



Happy Gratitude Day

The wonderful holiday of Thanksgiving is this weekend. Well it is if you live in the land of the true north strong and free, or as my Australian friend likes to call Canada (*insert loud booming announcer voice here*) "**THE LAND OF GIANT SHOPPING MALLS,**" OK maybe that's more specific to Edmonton. I digress; **THANKSGIVING!** My favourite holiday! A time to share good food and gratitude with friends and family. And that's all that is expected! No gifts to worry about, or extras, just a good meal and a chance to reflect and say, "We are pretty lucky aren't we?"

I hope everyone gets a chance to do that this weekend. Last year on Thanksgiving as my family all sat down for dinner, my 4-year-old nephew said "Alright! Now we are going to go around the table and say what we are thankful for!"

I looked at my sister and whispered through a smile, "Did you tell him to do this?"

She replied, "Nope! This is the first I've heard of it." I actually don't remember doing that **EVER** as a family at Thanksgiving, but you know it was a pretty special moment. And I love anything that forces my father and brother to be sentimental, as this is not their strong suit (*actual quote from my brother: "We know we all love each other we don't have to say it all the time." ;)*) No doubt we will do that again this year as the little dictator rule following nephew will be present.

Why not get into the habit of being thankful everyday? Gratitude is a powerful thing and brings positivity into our lives. At one of our [ABC Head Start](#) sites, the team does a wonderful job of teaching gratitude to their students. When the children get off the bus there is a large, elderly tree that stands right by the bus stop. They have named the tree Grandma Elm Tree. They start each morning by surrounding the tree and sharing their appreciation for Grandma Elm. I spoke with the teacher in more detail about this and she said the project started because she recognized this great opportunity for learning. It brings awareness to their environment, they get to experience change as the tree goes through the seasons, and most of all they get to show gratitude to nature and marvel in its greatness.

On Facebook there is a fan page called The Attitude of Gratitude Project. The project is simple share your gratitude: what are you grateful for today?

"In the end, maybe it's wiser to surrender before the miraculous scope of human generosity and to just keep saying thank you, forever and sincerely, for as long as we have voices." Elizabeth Gilbert

