

30 DAYS OF THANKFULNESS

Documenting what's good in your life right now.



For you – from Lori Ferguson
@ PositiveThanksLiving

Hello!

I'm Lori Ferguson and I write about being optimistic and thankful at PositiveThanksLiving.com. This focus grew out of a few years of discouragement and difficulty. I decided then to research the topic of being thankful because I had the feeling it would make a difference inside me – and even, perhaps, have an impact around me. And it did. It does.

Why is gratefulness important?

In a document by Harvard Medical School it says,

Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships.

Maybe there's something in that statement we all could use?

Cultivating a character of gratitude doesn't show up out of nowhere. It needs to be nurtured. And just like any other habit or quality, little bites, over time, work best. That's why I'm hoping you'll join me on the journey of 30 days with these prompts.

If one or more of prompts doesn't work for you, then make up your own! Or repeat a favorite. This is your list – not mine! And you make the "rules", not me!

I invite you to share on social media with the hashtag [#positivethanksliving](https://www.instagram.com/positivethanksliving) to connect with me and others who are on this journey toward a character of being grateful in all circumstances.

Remember – it's little steps.

Grab a composition notebook, an app on your smart phone, a traditional journal or make your own... I have some labels at the end of this book – print out that page and you can decorate your journal!

Just write your answers down every day.

What will you have at the end of 30 days? It'll be a document filled with good stuff. It'll be a snapshot of all the good that's in your life right now regardless of outward circumstances. It'll make you smile. And it might even impact those around you in a positive way...

Come on... let's try it! Just start with *Day 1 – Thankful for the View!*



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1 - Thankful for the view.

What can you see that you're thankful for?

Yes, as you're reading this sentence look up from your phone/computer, this page...

! Look up!

For what item – you can currently see in real life – could you give thanks?

Is the sky blue?

Are you with someone you love?

Is there an item you treasure?

What do you hear, smell, taste, or feel that can spark a sense of gratitude?

Write it down!

2 - Laughter and the joy of laughing.

What makes you chuckle, guffaw, chortle, giggle, snicker, shriek, or roar with laughter?

Be thankful for the laughter in your life!

Firstly, you could list all the entertainment which makes you laugh. Many have favorite comedians and movies that make them laugh.

Then... make a list of people in your life who make you laugh and for those you love to laugh with – even if it's been a bit of a while since you visited together.

Add these lists to your gratitude journal...

(I find myself smiling as I think of those beloved people who make me laugh. If you find it difficult to make this list, then perhaps it's time to seek out additional friends?)

It's a privilege to laugh within a group.

Maybe invite some friends to bring over a movie to watch where you can all laugh together. Or do a YouTube search, taking turns playing funny videos... You could even connect via an online platform if distance or issues separate you all.

It's good to laugh.

Write it down!

3 - The scent of thankfulness.

Our nose has a unique way to scent out thankfulness! Yes, your nose... knows how to be thankful! Just think of these scents:

- Memories from a scent: your mother's perfume, long after she is no longer with you... or, for me, it's smelling the smoke from a cigar. It reminds me of my father who passed into eternity three+ decades years ago... What about a campfire? Or your favorite soap?
- Imagine walking through the door at the end of a long day and inhaling the delicious aroma of roast beef or chili, or... (What's your favorite food smell?) When family remarks on how the food smells, (in a positive way, of course), I will respond by saying that it's a good way to start the meal! Their noses lead the way.
- What about just before you take that first sip in the morning – oh, the smell of fresh-brewed coffee! Or bacon frying on a holiday morning...
- And baby cuddles! Isn't that the best smell when they're fresh from the bath?
- The fragrance of a flower... rose, lilac, lavender... Walking through a herb garden is a feast for your nose – have you ever smelled fresh dill, mint or basil?

Your nose knows how to be thankful!

Quick! What's your favorite scent? Aroma? Fragrance?

Now, there's something to be thankful for!

Write it down!

4 - Thankful for the investment.

Investment - I'm not talking dollar signs...

We don't walk through life alone.

However, we may not have the same people with us today, as we did years ago. So do a little walk through your own history...

Who has invested in you along the way?

Consider the skills you have today – chances are you didn't develop them in a void. Who walked alongside you during your times of growth?

Who demonstrated the character qualities you've adopted as your own?

Give thanks for those mentors – especially the silent ones.

It's important to be thankful for the investment others have made in who you are today.

Make a list of names of all those who have invested in you!

Write it down!

5 - Thankful for books.

Yes. Huge tomes and tiny treasures. Ancient words, new concepts. Happy or sad books, complicated or simple books – they’re all my favorite! And with the invention of the Kindle, I can take all my favorites everywhere I go!

One of my first memories is going to the library. We went once a week on Tuesdays, after my piano lessons. I remember when my mother finally let me stay in the kids’ area by myself, (it was on a different floor) and she went upstairs to the adult books. It was like I’d won the lottery – what JOY! I was so thankful for books.

What elation! Set free among all those stories and ideas!

And then there was that one summer. I determined I’d read every book in that children’s area. Starting at the “A’s” in fiction and in the 000 to 100’s in non-fiction, I think I only made it to the psychology section in non-fiction (just before the 200’s). And I can’t remember about fiction books. Those I read quickly, so who knows? Plus, we were only allowed 12 books per week! (I still feel indignant about that condition!) And to my defense, there were a LOT of books in my library. At least that’s what I remember...

Thankful for books. Yes, I’ve developed a fairly healthy relationship with books... ? Maybe.

It’s still my go-to place when I need to escape. Long, long before people binge-watched shows, I binged on books. (Still do, if I’m being candid.)

I can’t fully express how I’m thankful for books...

What about you?

What kind of relationship do you have with books?

Is there at least one book for which you’re thankful?

Use today’s prompt to think of all your favorite books – those from childhood, and every age and stage forward.

Make a list!

Have you shared any of these books with those you love?

My children read the [Madeline L’Engle books I loved](#) – Alex was enamored of the book featuring the twins, “Many Waters”. I think it’s still on his shelf. And the Narnia series by C.S. Lewis, and [Enid Blyton’s “The Adventure of...” series](#) with Kiki the parrot! I’m looking forward to sharing these books with the next generation...

So — for which books do *you* feel thankful?

Write it down!

6 - Thankful for convenience.

Convenience – what? Well, just think about it a bit. How is your life easier than your grandparents' life when they were your age?

We live in a time of gadgets and do-dads.

Vacuum cleaners, dishwashers, refrigerators, Swiffer mops, washers and dryers, electric tea-kettles, bread-makers, Kuerigs, hair-dryers, microwaves, electric/gas-powered lawn-mowers, garage-door openers, programmable thermostats, even the convenience of an “Alexa turn on the lights!” gadget.

So, which item in your list of conveniences are you *most* thankful for? Has this changed over the years?

What have you added to your list of conveniences?

I'm thankful for convenience in the morning with my little [egg-cooker](#)! It's just a tiny helper in the larger scheme of life, but it's made my mornings much more efficient. Plus, I never have to worry about the eggs boiling dry! (It's “Lori-proof”. LOL) Another convenience I value is my own washer and dryer. While we were living in our 5th wheel, I needed to use a laundromat, or visit our adult children. It's a privilege to just drop in a load of laundry whenever I feel like it!

What about you? What convenience do you value?

Make a list of all the gadgets that add up to make your life easier! What's at the top of that list? What would you miss most if it *wasn't* available?

Write it down!

7 - Thankful for your spot.

Your spot... you know... it's that spot where you relax.

You're probably in your most comfortable clothes, maybe even in your pajamas, when you're in your spot. It's the spot where you just take a deep breath and decompress. Maybe you even have a table beside your spot where you can put down a cup of tea, or coffee or a wine glass.

Is there a book waiting for you in your spot? Or are you facing the television?

Thankful for your Spot to Relax

Life can be busy, so having a spot to relax in – whether it's an end of a sofa, a plush chair or even on your side of the bed – that's a spot to be thankful for.

Where's your spot – and what do you love about it?

Write it down!

8 - Thankful for traditions.

Thankful for traditions... is there a tradition in your life that you are thankful for? Consider:

- a holiday event
- birthday experiences
- seasonal trips

Go through your calendar and see if there are items that happen yearly (or you'd like to happen yearly) which are pleasant, enjoyable and memory-making.

What's on my list? I'm thankful for the tradition of doing plates!

In our family, we “do plates” every year.

It's a tradition Rob began when we moved to another country in 2000. Each year, near the end of the year, we draw on paper plates a representation of the past year.

After we're done our plate design we describe our year to each other.

However, the real magic is looking back at the previous year's “plates” and remembering all that happened over the last 18 years.

Create a favorite tradition!

If you can't think of a tradition that's been a part of your life, then NOW is a great time to begin. Yes, right now!

- Do a little Pinterest search in areas you enjoy for ideas. [Here's a Pinterest board I've begun](#) for this purpose.
- Think of your skills – share those with a loved one.
- Who would you share a tradition with? Even if your family is far away you can still create traditions with friends. The people may change but as long as *you* do the tradition each year, it's a tradition!
- Does someone else do an activity that you admire?
- Start a conversation with your spouse or children about traditions – get their input!

Write it down – the traditions you already have and the ones you'd like to begin!

9 - Thankful for your hobbies.

What's a hobby? It's an activity that isn't work. It's pleasure.

If we're being specific or legalistic, then a hobby is something that's supposed to be done during your leisure time. Most of us have little time we'd consider as throw-away leisure-time, so I'm going to make the term "hobby" as loose as you choose. The only thing I'd say is that it needs to be something you find pleasurable.

Now, before you say that you don't have any hobbies, I'd like you to consider:

- Do you sing in a choir?
- Enjoy cooking? Baking?
- Do you like to send snail-mail cards?
- What about organizing and improving your environment?
- Do you make things? Take photos?
- Read, read and read some more?
- Garden or nurture plants inside?

Many activities you enjoy could be considered a hobby!

Record all your hobbies – they're activities you're thankful for!

Write it down!

10 - Thankful for prayer.

Be thankful for both the ability to pray and thankful for those who pray for you.

Who prays for you?

Do you know?

Perhaps some people are aware of those who pray for them. But there may be times when there's little indication...

- grandparents who complain that they don't see you often enough... continue to intercede in prayer for you...
- your ministers pray for you – even though they don't know anything about your life. They trust God knows the whole story and reach out on your behalf...
- co-workers who are quiet about their faith and you might not even know that they sit quietly in the church each week, praying for you. (I've heard when co-workers were prayed for.)
- that person strolling past your house who is just walking... might be praying for those who live in their neighborhood... my parents-in-law had a tradition of doing that when they went for their evening walk.
- when you're facing procedures or issues, and you've shared with someone, they may just go home and remember you. A stranger could be praying for you. (Rob and I have done that.)
- I know people who, when they hear a siren, automatically pray for those involved.
- when you vent on social media, and though you don't get a "like" or comment, there will be those who are praying for you and your pain.

Now you. Thankful for prayer...

Who do you pray for? And when?

Prayer is a power action. It's a gift. It engages the One who created everything.

Prayer can be done silently, and constantly.

It's a way to express joy and sorrow and fears and overwhelm. It's a way to help, even when you're far away, or there doesn't seem like there's any solution. Prayer makes a difference.

(And if you have time to scroll on social media, you have time to pray – just sayin'...)

Yes, it's time... Be thankful for the opportunity to pray. And be thankful for those who pray *for* you.

Write it down!

11 - Thankful for your favorite.

Favorite what? Think about what you wear.

Do you have a favorite set of pajamas? What about a sweater or hoodie that wraps you up in love? Perhaps there's a swim-suit that fits just right or a huge, fuzzy, flannel shirt that feels so cozy?

If you're a woman, maybe it's a dress that fits the glamorous side of your personality. Or a set of lingerie which no-one might see, yet makes you feel so feminine. Gender aside... What kind of wear-ables are your favorites? Your favorite might be a robe or a slouchy pair of sleep-pants that, when you wear that outfit, means it's going to be a relaxing day – all day... If you're suiting up for a hobby it might be your hunting/camo gear, or your wet-suit, or...

You might be thankful for a favorite pair of shoes that make you feel like you could run all day or a set of sunglasses you can hide behind. It could be a scarf that's just the right amount of warmth, or...

Thankful for your favorite wearable!

Write it down!

12 - Thankful for safety.

To be thankful for safety we first need to be aware of our vulnerability. I'm imagining we are all, to some extent, aware of how fragile our safety in this world is...

In the United States of America, November 11th is Veterans Day. In Canada, Australia, and the [Commonwealth of Nations](#) this date is titled Remembrance Day.

Where you live, is November 11th dedicated to those who fight, or have fought, for your safety – freedom?

Regardless of the date or the title of that date, we all have someone in our life who has championed our safety.

Perhaps they are closely related or a friend who served in the military. Maybe they don't have anything to do with the military, however, that person has protected us: physically, mentally or spiritually.

But what about going further than our military protection...

We *can* continue to be thankful for being safe.

Consider lifeguards and paramedics. Think of the coast guard and fire-fighters.

Look around at the teachers and pre-school caregivers who are involved in their student's lives. Even if it's primarily online, their caring and concern has grown as they navigate this new way of imparting knowledge in 2020. Who knows what the future will bring? But there still will be those who care about education and bringing learning to everyone in a safe way.

Your ministers and congregations continue to pray for you and welcome you to worship with them in whatever manner is possible... your safety is important, including your soul's well-being.

Nurses and doctors and aides and phlebotomists and elder-care specialists and loving family members and the Red Cross and, nutritionists and psychiatrists and pharmacists and ... We are surrounded by health care focused people who stand ready to meet our needs if we're feeling less than well.

So today, we can be thankful for safety and those who provide it. Who will you be referencing in your journal about thankfulness?

Write it down!

13 - Thankful for accomplishments.

Accomplishments – what have you completed that you're thankful for?

Do you feel a sense of satisfaction about something you've done?

We all have failures in our life. That's normal. Failing is part of being human. Too often the first that comes to mind are those items which we regret, or didn't do, or haven't excelled at - at least in comparison with others or our own expectations.

Today I want you to tuck away those negative thoughts.

Far away.

Today be thankful for your accomplishments!

We *all* have accomplishments that we can list.

- Where have you succeeded?
- What have you completed?
- Who has benefited from what you've done?
- There are areas in which you've had influence that are *better* today because of your presence.
- You have contributed in places, with people, in ways that no one else could have done.

It's not necessary to make a big splash to be considered a success. Even the smallest pebble will create ripples when dropped into a pond.

The ripples from your accomplishments have value!

For one who cooks supper each day for decades – that's an accomplishment! (Don't laugh. It's not an easy task for some of us to be consistent!)

Raising children is an accomplishment. Nurturing a marriage is an accomplishment. Caring for a parent is an accomplishment. Singing in a choir is something for which to be thankful. Paying taxes, learning a new skill, voting, improving your bank account, making something useful, writing, giving up a vice, being optimistic even when life looks dreadful, getting up early to exercise, trying once more at that thing that seems too much...

The list of accomplishments is long for every life!

Take a new look at what you're involved in and celebrate!

Be thankful you can do that one thing... it's an accomplishment!

Write it down!

14 - Thankful for H2O.

H2O – water. Consider all the ways we are privileged to use water. Turn on the faucet and there you have water.

We disregard the free-flowing availability of our H2O. No walking down to a stream to fill our buckets. No pumping by hand at a well. We turn on a tap and there it is!

Washing, cleaning, preparing food and all kinds of activities would be extra challenging if, firstly, we needed to go get our water!

Be thankful for H2O – hot & cold!

Even more miraculous is the opportunity to have *hot* water flowing from the tap.

Next time you take a shower or relax in a bath, take note of the flowing hot water. Consider how thankful you are it's there...

In what ways have you used water today? Make a note and give thanks!

A Story from Haiti

Our son and daughter-in-love participated in a non-profit video shoot in Haiti. Part of the trek included time far up in the hills where there is no running water.

People walk down, down, down, through the bush to the river far below to collect their daily water. Often it's the children who carry heavy buckets back up the hills to home.

One day, Alex accompanied these children to film the process. He chose to wear sandals/flipflops. (As he tells the story he usually pauses to tell the listeners that wearing flip-flops in that terrain is *not* a good idea!)

The group collected their water at the river and began the uphill walk on the rough trail back to the village, carrying their jugs.

Half-way back up Alex stumbled and fell to the side of the path. His feet and legs were muddy and messy from the fall.

He began brushing at the dirt, and before he could react, one of the young boys, carrying his family's water in a heavy jug, poured water over Alex's legs to clean them.

That young boy didn't hesitate to share this precious resource. Alex says he wanted to tell him to save the water that they'd just walked 30 minutes to collect, but the boy gave too quickly...

Think about it. Would you be that quick to share a precious resource you'd just walked 30 minutes to gather?

In what ways has and does water – H2O – play a significant part in your life?

Write it down!

15 - Thankful for new... what?

What's new in your life?

- **Stuff.** This could be about the littlest thing, such as a new box of tissues. Hey! I bet you're feeling a unique sense of gratitude when you've just sneezed, and, sitting by your side is a new, full box of tissues to meet your need! It's also perfectly fine to include on this list the new things you're anticipating... Be aware and give thanks for even the essentials in your life.
- **Experiences.** What have you just done that you've never tried before? Have you just eaten sushi? Or learned a dance step, or been to a great movie, or... *Being filled with thanks* for new and lovely experiences is essential for living a grateful life! Big or small, let's keep track!
- **People.** Who have you just met that strikes a spark in your soul? Surely there will be at least one new person – even if that meeting was fleeting... Rob and I have been traveling and we've met some really fun and interesting people. I don't know when we will connect again, but boy-oh-boy am I thankful for these special people. They're the secret sauce in my life!

What about you?

In what way are you thankful for new...

Write it down!

16 - Thankful for old.

Thankful for old experiences, stuff and... *you knew this was coming, right?* After all, we just thought about what *new* things, people and experiences we value!

Of course, we need to also record those long-time precious parts of our life!

People

Who in your life has stood by your side for a long time? Perhaps they've already passed into eternity, but you know they're still interested in you and love you from there. Make a list. Think through all your life stages... childhood, teen years, as a young adult and beyond. You're going to find certain people have played a part in your life for years and years. Others have popped in and out again... they all have great value. Be thankful for those old friends and mentors.

Thankful for old experiences...

What experiences have you had on an ongoing basis?

- Perhaps it's as simple as baking (or eating) the same Christmas cookies year after year... the familiar taste, smell, and love wrapped up in something sweet.
- Consider the [traditions in your life](#)... what part of those experiences do you treasure?
- What about performances? Do you play an instrument? Or sing? Each year, from my earliest memories, we had a Christmas program at our church and in larger and smaller ways I participated over the years. (One year I even made a small dent in my stash of fabric to make costumes for the children...) The experiences surrounding Christmas Programs at church hold many ways I feel thankful. Somewhere in storage, there's a box of Christmas music... I need to pull it out for our grands.
- And reading and re-reading the same book over again. Maybe it's a children's book you've read to your children and now to your grandchildren. Maybe it's a book you revisit each year at a certain time... The experience of refreshing those particular words becomes part of who you are as a person... (For example, [this is a book](#) I recommend to everyone for its tongue-in-cheek style that prompts me to examine my own negative tendencies as a disciple of Christ.)

In addition, consider past experiences, those once-in-a-lifetime events, which will never show up again. Be thankful for those special moments also.

What about the old stuff?

Be thankful for all the old stuff in your life. New is great, but sometimes that special blanket, or dish, or cup that's been a part of your life from youth onward has great memories.

A while ago I helped my mother sort through her stuff for a move into assisted living. It was really hard to let go of all the stuff with good memories. To combat some of her (and my) melancholy I began a new hobby – *Junk Journaling*. (Crafting a book using recycled, found and memorable items used to record

ideas, quotes, memories, etc.) I'm incorporating things like the cards from my grandparent's 50th wedding anniversary, some fabrics from worn-out linens, and more into this new art form.

I can't keep all the stuff – but I can be thankful for it as I use bits and pieces!

What about you?

What long-term people, experiences and things are you thankful for in your life?

Take note!

Write it down!

17 - Thankful for your favorite food.

Be thankful for your favorite food – what is it? Spicy, sweet or salty?

Do you have a particular food that rings your bell, when you smell it cooking it causes you to salivate, or you obsess over? I'm guessing that you – like me – may have *more* than one favorite.

In case you need some prompting, here are some favorite food items that might be on your list:

- chocolate – in any form
- cheesecake – what kind?
- pizza – wood-fired, Chicago style or loaded?
- bacon
- chocolate-dipped strawberries
- poutine (for me, the perfect one is from Harvey's in Canada)
- french onion soup
- mac and cheese
- lobster dipped in clarified butter
- garlic shrimp linguine
- hamburgers
- Charcuterie plate
- french toast with real maple syrup
- peanut butter and jelly sandwiches
- spaghetti and meatballs
- tiramisu
- hot wings
- ice cream – what flavor?
- meatloaf
- milk and cereal
- chocolate pudding
- turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy
- lightly steamed broccoli with a drizzle of lemon butter
- ribs slathered with sauce
- ramen noodles – the authentic kind
- sloppy joes, dripping with goodness...
- and what else would you add to the list?

I'm guessing this list barely touches on some of your favorites!

Record your favorites in your gratitude journal – and maybe even have them (or at least one) for supper!

It's always a good day to eat your favorite food!

Write it down!

18 – Thankful for sound.

Our daughter fell in love with American Sign Language and deaf culture when she first began college courses. No, she's not deaf and nor were any of our friends or acquaintances at the time. It just began a passion that's continued until today. Interpreting for the deaf became her profession.

As our parents have aged, their sense of hearing has been impacted. Speaking slowly and clearly is important to communicate with someone who is hard of hearing. For example, my mother can hear lower registers better than higher pitched sounds. (Men's voices are easier to understand for her.) She misses out when there are groups of people all speaking at once. And with a hearing aid, you'd think that sound is improved, but she has explained that the sound is enhanced, not necessarily improved. She no longer enjoys listening to music – something that was a passion in her life.

Sound impacts all of us as much as a lack of sound.

If you're reading this and your ability to hear is less than you'd like, I can imagine your anguish. So, I'll begin this entry about "thankful for sound" with a gentle nod, and if we were together in person, I'd pat your hand in empathy. My hearing is less than it was... and will likely continue to decrease because I've inherited my mother's issues. Our daughter has begun teaching me some ASL signs to meet our needs as we age...

But to carry on...

For most of us who read this and have heard sound in our life, there have been sounds for which we can be thankful.

What sounds in your life make you smile?

I'm sure there are sounds in your life that you enjoy.

Maybe I'm talking about music. Perhaps it's an environmental sound like waves against a sandy shore or the rustle of wind through the leaves. Or it could be the sound of your loved-ones' voices... a baby's giggle, the wail of a bagpipe, the strum of strings on a guitar, the beat of a drum, and more...

Think of all the sounds in your life that make you thankful. What are they?

Write it down!

19 – Thankful for a challenge.

Challenges. We've all had them.

They're either something you use to push you forward or you're determined never to repeat. Regardless.

From every challenge we've ever experienced, there is something to gather a sense of gratitude.

Rob and I have gone through some challenges in life – things we would have chosen never to go through, yet couldn't avoid. There were other challenges that we sought – and would seek again if given the opportunity.

Most parts of challenges are not fun. At all.

But they are worthwhile.

Sometimes you know the worth of the challenge up front:

- marriage is a challenge – but what a great value!
- children
- education

And there are times when a challenge seems like it's worthless, yet what you learn going through it has value:

- illness
- financial troubles
- relationship conflict

So, regardless of the perceived quality of the challenge, which challenges could you be thankful you endured? Maybe you came through the challenge and are on the other side right now so you know fully the worth of what you experienced... perhaps you're still in the middle and there's no end in sight...

Still. Take a close and deep look at that challenge; all those challenges life has brought. For which ones are you thankful? (And maybe part of documenting them is explaining exactly *why* you're thankful.)

Write it down!

20 – Thankful to play.

What are your favorite games? Do you have one game that you'd choose over any other?

Our little grandson is learning checkers. It's the precursor to teaching him chess... Our son enjoys video-games. My husband loves solitaire as a way to decompress. As a family we've played many games including UNO, scrabble and Monopoly.

Maybe these kinds of games aren't your choice – maybe your preference is an active game like soccer, tennis, or baseball.

It's important to play.

Play is something that's not serious. It has no impact on our life except as an enjoyment. Play is something many of us leave behind when we're adults... but we don't have to!

Think about all the games you enjoyed as a child. Could you make a list?

Now, what's your favorite? What are ten favorite games?

Write it down!

21 - Thankful for work.

Just as we're thankful for play, we also can be thankful for the work we do.

As an example, I'm thankful to do laundry. Sound nuts? Are you shaking your head at me? Well, I had a lovely experience of traveling and living full-time in an RV for a number of years. One thing I missed was my own laundry machines. Now, I have some again, and I am immensely thankful to do the work of laundry in my own space with my own machines. That "work" is fun for me.

How about you?

For what "work" in life have you felt a deep gratitude?

Perhaps it's a career you've worked hard to enter, and the path there wasn't fun, but now... well, you're very thankful to do that work.

Maybe it's a role in life which you've longed for – being married, being a parent, etc. – but through the work of being and doing what's necessary for that role, though some of it is hard, you feel an immense thankfulness.

Or it could be a simple case of being remunerated financially for the labor you do. For those who have experienced long (or short) periods of unemployment, finding a job which can pay the bills feels greatly satisfying. And there's a huge thankfulness from having income to meet basic needs because you're doing that work.

Make a list of all the work you've been thankful for over the course of your life...

Write it down!

22 - Thankful for the destination.

Where do you look forward to going — and arriving?

It could be a vacation destination. Or the destination could be your home. It could be a place in the world. Or the destination could represent something you had in the past, but no longer have... but going there (even imagining going there) brings a sense of joy.

Grateful to get there.

For five years we lived near Dallas, Texas. I remember returning from trips late in the evening and seeing the iconic Dallas skyline. The view became an indication of the life we had in that city. And I felt an overwhelming sense of awe and thankfulness every single time. We haven't lived in Dallas for more than a decade, but I still remember with thankfulness that destination experience.

On my 50th birthday, we stayed at a place called "[Lion's Head](#)" on the Bruce Peninsula in Ontario Canada. Rob arranged the trip because the destination holds a dear spot in my heart. Growing up, every June we'd camp there. The travel and arrival at Lion's Head meant the beginning of summer. And 50 years later I still have a joyful sense of gratitude when I think of that destination.

What about you?

Are there places in this world where, when you get there, you're thankful? What and where are they?

Write it down!

23 – Thankful for inspiring words.

Words can inspire.

Social media is filled with memes to inspire. We have phrases and quotes printed, painted, and created as art – and then we display them in our environment.

Words have power.

What words and phrases have an impact on your heart? Do you have favorite poetry that speaks to your soul? Which words or quotes have played a part in your life that make you thankful you had them – at that time?

Make a list of these powerful words.

And if you find this prompt for thankfulness difficult, reach out to gather ideas from your friends and family... think of song lyrics, or a homey “saying” a relative had. As a Christian, I treasure different Scripture verses and hymn phrases. They bring me great thankfulness.

As an example of this idea, I remember watching a movie where the heroine had a book from her mother filled with inspiring thoughts. Her mother had passed into eternity, yet the heroine had that book filled with words to draw close to what her mother felt important.

Could you do that?

Could you create a book filled with words and phrases that inspire you? Start with this prompt to be thankful... begin with one inspiring phrase.

Write it down!

24 – Thankful for qualities, values, and virtues.

What are qualities, values and virtues? They're the intangibles we see in others, that we want for ourselves. Everyone is different – yet many of us strive for the similar values. Do you see them in others? Do you see them in yourself? Are there ones you don't want, and would never feel thankful for... ?

For which qualities, values and virtues *are* you thankful?

Rob and I decided a long time ago that the three values we'd work toward in our life together would be loyalty, optimism, and discovery. We are thankful whenever we can share aspects of these qualities with each other and experience them in others.

Other virtues we are thankful for – in ourselves and others - are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. And more. (You get the idea.)

You can't touch or own any of these virtues. You can't buy them. And sometimes they're fleeting. Yet, at every time, we've been thankful when we experience them.

Can you make a list of the virtues, qualities and values you would be thankful to experience in others? Or have yourself?

Write it down!

25 – Thankful for feeling loved.

All of us have different ways we feel loved.

If I were to use Gary Chapman's theory of "The Five Love Languages", I'd say that:

- a gift,
- or a specific time spent with us,
- or a hug,
- or when someone did something for us,
- or when someone said certain words to us

one- or more – of these actions - made us *feel* loved.

Feeling loved in life is precious.

We can feel profoundly grateful when feeling loved.

What times in your life – what happened – to make you feel loved? Play the experience out in your mind... imagine it happening again. If you can think of more than one experience of feeling loved, were there correlations?

Be thankful for the times you felt loved.

Write it down!

26 – Thankful for being served.

When someone does something for us, without prompting or expectation, we are usually thankful. When people serve above and beyond expectation it's highly lauded – in the press, in stories and song.

I'm not referring to those who do more than we expect. What about all those people in our life who do their job and it benefits us in small, almost inconsequential ways... we almost don't notice.

Are you thankful when people meet your needs as part of their "job"?

The most obvious way we show we value service is with someone who gives us our food in a restaurant. We leave them a "tip" according to how we feel they performed. However, when you leave your monetary extra with the cost of the bill, are you thankful for their service? Or do you expect good service because you're paying for it... ?

The other day I picked up an online order of groceries. I drove to the store and a young fellow brought them to my truck through torrential rain. He was obviously soaked. And yet he was cheerful, as he did the exact job he'd been hired to do. However, I can honestly say that I felt a huge sense of gratitude. He was doing his job – but his work made my life easier.

Take a mental walk through your week.

How many people served your needs as part of their job, and you merely expected it? Maybe it was even your spouse who put gas in your vehicle or carried out the trash, or made the bed... Perhaps it was the maintenance worker who was filling the holes in the street, or the minister who prayed with you, or the mail carrier (or Amazon Prime Package Person), or the health-care scheduler who phoned to make your next doctor's appointment. You get the idea, right?

Make a list of all the people who have served your needs this week – and really dwell on their value. Feel grateful that you live in a world where these needs are met...

Write it down!

27 – Thankful for a reminder.

I have a number of photos from my history that, when I look at them, a huge sense of thankfulness wells up. They're a reminder of all the good in my past...

One is a photo of my grandparents. They'd been living in a tent for a year as they cleared land and built a house in Northern Ontario, Canada. They were city people, transplanted with their 10-year-old son (my father) to the wilderness. They read books to learn how to farm. That photo humbles me and fills me with gratitude. Would I have had the courage it took to do that? And how I've benefited because of their sacrifices...

Another photo I have is of our children when we were homeschooling. It represents the freedom to learn and to come-and-go as we needed. I'm thankful for that time with them.

What photos are you thankful you have as a reminder of something good?

And maybe what you're thankful for are not photos. Maybe the reminder is a letter, or a drawing or...

Consider.

What would you grab if your home was on fire? What reminder is too precious to be without – not because it has a monetary value, but because it makes you feel thankful?

Make a list if there's more than one reminder...

Write it down!

28 – Thankful for your body.

If you're at all like me, there are parts of your body that you don't like and don't feel much gratefulness for... and yet...

Yet.

I have two hands and two feet. My head sits comfortably on my neck and shoulders. I'm typing these words so my fingers work, my brain is active, and my thoughts are (somewhat) organized. I've eaten lunch and it's sitting comfortably in my stomach. I have faith that it will nourish me. And then, what I don't need will pass through.

Even though my body is not perfect, I do value it.

I am thankful to be able to use it.

What about you?

Spend a few moments thinking about all the parts of your body – those you can see and those that are hidden under the skin. We take for granted when they work and moan and groan when they don't.

Start at the top of your head and work your way down to your toes... make a list of all the parts of your physical body you're thankful for and why.

Write it down!

(Does this seem simple? I challenge you to do the work to make this list. You'll be thankful you did!)

29 – Thankful for the future.

What, in your future, are you thankful you can anticipate?

I must say, that the older I get, the shorter my list becomes. We (my husband and I) have done and owned many things on our list of goals. Some we are happy about, and others leave room for improvement.

Regardless, I'm still thankful.

But what about the future?

As I write this, I think about you – the person who will read this. I'm grateful you will read my words and hope they have a positive impact.

Sometimes the future we're anticipating is simply the joy of sharing a meal with those we love. Sometimes it's a grand future that'll take many, many years to accomplish. Regardless, we can be thankful to anticipate any future at all. For all of us, it will come to an end.* Grab hold of what you can anticipate, and be grateful!

Make a list of all the small things you're anticipating for your future. And if it's a huge anticipation, then make sure you note every small part of it!

Write it down!

**If you're reading this, and you're traveling very close to the end of your natural life, I pray you continue to feel a hope for an eternal future. If this makes you feel confused, or worried, and you feel prompted, reach out to me and I'd be happy to share what I believe... I believe there is a great hope for an eternal future!*

30 - Be thankful for now.

Is being thankful for “now” difficult sometimes? Yes. It can be.

I’ve been there.

If you’re looking at your “now”, and it’s so far from what you want or what you had, it can feel discouraging.

Maybe you’re in a unique time. “Now” might not feel good.

Now might feel scary. Now might feel tragic. Right now there may be no change in all the scary, tragic and discomfort.

And yet.

Yet.

Here. This moment holds joy.

It does!

Look for the joy in the story you’re living.

(Stop. See. Feel. Taste. Touch. Smell. Experience.)

- the voice of someone who loves you is joy
- the arms of a child wrapping around your neck is joy
- the sweetness of chocolate on your tongue is joy
- the scent of autumn, spring, winter or summer on the air is joy
- the melody in a song is joy
- the warmth of a smile is joy

Is everything perfect?

No.

Do you have everything you want?

No.

But your story, right now, holds some joys.

Write down one joy you are experiencing... regardless if your story isn’t the one you would *like* to be living. And realize it’s a reason to be thankful. Because it is...

Labels and Interesting Embellishments

Maybe you'd like to enhance your Gratitude Journal with some labels that'll correspond to each Day's topic, or add a few extras... I've designed something for you to use, if you choose. Just print these next few pages and cut them out! (There are some extra labels if you want to do your own topics.)

30 Days of Thankfulness



Thankful for you! ~ with love ~ Lori @ PositiveThanksLiving

SCENTS

Quick! What's your favorite scent?
Aroma? Fragrance?

30

CONVENIENCE

Which conveniences are you most thankful for?
Which ones do you use daily?

30

HOBBY

Which hobby (or hobbies) are you most thankful for?

30

LAUGH

Make a list of people in your life who make you laugh and you love to laugh with...

30

BOOKS

Which books are you thankful you own?
Which ones do you re-read regularly?

30

SPOT

Where's your spot – and what do you love about it?

30

VIEW

For what item – you can currently see in real life – could you give thanks?

30

INVESTED

Who invested in YOU?
Give thanks for the mentors who invested in you.

30

TRADITION

Is there a tradition in your life that you are thankful for?
If not – what would it be?

30

SAFETY

Be thankful
for safety and those
who provide it.

30

NEW

What's new in your
life that you could be
thankful for?

30

SOUND

What sounds
in your life
make you smile?

30

FAVORITE

Be thankful for
your favorite
wearable! What is it?
When do you
wear it?

30

H2O

In what ways have
you used water
today? Make a note
and give thanks!

30

FOOD

Be thankful for your
favorite food –
What is it? Spicy,
sweet or salty?

30

PRAYER

Be thankful for the
opportunity to pray.
And be thankful for
those who pray
for you.

30

ACCOMPLISHMENT

Take a new look at
what you're involved
in and be
thankful for what
you've done.

30


OLD

What long-term
people, experiences
and things are you
thankful for
in your life?


30

WORK

List the work you've been thankful for over the course of your life.




30




VALUES

List the virtues, qualities & values you would be thankful to experience in others.




30




REMINDER

What reminder of good things is precious and you'd like to keep close?




30




PLAY

Don't leave play behind as an adult! Which games are you still thankful to play?




30




INSPIRATION

Words can inspire. What words have been spoken to you that inspire you?



30




SERVED

Be thankful - look at all the ways where your needs have been met.




30




CHALLENGE

For which life challenges are you thankful? Why?



30



DESTINATION

For what places in this world, when you get there, are you thankful?




30




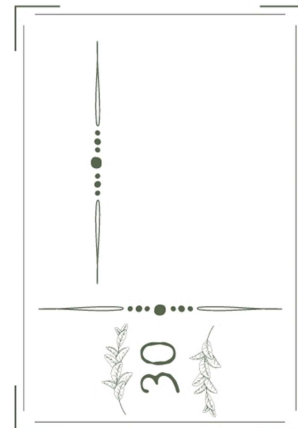
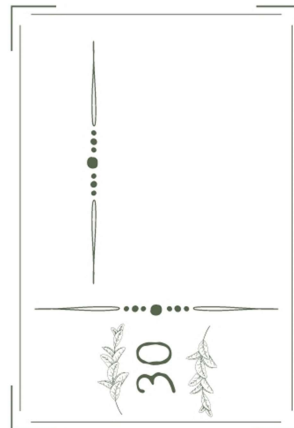
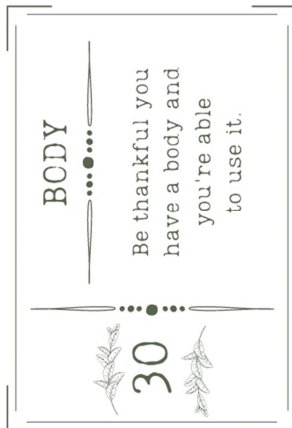
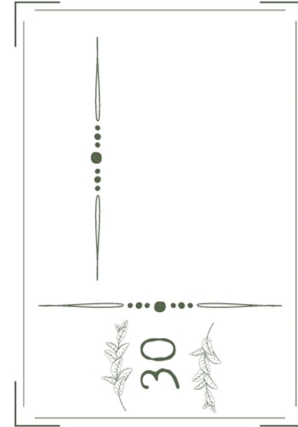
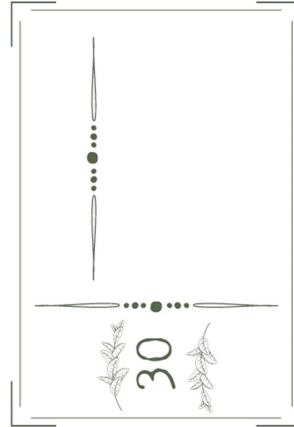
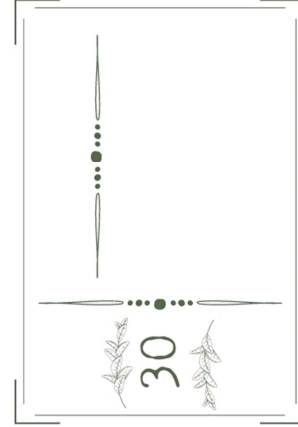
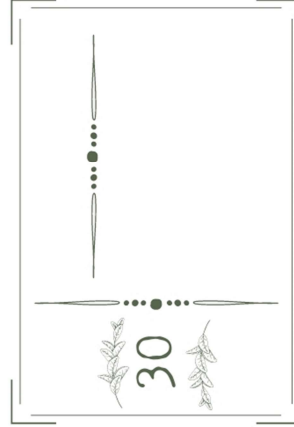
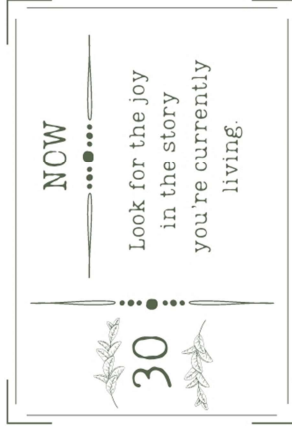
LOVED

When have you felt loved? Make note of all time times you've really felt loved.



30





Where to now?

Congratulations! You've made it! It's been 30 days. Thirty days of noting and documenting many ways in which you feel thankful. If you've made that list, then you have something to hang on to for the future.

And there's no reason to stop!

You can continue in this practice of gratefulness! What could you do?

- 1 - Read more on the subject. (There's a list of recommendations on PositiveThanksLiving.com)
- 2 – Surround yourself with other people who share your desire to focus on being thankful.
- 3 – Share your experience with gratefulness.
 - Talk about all the things you're thankful for..
 - Say "thank you" to everyone. (Including God, from whom all Good flows, I believe.)
 - Write notes to tell people how thankful you are for them.
 - Draw, paint, and create in the spirit of gratefulness.
 - And continue to document – every day possible – all the ways in which you're thankful.

I'm thankful for YOU!

Thank you for reading these pages about being thankful for 30 days. Thank you for interacting with me. I'd be so grateful if you'd reach out on social media and share all the ways you're thankful...

With love, and thankfulness,

Lori Ferguson

PositiveThanksLiving.com
Instagram.com/PositiveThanksLiving
Lori@BigPicturePractical.com

