

LifeMapSM



"LifeMap is a navigational tool to help you on your path towards personal and professional success. Our belief is that you can achieve a more rewarding career, a more productive organization and a more enjoyable and abundant life."

May 19, 2009

This Week's Message:

Remembrance and Appreciation.

Paths Forward

- Need Career Coaching?
- Tired of boring

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Remembrance and Appreciation.

Before you receive your next LifeMap we here in the U.S. will celebrate Memorial Day. This edition of LifeMap is an updated version of one we ran a few years ago that was picked up by a number of national publications.

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The Memorial Day holiday originated after the U.S. Civil War as Decoration Day to decorate the graves of those who gave their lives in that struggle, it expanded in later years to honor those who died in all wars and has now evolved as a day to remember those who have gone before us whether in peace or war.

It is said that as long as someone is remembered they are not truly gone. Make today and this week your time to remember. Who has gone before you and opened a path for you? Your parents, a sibling, a teacher, your grandparents, your immigrant forbearers, a scout leader, a member of the clergy, a coach, a counselor, a friend? It is not enough just to remember; what gives remembrance its full value is the realization of what those who you remember gave you and your willingness to express appreciation to those remembered.

Expressing this appreciation can take many forms. Maybe those on whose shoulders you stand are still with us. If so, a note, phone call or visit will allow you an opportunity to say 'thank you' now, for which you will be increasingly grateful over the years. I remember fondly my visit years ago with Miss McNamara, my fourth grade teacher (who I thanked for not throttling me as I so richly deserved) but I still lament never having found or thanked Miss Malinowsky, my fifth grade teacher, who was the most creative, inspiring, and engaging teacher I ever had. Thankfully I've had better luck thanking my college professors and adult mentors if only through an occasional lunch or the dedications and acknowledgements contained in my books.

If the vagaries of life or the inevitability of death has removed someone from your side there is still an opportunity to express your appreciation. If, like many, you believe in the power of prayer this is an ideal way to say thank you -without worrying about getting the words just right. On the other hand, maybe starting a 'who should I thank' section of your journal will aid you to acknowledge and express your gratitude for those who have helped you on your way. But, either by word, deed, thought or prayer, taking the time and energy to remember and appreciate will help you complete an essential emotional process within yourself and will make you more conscious of the constructive role you can play in the lives of others.

[Paths Forward](#)

• **Thank a Vet.** Some years ago I stood by my great friend Silas Parlin at a checkout counter when the clerk noticed and mentioned his USS Arizona hat. Ever the stoic Mainer, Si just nodded. The clerk followed up and said "Thank you for your service. I appreciate it." With the deep but understated patriotism of so many veterans he grinned and said, "Any time". A hat, shirt, lapel pin or license plate, especially around Memorial Day, July 4th or Veteran's Day, will help you identify a vet. Regardless of your political preferences, thank someone who has gone to bat for all of us.

• **Pause at a Monument.** As we rush to and fro getting our errands and chores done we often pass by, without noticing, the many tributes to those who have gone before us. Whether you live in a small town or big city there are plaques, statues and memorials of all kinds. In your travels notice where they are and, from time to time, take a moment to stop and read the inscription and reflect on who or what is being honored and what that event or person might mean to you. A few of my Boston favorites: the magnificent Saint-Gaudens' memorial to the Mass. 54th Infantry (depicted in the movie "Glory") on the corner of Beacon and Park Streets, the statue of my hero Charles Sumner at Boylston and Arlington Streets (Sumner was caned-almost to death - on the US Senate floor for his abolitionist views), the Vendome Fire Memorial on Commonwealth Avenue (honoring 9 firefighters who died in a 1972 hotel fire) featuring a low wall upon which is laid a poignant, solitary bronze firefighter helmet and coat, and, at Washington and School Streets, the memorial to the victims of the Irish Famine.

• **Make a List and Give Them Honor.** Who is responsible for you being where you are today? Your journal is a good place to capture these names. How can you thank them? If they are gone, how can you honor their memory? There are many ways to do this from contributing to a cause they believed in, to volunteering your time to their favorite charity, to planting a tree in their memory, or contributing a single book in their name to the local library. The size of the gesture or whether it is public or private doesn't matter. What matters is that you remember and give appreciation and thanks where they are due.

• **No Perfect Words / No Perfect Time.** If you wait for the perfect words to come to you or if you wait for the perfect time to arise to give someone their rightful appreciation you will be waiting a long time - and, eventually, it will be too

late to do it face to face. If you are fortunate enough to have this opportunity - take it. Almost any time is the right time and almost any words will do the job. Actually, let me revise an earlier statement. There is a perfect time. It is now.

LifeMap is about helping you to direct your life path and prompting you to remember and appreciate those who have helped prepare that path for you as well as those who have helped prepare you for that path.

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· ***Someone you know job hunting or thinking about it?***

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· ***Stalled at work? Still struggling to find your true vocation?***

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