

Hello Friends,

Thanksgiving is around the corner, and there are reminders everywhere to be thankful for all the gifts that we have. However, some of you may be feeling like life is still an uphill struggle, and you are wondering how you can change your situation. I know that there are times when I feel that I MUST have been REALLY BAD 🙄 in a past life or two, or else I would not have had some of the challenges I've experienced in my life. Even if you don't believe in past lives, you may still wonder why certain circumstances are so difficult for you.

In trying times many people turn to prayer. Praying is a universal practice that seems to be used most commonly to ask for what we think we need in order to make our lives better. I believe that we are often given opportunities in which to **practice being better people**, rather than receiving relief from those stressful times. **Did you know that the Chinese character for Crisis and Opportunity are exactly the same?**

Trying circumstances are opportunities to learn and grow, and are therefore of great value. We will probably do something different the next time we are faced with a similar problem.

PRAYER vs DEMAND

Interestingly, **Yogananda prefers the term "demand" rather than "prayer."** He explains in his book, Journey to Self-Realization:

*"I prefer the word "demand" to "prayer," because the former is devoid of the primitive and medieval conception of a kingly tyrant-God who we, as beggars, have to supplicate and flatter.... The best way lies neither in begging for favors or for amnesty from evil results, nor in being resigned and sitting idle, inviting the law of action to take its course... **Every begging prayer, no matter how sincere, limits the soul. As (children) of God, we must believe the we HAVE everything (that God) has. This is our birthright...** We do not have to beg, but to RECLAIM and DEMAND from (God) that which we, through our human imagination thought to be lost... It is only when the slumbering ego perceives itself not as a body, but as a free soul or (child) of God, residing in and working through the body, that it can rightfully and lawfully demand its divine rights."*

*"Repeating a (prayer demand)...with deepening attention and devotion spiritualizes the prayer, and changes conscious believing repetition into superconscious experience... **Feel that just behind the screen of your devotional demand God is listening to the silent words of your Soul.** Feel this! Be ONE with your heart's demand - and be thoroughly convinced the (God) has listened to you. Then go about your duties, seeking not to know whether God will grant your demand. Believe absolutely that your demand has been heard, and that you will know that what is God's is yours also."*

I've found that when I remove the "begging" feeling and make the prayer demand in a sincere and loving way, then I am more at peace. I can let go of the fear, or hope, or attachment, just do my very best to change the situation, and let God/the Universal Energy

do the rest. Then I am happy with whatever the outcome turns out to be, because **I know that I received exactly what my Soul NEEDED, rather than what my ego wanted.**

So this Thanksgiving I wish for you everything that your Soul needs...

Chris 😊

Christine-Anne Plâtel

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