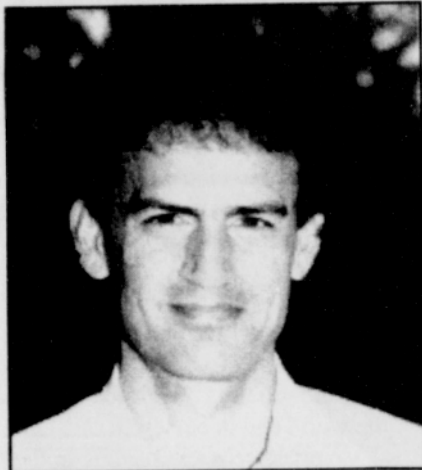


Happy Holidays

Holiday Cheers From The Check-Out Line



By MATTHEW GILBERT

You're standing in line at a major department store, loaded down, like everyone else, with an assortment

of bags, clothing and an aspirin back-up. The lady in front of you, having had her merchandise rung up by the pleasant cashier, is searching frantically for her credit card, at this point any credit card. The more she searches, the redder her face gets, and the more restive becomes the line. You check your watch, calculate your chances of making the last movie matinee, watch two people bump into each other across the aisle and barely exchange apologies, and wonder why Christmas has become so dysfunctional.

Up ahead, the card-less customer has the look of defeat spreading across her face when the cashier suddenly has a plan. She motions the luckless buyer off to the side, briefly reassures her, and you

step up to the counter. Soon a manager shows up with something warm. The lady smiles and takes it, and is suddenly on the phone making alternative arrangements. This potentially hard-luck story has a happy ending - the woman is spared further embarrassment and complications, and, well, you make your movie.

Many such stories are unfolding during this typically busy shopping season, some successfully, some, unfortunately, not (like recent film footage on national news showing a customer actually attacking a cashier and throwing her to the ground). At the center of them all are those on the other side of the counter, the front line warriors who keep the wheels of commerce turning. It's not an easy job, especially now during the holiday crunch: bathroom breaks

are a sprint, and meals are sometimes no more than an exhausted few minutes of basic sustenance. Add long hours, testy customers, whining babies, and frayed nerves - any of which can turn holiday hood cheer into tight-lipped frustration - and it's a miracle that anyone can keep up a festive spirit.

Surprisingly, many do. They are the unsung heroes, the glue that keeps the whole thing from coming undone. The people who take our money or serve our food or find us the right gift are no less important than the accountant or the lawyer or the software designer. The work is just as challenging, and their influence of immeasurable value. Those who stand out have an uncanny ability to make others feel good, or at least not so foolish when the wallet's

in the car or the kid's on a screamer. They're kind, they're patient, and they make me want to take my business there. By their very nature, they affect the people and the space around them, reminding me of one of my favorite quotations: "I would be content with any job, however thankless in any quarter, however remote, if I had a chance of making a corner of the desert blossom and a solitary place glad" (the Canadian statesman Lords Tweedsmuir).

Think of the last time you were greeted with a smile or charmed by a joke during some "simple" transaction at a store or a restaurant. How did it make you feel? How did you treat the next person you met? As we have all experienced at one time or another, even the smallest of courtesies can make a differ-

ence; indeed, a helpful spirit may be just the thing that a harried mother or a nervous child or a confused elder needs in that moment. This is what makes the work of service so special - not just at Christmas but throughout the year.

During a time when family pressures and emotional stress run high, a kind word or an extra moment of patience on either side of the counter can go a long way to making the gift-buying experience a truer reflection of the spirit of the season, and a reminder that what divides us is far less important than what unites us.

Matthew Gilbert is a magazine editor and the author of *Take This Job and Love It: How to Find Fulfillment in Any Job You Do* from Daybreak Books.

Angels Among Us

INTERVIEW BY JOY RAMOS

Patti Davis is an internationally renowned Angel Consultant for people to get in touch with their angels and other guidance to help them align with their Soul's highest purpose for evolution and growth. Her experiences were detailed in the best selling book entitled *Messengers*.

Q: What is the role of angels?
Patti Reed: There's a couple. Everyone comes with a minimum of two guardian angels. One of them is to make sure that they do not leave the planet before their time.

The second angel has to do with their connection to their life's purpose and whether their Soul has accomplished that. That's why a lot of suicide attempts don't work. It's just not time for the person to go. Their guardian angels intervene to prevent their leaving.

Both angels help to create circumstances to keep an individual on their life path.

Q: How do you know angels are around?

Patti Reed: It varies from individual to individual. Probably the most common way people "sense" angels is a warm love that comes with that connection. Some will see angels, some will see flashes of light from the corners of their eyes. Some will get "spirit chills" like



when you hear absolute TRUTH, cold chills just run right through you. An even more common occurrence of an angelic connection are small miracles or coincidences that open someone to good.
 Q: Do angels manifest in human form?
Patti Reed: They can take on the form

Sometimes things don't always manifest the way that a person would want when the answer comes

of humans for brief periods of time to help us change our lives out of Divine intervention. They never come down to live a human lifetime - only for short periods of time do they come in as humans.

Q: Is there an angel hierarchy?
Patti Reed: Archangels are at the top of the rung. They have other angels under them aligned to their specialty.

Raphael is in charge of healers of the world.

Gabriel is in charge of messengers (people helping to deliver God's truth).

Michael is in charge of the warriors of Truth (people chosen to act with integrity and stand up for that which is God's Truth).

Metatron is in charge of the physical

dominion. He was given dominion over the physical reality for all.

Uriel is in charge of ending separation and maintaining balance.

There are other archangels.

Q: Why the angel wings?

Patti Reed: They don't really have them, they are just forms of "energy". Through our limited understanding, wings help us to explain the lightness of their being and their ability to travel between the spirit-material realms. Their wings and halo are the energy form around them that appears to us.

Q: How does one invoke angels into their life or call on them for help?

Patti Reed: The key is to ask for guidance and direction and to remember that we have free will. They do not

intervene or interfere unless we ask them to. They allow us our free choice and free will. They will try to send messages or healing to us, but always leaving the choice to us.

Sometimes things don't always manifest the way that a person would want when the answer comes. Invoking angels is simply asking for their assistance or guidance.

It can take any form. The best way comes from your heart and creates the greatest results. When the request is a heartfelt desire, then they will feel an inner peace settle inside of them as the angels begin to answer their request.

Patti Reed is based in Astoria, Oregon and can be reached for consultation by calling 503/861-7923.

Overcoming A Poverty Attitude

At this time of year we are highly sensitive to the dramatic contrasts of extravagant indulgence painted against the backdrop of grinding poverty and despair. These conditions always exist, but the festive season amplifies our awareness of them. The two extremes invariably register a pang of guilt in many people, even those struggling to make ends meet.

Of all the blocks to experiencing true abundance in our lives, a lack of self worth due to guilt is the greatest. If we believe we do not deserve we will not open ourselves to receive. For most people, not deserving is too painful to think about, so our ego creates a shield to camouflage the real cause of lack.

The shield is an attitude that says the real cause of misery is somewhere outside us. It's the economy, my boss, my company or my industry. It's my poor education, my sex, or my age. It's anything except me.

However, worthiness is the door to receiving true abundance. It is an aspect of self-love and the antithesis of guilt. To love one's self then means that we must rise above guilt. The antidote to guilt is self-forgiveness.

Forgiving ourselves can be accomplished best by focusing on the goodness within us, and the good we exercise in our daily lives. Our thoughts are magnetic, and by focusing on our good,

we soon rise above the weaknesses that instill feelings of guilt and unworthiness.

This way of thinking stimulates the best within us, drawing us toward a fuller expression of it in our day lives. The affect is compounding and generates a healthy attitude of self-love. To help you with this abundance attracting focus, I suggest the creation of a "Love List." Under that write "I deserve full abundance in my life now because: "

The list is then broken into two parts. The first part is called: "Proof I deserve." On it, in point form, you list every award you have ever won no matter how small. Add to it every genuine compliment you can remember, every certificate earned, every merit badge, in fact every achievement you have accomplished as far back as you can remember.

Try to keep each item short, simple and very easy to read. As new achievements occur in your life, add them to the list. This serves as constant validation that receiving is a normal part of your life.

The second part of the list is called: "What I give I Receive." This part of the list illuminates the goodness within you making the process of self-forgiveness easier. This is not egotism. In fact, it is an antidote to the lie the ego has told

you that you are not worthy.

The fact that you may not now be receiving what you have given is a perfect indication that at some conscious or unconscious level, you are resisting what you deserve by not feeling worthy of it. If you say to yourself; "I do not deserve," then you will definitely not receive. Remember, your thoughts are like magnets, they attract what they focus upon. On this part of the list, write down every way you exercise kindness, thoughtfulness, charity and selflessness in your day-to-day life. Itemize thoughts, prayers, words and deeds that are a common part of the way you live your life. If you find at first that this is a little embarrassing, then you are successfully rubbing the truth in your ego's face and it is resisting. But persist, you will soon see tangible proof that you do deserve. At the very least, read the list the first thing in the morning and last thing at night is best. The more you read it, the faster you will change your poverty attitude to one of abundance. **John McIntosh is the author of "Living Abundantly through Inner Guidance" and "The Millennium Tablets." To learn more about the author or to order copies of his books, log on to <http://www.innerguidance.com> or call 888/625-3450**



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