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Subject: Live & Work Wise, from Kim Ratz

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Live & Work Wise

From Kim Ratz – Speaker, Trainer, Troubadour, www.kimratz.com, Dec. 2015
Nothing fancy; just a fast, free read to inspire hope, improve skills to cope, and induce some fun in your day.

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A Thought to Help You Live & Work Wise: **Feeling Grateful, on Thanksgiving, Holidays, and Every Day ...**

One of the techniques that people often tell me they like from my presentations is a study that reminds us about the power of exercising an "attitude of gratitude." So it seems appropriate with our recent Thanksgiving and upcoming Christmas holidays to highlight this skill which can help you 365 days of the year. All you need is the self-awareness to recognize when you are feeling down or ungrateful, and the discipline to use this practical technique. The study by McCullough & Emmons ("Counting blessings versus burdens," Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 2003) divided subjects into three groups or "Conditions" for 10 weeks:

- (1) The "Gratitude Condition:" people journal daily about things they are grateful for;
- (2) The "Hassles Condition:" people journal daily about hassles they are displeased about;
- (3) The "Events Condition:" people journal daily about events or circumstances that affect them without being directed to accentuate either the positive or negative aspects of the situations.

The results? People in the "Gratitude Condition" reported the fewest health problems, spent the most time exercising, had lower levels of stress hormones in their blood, got more sleep each night and spent less time awake before falling asleep, and felt more refreshed when they woke up compared to people in the "hassle" and "events" conditions.

This research is especially helpful to reminder as we experience the holiday season, and the stress and pressure that can often come with it, that when you are aware that you see your glass as only half-empty: start making a list regularly of what's in the glass half-full portion -- those people, experiences, and circumstances for which you feel grateful. When you choose to do this for yourself you don't have to wait long, or for anyone or thing else to make your world better again ... What a wonderful gift to give yourself, so you, in turn, can share your best with others! **Merry Christmas!**

Speaking of Christmas ...

Regardless if you seek the Son at Christmas, more sun during the winter solstice, or any of the other spiritual and secular observances this month -- this is a significant season, rich with tradition, meaning, and celebration. So I just want to take a moment to wish you a Merry Christmas and holiday season that brings **joy, light, love, meaning & peace** to you and yours.

And a quick note regarding the e-Newz series in 2016:

Because I've added so many subscribers over the past 22 years the mailing list is now quite long, requiring considerable time to send it out and then manage all the returns from people whose email address or job changed. You've been receiving this e-Newz every other month, and I also send a similar version to a second, large group of people I market my services to during the "in-between" months ...

Starting in 2016 I will work with three groups that will be more manageable in terms of numbers, so you'll receive this e-newz every 3 months (instead of every other month) as I seek ways to continue to be supportive of you and an ever-increasing list of readers. I hope you understand, you don't mind, and I remind you that you can still unsubscribe at any time ...

Another Thought to Help You Live & Work Wise: *Still Planning a Winter In-Service or Conference?*

If you're still planning your Winter In-service and want to consider a training program that helps people better manage the many different communication styles they encounter in a routine day and how that affects teamwork and moral, plus enjoy a rejuvenating program to shake off some mid-winter "blahs," then let's talk soon -- I just booked three more groups in Jan - Mar today!

A popular winter choice is my workshop ***"Playing Nice in the Sandbox,"*** a practical and fun program to offer the staff as a "pick-me-up" that's practical and motivational, whether it's an In-service program for a group of employees who work together every day, or a workshop offered as part of my "All-Inclusive Keynote Package" at a conference for your peers and colleagues. We cover several doable skills and strategies that help you "flex your own style" to better manage the many style differences you interact with among your coworkers and constituents, and deal with the "stuff" that comes up between busy people. It also creates a shared vocabulary for everyone, and serves as a basis from which each team can develop specific plans for how they use the information covered, as well as provide a framework for follow-up discussions about progress and improvements ... This workshop is very customized around each group's specific issues and opportunities.

And -- If you have a number of people in leadership and supervisory positions, I also cover many of these same skills and strategies, along with others, in the workshop: **"People Don't Leave Jobs -- They Leave Bosses,"** so let me know if you are interested in providing people in supervisory roles with a chance to look at the attitudes and actions they bring to their job, learn more about their leadership and communication styles and traits, and ways to increase their range of styles and effectiveness for the many types of situations they deal with, and also retain your best and brightest employees!

Welcome new readers, from attendees at presentations given the last few months to Winston-Salem, NC Head Start; New Ulm, MN Public Schools; Northern Iowa Head Start; Indiana Infant/Toddler Institute; New Horizon Academy-MN; Oregon Parks & Recreation Association; Twin Cities (MN) Early Childhood Conference; MN Assoc. of School Business Officials; and those of you who saw this blog and subscribed. I hope you find them helpful and fun.

Quotes for the days ahead related to **"Gratitude" & Holidays ...**

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. - Melody Beattie

Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace, and gratitude. - Denis Waitley

Gratitude is a quality similar to electricity; it must be produced, discharged and used up in order to exist at all. - William Faulkner

At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lit the flame within us. - Albert Schweitzer

One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child. - Carl Jung

Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it. - William Arthur Ward

Gratitude is the healthiest of all human emotions. The more you express gratitude for what you have, the more likely you will have even more to express gratitude for. - Zig

Ziglar

All happy people are grateful. Ungrateful people cannot be happy. We think being unhappy leads people to complain, but complaining leads people to become unhappy.
– Dennis Prager

Unless we make Christmas an occasion to share our blessings, all the snow in Alaska won't make it a white one. – Bing Crosby

Christmas, children, is not a date. It is a state of mind. – Mary Ellen Chase

Maybe Christmas, the Grinch thought, doesn't come from a store. – Dr. Seuss

Once again we come to the holiday season, a deeply religious time of year that each of us observes, in our own way, by going to the mall of our choice. – Dave Barry

I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. – Charles Dickens

My husband's idea of the Christmas spirit is to become Scrooge. – Melanie White

The commandment to light the Hanukkah lamp is an exceedingly precious one, and one should be particularly careful to fulfill it. In order to make known the miracle, and to offer additional praise ... to God for the wonders which He has wrought for us. - Maimonides

Now, near the Winter Solstice, it is good to light candles. All the nice meanings of bringing light to the world can be beautiful. But perhaps we are concentrating on lighting the world because we don't know how to light up our own lives. - Ralph Levy

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I specialize in helping people create more harmony in their own life, and in their relationships with others. It's about being Congruent and making good Choices - by aligning your Attitudes, Aptitudes and Actions - so at days end you feel Content, not regret. I do this by sharing keynotes and workshops that inspire hope, help people improve skills to cope (Personal Excellence, Communication & Relationships, Teamwork, and Leadership skills), and original music, stories and humor to induce some fun along the way!

If you need a presenter who shares content, energy and inspiration, call me so we can discuss what you need, and how I might be able to help!

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Positively Yours,
Kim Ratz

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Successfully sharing skills, songs & stories since 1994