

Celebrate! *A Healthy You*

A newsletter devoted to helping individuals of every size live in a healthy body.

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Gifts of Gratitude

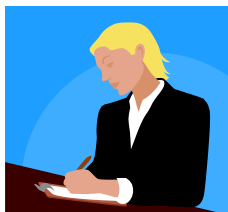
Sincere expressions of gratitude bless both the giver and receiver in real and important ways. Author Margaret Cousins wrote, "Appreciation can make a day, even change a life. Your willingness to put it into words is all that is necessary."

Gratitude is a wonderful gift because it makes both the giver and recipient happy. The habit of expressing thanks is important for developing strong relationships. Just the desire to find something positive in others generates feelings of good will and optimism. In addition, the recipient of appreciation is likely to feel many positive emotions—joy, acceptance, self-worth.

Scientists have also determined that appreciation has health benefits. Simply thinking about being grateful decreases the amount of stress hormones produced which in turn causes a number of other positive changes in the body. Coronary arteries relax so the blood supply to the heart increases. Breathing deepens to raise the level of oxygen in all parts of the body, which increases energy level. The immune, digestive, and nervous systems all work better when this happens.

Our national holiday of Thanksgiving recognizes the importance of gratitude to community and nation as well as individuals and families. As we prepare for this holiday, remember that Thanksgiving Day is more than the turkey dinner many of us will eat. Choose to take this time to give the gift of gratitude not just on Thanksgiving Day itself, but throughout the year. You may want to start by putting some of the following ideas into practice.

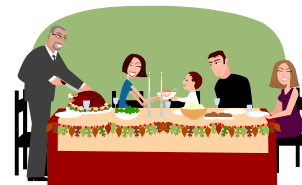
- Start a list of things for which you are grateful. Include the silly and simple as well as the big, important ones. For example, sunshine, butterflies and pizza might be on your list along with family, friends, freedom. Put your list where you will see it often and add to it as more things come to mind.



- Write a short note of appreciation to a loved one, a public official, or someone who provides a service for you like your minister or childcare provider.
- "Count your blessings instead of sheep," as the old song goes. Before you go to sleep at night, write down two or three things that happened in the day for which you are grateful. You will feel relaxed and end the day on a positive note.



- When you go through your morning routine, spend a few seconds thinking about the everyday things that we normally take for granted—clean water for showering and brushing teeth; comfortable chairs to sit on while eating breakfast; warm clothes, and on, and on, and on.
- Make a list of all the people who have helped you at some point throughout your life. Write each one a letter expressing your appreciation and giving specific details about why it is important to you. Mail the letters, or go visit and read the letter in person.



- A tradition in many families is having each person say aloud one thing for which they are grateful as they gather around the Thanksgiving table. Continue this practice every day throughout the year when you sit down to a meal.

Make Cooking Simple

Thanksgiving is just around the corner, ushering in the busy winter holiday season. Pumpkin pie is a traditional 'must have' on this holiday but making a piecrust can be beyond the skill or time available for busy cooks. **Impossible Pumpkin Pie** is an easy, yet homemade solution. No need to struggle with rolling out pastry that tears or crumbles before you can get it into the pie pan. Just blend all ingredients and pour into the pie pan. And, this makes a large 10-inch pie, enough for 10 modest servings that are just the right amount after the big feast.

Pumpkins are an excellent nutritional value—high in vitamin A and low in fat and calories. Buy a few extra cans of mashed pumpkin while they are on sale this month and make pumpkin soup, bread, muffins and cookies as well as pie. See the recipe for Pumpkin Cookies on this month's handout on cookie baking.

Impossible Pumpkin Pie

- 1 16-oz. can pumpkin
- 1 12-oz. can fat free evaporated milk
- 2 tablespoons margarine, melted
- 2 eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup biscuit mix
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons pumpkin pie spice (or 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons cinnamon + $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ginger + $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cloves)
- 2 teaspoons vanilla



Heat oven to 350°. Grease 10" x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " pie plate. Beat all ingredients 1 minute in blender or in a large bowl. Pour into pie plate. Bake 50 to 55 minutes or until table knife inserted in center comes out clean. Makes 10 servings. Nutrition information per serving: 126 calories, 5 g. protein, 11 g. carbohydrates, 2g fiber, 5 g. fat, 108 mg. calcium, 109mg sodium, 1066 RE Vitamin A.

Words to Consider

"For today and its blessings, I owe the world an attitude of gratitude." — Clarence Hodges

"Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all others." — Cicero

"Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace and gratitude." — Dennis Waitley



A Little Turkey Day Humor

Then there's the time a lady was picking through the frozen turkeys at the grocery store, but couldn't find one big enough for her family. She asked a stock boy, "Do these turkeys get any bigger?" The stock boy replied, "No ma'am, they're dead." —From FitNet, email communication from Tim Lane, Iowa Department of Health, 11/26/08.

