. The more thoughtful the gift, the more transformed I feel and the greater affect it has on the receiver. For example, if I walk the dog or do the dishes for my husband when it's his turn, it feels good, but not as good as when I make a card for a friend. Other observations include having more



energy and feeling more optimistic about my life; abundance showing up in unusual and unexpected ways; feeling closer and more connected to those I give to; getting out of my head and perceived problems and into my heart...into a place of love and gratitude.

One of the rules in the Giving Challenge is that the gift must be mindful and heart felt.

It can be as simple as smiling at a stranger. Dr. David Hawkins wrote, *“Simple kindness to one’s self and all that lives is the most powerful transformational force of all.”* Are you ready to transform your life and make a difference in the life of others? If so, I encourage you to read Cami’s book and check out her website www.29gifts.org. If you feel called, please join me in the Giving Challenge and share your experiences on my blog, <http://liveapurposefullife.com/wordpress/>, where I will post my observations.



If you are not called to participate at this time, I encourage you to place more awareness on your giving practice. Do you do and say things on a regular basis to make someone else’s day better? Is it harder to give when you feel burdened with your own problems? What happens if you stretch yourself and give anyway? Consider keeping a journal and writing down your observations about giving. How does it make you feel? What types of gifts feel better to give than others?

During these challenging economic times, it may seem counter-intuitive to focus our attention on giving and yet, it is during these times when giving can have the most profound affect on our lives.

If you are currently feeling anxious or stressed out about money, this is the best time to focus on others and experience the gift of giving!



“For it is in giving that we receive.” – St Francis of Assisi

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