**Gratitude Tutorial**

We’re going to talk about gratitude as a spiritual practice tonight. And how to share it.

It’s not just about Thanksgiving – although Thanksgiving can be a good reminder of our blessings.

As Linda Douty noted, Gratitude is not gullibility, grandiosity or guilt, although for some it may start with guilt.

Instead, gratitude is grounding. It grounds us in something solid and sustaining and even sacred.

Gratitude is also an act of grace. It can start with a specific thank you to someone for their good works and grow into a contagious spirit.

IMAGERY EXERCISE – taken from the Spiritual Practice Homepage – [www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/practices.php?id=11&g=5](http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/practices.php?id=11&g=5) :

Some of our most profound experiences of gratitude occur when we find ourselves in a beautiful place in nature. This exercise is adapted from one offered by Belleruth Naparstek in her book *Your Sixth Sense: Unlocking the Power of Your Intuition:*

Settling fully into your body…as you take a nice, deep, full cleansing breath…and breathing out as fully as possible…now imagine a place…preferably outdoors…where you feel perfectly safe and peaceful…and looking around you…feeling whatever you’re sitting against or lying upon…and listening to the sounds of the place…and smelling its rich fragrance…and feeling your heart fill with gratitude for such stunning beauty…each beat of your heart drumming out its strong, steady gratitude…saluting all the beauty all around you…each beat pulsing out its thanks…resonating outward in slow and gentle waves…reaching into every corner of this place…offering a blessing…and feeling the place respond with its own powerful, loving pulse…answering you that you are welcome…back and forth…pulse to pulse perfectly synchronized…where the giver becomes the receiver…and the receiver becomes the source…

And so, whenever you are ready…you can very gently allow yourself back into the room…remembering in the words of the poet Rainer Maria Rilke: ”breathe in – to praise, breathe out – is the whole thing”.

I encourage you all to find gratitude for the blessings around us each day – and to share your gratitude for the blessings of others.