



Count Blessings, not Setbacks

By Bill Gosse

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Wikipedia tells us “gratitude, appreciation, or thankfulness is a positive emotion or attitude in acknowledgment of a benefit one has received or will receive.”

Are we grateful for what we’ve been given, or are we always thinking about what we don’t have?

Dissatisfaction comes when we lose that positive focus.

Schools willing to start a football program for the first time; communities with coaches who have been around for generations, youth programs for just about every sport; new field houses, aquatic centers and weight rooms all provide incredible opportunities for thankfulness. Today’s student-athlete just about has it all.

When we are thankful on a daily basis, our attitude toward life will change. We will be more positive, gracious, loving and humble.

Only being thankful at times of celebrations or big moments, when we get our way or when things are new, will cause us to take items for granted and never be satisfied or content. Even though it is renovated, Lambeau Field is an example of how something old can be revered throughout sports because it is a testament to eras gone by.

We can never thank administrators, parents, fans, coaches, opponents and even officials enough. Without them, sporting events wouldn’t be possible.

We should be thankful for challenging times because of the good that can be accomplished through distress, but sometimes we get so wrapped up in what we don’t have and miss opportunities to be grateful.

Here are four elements of true thanksgiving:

- Remember what you have. Take a look around and notice things. Count how many benefits fill your life, instead of counting what’s missing. Sometimes we don’t get what we want, but we may get exactly what we need. Amazement will surface at how many “riches” truly exist.

- Tell others what you have. Being excited and appreciative of blessings is worth talking about. Expressing gratefulness over opportunities doesn't have to be boasting.
- Show others what you have. It's okay to be proud of great things in your life. As first graders we are encouraged to bring in things for "show and tell." My Marquette basketball jersey is one of my prized possessions because of the opportunities that came with it.
- Offer gifts of time, talents and treasures to what you have. Thankful people give back. We don't often hear the stories of athletes who make huge donations to their high school or university. The number of Packers putting down roots in our communities after their playing days is an expression of appreciation for our way of life.

Like many of the other character traits we discuss, thankfulness is a habit.

Do you have the attitude of gratitude?

Start counting.