

Greenwich Sentinel

Building a Strong Community Together † November 17, 2017

First Cousins, Thankful & Grateful

By Julia Chiappetta

The Oxford Dictionary defines “thankful” as “pleased and relieved.” That same dictionary defines “grateful” as “showing an appreciation of kindness.”

So, being thankful is a feeling while being grateful is an action. Both essential, but which one comes first? I believe thankfulness is our first feeling, then we build upon that and reach a place of gratitude, where we stay for a while and dwell if you will, each day. Perhaps in terms of wellness, we should think of Thankful & Grateful as a daily supplement, for our heart, mind, body and soul.

I have learned to try and start each day talking with my Creator and thanking Him for loving and forgiving me. This is my time to cite the things I am most grateful for. It sets the tone for the day. Of course, my list includes some cornerstones, like my body, my home, my business, my loved ones, which are amazing by themselves, but when mixed and mingled with some newcomers, these delightful, unexpected surprises come like shiny gifts ready to be opened.



It is, however, difficult for any of us to consistently dwell on being thankful and grateful, but when we put these two powerhouses to work for us, we are able to smash the negative and build up the positive. It balances us. Personally, it helps me experience love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Thankfulness and Gratitude are at the front door knocking, waiting to be invited in, so they can minister to us in simple, everyday occurrences. But many of us, myself included, need extra training to build the muscles that will help us to know how to receive these free gifts. So, let's experiment and be radical in our giving and receiving of

such precious gems.

When I have allowed myself this mindset, I find that I am being led to buy coffee for a stranger, pick up someone at a bus stop who is sitting in the rain, helping someone with a walker out of their car, hugging someone I have never hugged and speaking tender word to someone who has pain in their eyes. Any of this and all of this sets us on a course for a better day filled with thankfulness and gratitude. Again, there may be days that we feel low or on the verge of a good pity-party, but fear not, reach for your daily dose of Thankful and Grateful and feel the soothing effect. And... practice makes perfect, as my dear dad would say while cringing at my golf swing. Ha-Ha.

So, are you ready to let being thankful and grateful spring into action for you? In my cancer journey, I had a vision for healing, fueled by a peace from God which enabled me to pursue my plan of care without looking back. I am forever thankful and grateful for being healed. Friends and strangers would ask me how I did it and I would reply “I did not give

cancer any power.” I keep that vision of healing tucked into my heart, to lean on with gratitude.

May this Thanksgiving be a time when we find time to be thankful and grateful, make a gratitude list and share it around our dinner tables. In advance of that I would like to thank my family, friends, colleagues, my morning prayer partners (the sisterhood), a car to drive, clothes to wear, food to eat, a warm bed and amazing opportunities to learn and dream. Special thanks to Olimpia, the most amazing, beautiful, loving, kind and cool mom, who is always there for me.

In closing, as you dream of turkey, cranberry and stuffing, don't forget to add something green and gorgeous to your meal. Perhaps a spinach salad, sautéed broccoli or even better, an amuse-bouche of the juice of cucumber, kale and lemon.

