

Being Imperfect Together – 06-25-15

Share Your Wealth With the Community

Art Maines, LCSW

No, this isn't some sort of fundraising request.

What I'm writing about here is sharing your emotional wealth with our fellow community members. What do I mean by this? Here are three signs you're an emotionally wealthy person:

You choose to be happy as much as you can.

Emotionally wealthy people understand that emotions are real, but not true. They know that emotions are an important way we experience the world, but they are highly temporary and don't necessarily reflect some absolute truth. With that in mind, they know they can shift their experience by shifting their interpretation of an event. Somebody did something thoughtless? It's the wealthy person's choice: Either go in the direction of anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness, or go towards patience, forgiveness, and happiness. Emotionally wealthy folks know and practice the shift in how they look at emotions in the direction of more happiness, and then spread that through the power of their presence. Challenge yourself to try this the next time you're feeling down or upset.

You treat people how you would like to be treated.

Yep, the good old Golden Rule still applies in the 21st century. The emotionally wealthy recognize that when others treat people in needlessly mean or unkind ways it reflects a lack of self worth and self-confidence. They also understand that if you want to be treated in kind and nice ways, you treat others the same way. Of course, this is a cornerstone of being in community.

You practice gratitude in thought and action.

You're emotionally wealthy when you live as much as you can in gratitude. You know that the more you act and think from being grateful, the more likely you are to receive all kinds of good things from a variety of directions. Researchers have found that dwelling in gratitude significantly improves mood. Saying "thank you" and showing gratitude by giving generously of your time in reciprocal acts of kindness shares the wealth with those around you.

Emotional wealth is a different way of experiencing abundance in the world and relationships. We're extraordinarily wealthy here at Sts. Clare & Francis in so many ways - faith, talent, generosity of resources, skills, compassion for the poor and less-privileged, and many others. I invite you to consider and reflect on your emotional wealth as one of your most precious gifts you share with your church family and the world.

Now go spread your wealth around!

Art Maines, LCSW is a graduate of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis. He has over 15 years of experience as a counselor and psychotherapist. One of his specialties is relationship improvement and communication coaching.

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