

A Thanksgiving Gift
By Charley Green



Around Thanksgiving time last year I went over to the grocery store to do some shopping and for some reason, I noticed a thin, pale young lady in her late 20's intently shopping with a grocery list in hand. She was thoughtfully selecting only items on her list and placing them carefully into her cart.

Apparently she had a budget and even though she looked at and wanted other items, if they weren't on the list she didn't put them in her cart. I went about my own business of shopping and when it was time to check out, this lady was just ahead of me in the same check out lane.

As the cashier began ringing up her groceries, the lady, with her money in hand, was closely watching the total on the register. When the final item was tallied, she looked dejected, embarrassed and said, "I don't have enough money. I've got to put something back."

As she was deciding what she could do without, I asked the cashier how much she needed. It was \$3.80. I told the cashier she was covered and not to worry about putting anything back on the shelves.

With tears in her eyes and her voice trembling, the lady thanked me and asked, "How can I repay you when things are better?"

I told her the best way she could repay me was to; "pay it forward" to someone else who's having challenges in their life and asking them to do the same when they could.

She said she would, thanked me again, gathered her groceries and walked away. The cashier looked at me and said, "That's a wonderful thing you did as she needed everything on her list. It's also a great lesson for me to remember what Thanksgiving is all about."

As I walked out of that store a bit misty eyed, I felt blessed to be able to help someone out in a small way and at the same time share a lesson in giving. When we can enrich the lives of others, we also enrich our own and that's a pretty good way to live.

* For an inspirational look at the concept of paying it forward, I highly recommend the movie,
Pay It Forward, starring Kevin Spacey. Warner Brothers, 2000.

