



Thanks Made Visible

I'm a student of happiness. Notice I didn't say Zen Master.

I'm still learning every single day, and many days I have to relearn the same lessons over again. Nevertheless, I'm going to teach you one of the most important lessons I've learned about happiness. Consider it the "yoga of happiness," something to exercise your body and soul daily.

You don't know what you've got until it's gone.

President of the State Bar of Arizona writing about happiness? Does he think he's a therapist? Or does he need one? What does that have to do with the practice of law in Arizona?


The reason is because, in addition to being grateful for the honor of leading the Bar, I'm grateful for the Bar itself and for my fellow lawyers who are a part of it. We are a lucky lot. And this month we will once again celebrate with our families the American tradition of gratefulness: Thanksgiving.

One thing we all know about the experience of gratefulness is that we sometimes experience it by looking elsewhere. Whether it is seeing the struggles or losses of others or simply comparing and contrasting our circumstances, we are gently reminded to be appreciative—to be grateful.

This summer I was lucky enough to travel through India, a place that's hot, chaotic, noisy, crowded and overwhelmingly poor. It is also a colorfully happy place where people are remarkably kind to one another, where even the desperately poor wear the most unlikely smiles, and where thanksgiving is ritually

observed every day along the filthy banks of the Ganges.

The State Bar of Arizona and the practice of law in Arizona are not perfect, and indeed, last year there was an attempt to dissolve the Bar in our Legislature. Because we're bound to face that challenge again, I'd invite you to reflect on how that would be a terrible mistake. As someone who is licensed by four bars and actively practices in those states, I am constantly struck by the remarkable skill and professionalism of the lawyers in our state. The State Bar of Arizona is a key contributor to that end.

So when it comes to the State Bar of Arizona or even the personal struggles we face throughout the year, let's not once again have to relearn the lesson that "you don't know what you've got until its gone." Instead, let's work to make your Bar and the practice of law in Arizona even better. 



An Indian auto-rickshaw driver—and countless other people—leads us to consider gratitude.

There is nothing truer in the human condition. It's true of people in your life, freedom, health, justice, love, money, power, pets, reputation, safety, security, success, and even "your stuff." It's every little thing, from air in your tires to running water in your home. It all represents the nutrients of happiness and, until it's missing, you never wanted it so badly.

You see, happiness is not a destination, and the dogged "pursuit of happiness" is a sure sign you're (1) not happy and (2) never going to be happy while in such hot pursuit. Happiness is also not a product or an end.

We all seem to know this intuitively, but we still seem to think as though we're on a road trip to a place called Happyville. Or chiseling away, like Michelangelo, at a piece of marble to uncover *The David of Happiness* that will naturally emerge. But Happyville is not on the GPS, and it is certainly not an enduring, well-chiseled product of our efforts.

Happiness is gratefulness.

There it is. That's it. That's the important lesson I've promised. It's simple, really. If we were all to begin each day by recounting "how lucky" we are, we'd be a lot happier.

Why should this matter? Or, more important, why is the

