

# Living a Thankful Life

## The heart of Thanksgiving should beat beyond the holiday

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**WASHINGTON** — What are you thankful for?

It's a question often asked around the table during the Thanksgiving feast, met with as much enthusiasm as the dinner rolls being passed around. What most everyone really wants to get to is the turkey. In modern America, Thanksgiving Thursday has become the appetizer to the main course – Black Friday. The gift-giving reason for the post-turkey day discount shopping extravaganza even seems to have turned into a competition where the earliest bird gets the biggest screen TV. While it's easy to give into society's salivation for sales, let us not skip the opportunity to reflect inward and remember to give thanks.

For those of us who have earned the title of veteran, we all have stories of Thanksgivings past. Whether it was sitting with our shipmates in a cramped mess deck while underway, standing in a long line in the cold waiting for the chow hall tent to open, or crouched over a Meal, Ready-to-Eat (MRE) trying to heat it up against 'a rock or something,' we were thankful to have a brief moment to eat with our comrades and celebrate with each other. Wherever we were, we knew we had a mission to accomplish and those to our left and to our right were all the family we needed to get us through. Even now, men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces are serving around the world, giving up the comforts of home so Americans can feast with their families. Deployments have a way of helping you truly be thankful for the little things in life and the ones you have around you.

This Thanksgiving, let's put thankfulness back in the holiday season and let's continue living a thankful life knowing every day is a gift and each heartbeat a blessing.

From our family to yours, Happy Thanksgiving everyone!

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