

The CHOICE Connection

Positive strategies. Practical solutions.



constructive
CHOICE
Jean Strosinski, PhD, PCC, C

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Quotable Quotes

"Gratitude bestows reverence, allowing us to encounter everyday epiphanies, those transcendent moments of awe that change forever how we experience life and the world." ~ John Milton

"Acknowledging the good that you already have in your life is the foundation for all abundance." ~ Eckart Tolle

"Don't plant your bad days. They grow into weeks. The weeks grow into months. Before you know it, you've got yourself a bad year." ~ Tom Waits

Dear Jean,

Our guest author this month is Antonia Montoya. Antonia is a delightful, young, bright, and joyful entrepreneur here in New Mexico with such an important message for all of us. I met Antonia at a professional society meeting this summer as she shared her life focus on strengthening our connections with a fervent practice of gratitude. I was so very impressed with Antonia's simplicity in her presentation's delivery and her life mission to influence our lives with a focus to enrich our daily practices of gratitude. I have to admit that over the years I have kept a gratitude journal, although sad to say a bit inconsistently. Somehow, after a time it began to be a bit repetitive. I found I wasn't giving the practice a time to broaden my thinking and beliefs about my appreciation of all that I have been given in my life. I fell in love with the simple exercise Antonia had us do and share around the room. It is simple and even life altering. Read on for more of Antonia's shares about a life practice of gratitude and how it can alter your life in such a very short time.

Antonia Montoya, MS, CHES, Owner and Gratitude Specialist at **Change is Yours** is a health education specialist with well over a decade of experience including presenting her work to international, national, and state conferences. Her clients focus on gratitude and learn from their successes in order to make the positive changes they want in their lives. Inspired by a passion to bring out the best in people, Antonia formed Sendero Wellness, LLC in 2009 and has since helped clients improve their businesses, families and the communities of New Mexico. For booking, coaching, or subscription to Inspiring Gratitude contact Antonia at 505-333-9336,antonia@senderowellness.com, or <http://ourgratitudecollective.com>.

Thank you, Antonia, for the reminder of all our blessings and the impact a thank you has for others we share our lives with!

In the spirit of sharing our gifts,
Jean

Notice, Appreciate and Share by Antonia Montoya

I am grateful for the feel of pen on paper as creativity pushed my hand along...I am grateful for many breaks during my work today...I am grateful for payments received from my clients. At this time of year gratitude is everywhere we turn, a feel-good commodity to be sold before the final sprint of holiday shopping. But many of us know the immeasurable value of gratitude and incorporate it into our daily lives. Though there are countless ways to practice gratitude, today we will delve into one: a daily written gratitude practice. Simply write down 3 or more things you are grateful for each day. Although this is the main act of a written gratitude practice, I see it in three parts.



First, NOTICE. The most important and overlooked step is simply noticing. We can't be grateful for something that we don't notice. We all have varying levels of being busy in our lives but busyness need not be an excuse. Noticing the good in our lives takes no extra time. You might not have time to stop and smell the roses but you definitely have time to notice them.

Second, APPRECIATE. Once you've noticed, now you choose how you will respond to it. Will you complain, appreciate, or choose some other response? Appreciation isn't always the easiest choice especially for life's challenges but the more you choose appreciation the easier that choice will come the next time. Take this feeling of gratitude one step further by writing it down. We have hundreds of thousands of thoughts each day. Writing down our gratitude helps to give it more importance than just a passing thought.

Finally, SHARE. There is nothing as beautifully contagious as genuine gratitude. Share your gratitude and others will naturally think about what they are grateful for. Noticing, appreciating and sharing is a great networking strategy since it draws people to you. You can even use social media. I share my gratitude publicly on Facebook and last night was my 1,264th daily gratitude post! Sharing gratitude is a powerful way to connect with others but it's not necessary; you can always choose to keep it private. The important step is writing down what you're grateful for each day.

Tools and Resources FROM THE BOOKSHELF

[The Art of Possibility: Transforming Professional and Personal Life](#) by Rosamund Stone Zander
This book started me out on my journey of choosing my perspective and finding the good in every situation.

[Gratitude: Inspirations](#) by Melody Beattie
Encouragement and quotes to guide you along your own journey of gratitude.

[Thanks!: How the new Science of Gratitude Can Make You Happier](#) by Robert Emmons
The scientist in you will enjoy the data while the humanist in you will value the stories.

'The Power of Gratitude - 25 Unexpected Things to Be Grateful For Right Now.' O, the Oprah Magazine, November 2014, p. 122.

THE INTERNET CONNECTIONS

If you are ready to commit to gratitude and would like to receive a written gratitude guide that will help move your good intentions into a solid gratitude practice, email me (antonia@senderowellness.com) for a free issue of the Inspiring Gratitude Subscription.

[Collecting Gratitude Collective](#)
Many different voices expressing genuine gratitude. Read the gratitude of others. Share your gratitude.

[Highlights from the Research Project on Gratitude and thankfulness](#)
Overview of published scientific findings on the benefits of written gratitude practices.

[20 Questions for Thanksgiving](#)
A list of twenty gratitude questions to create a family dialogue about gratitude.

Reflection

One of my six tips for a successful written gratitude practice is to NOT write what you are most grateful for.

The things we are most grateful for rarely change. Writing the same gratitude again and again will become boring very quickly.

The magic is in the little things. I find joy in sharing gratitude for things that I am surprised to even notice. It renews my sense of wonder and opens my heart to the world in a new way. Whether you are new to gratitude or have been practicing it for a while have fun with your gratitude and allow your joy to emerge in surprising ways.

Try it now: My new words of gratitude for today are...(fill in this blank with 3 to 5 words of gratitude).

Thank you for taking the time to read my words on this topic that is so close to my heart.

Choose To

Answer the simple question ... What are you grateful for? ... Answer it again and yet again....find gratitude even on bad days.. .discover your truth...have fun with it... NOTICE ... open your mind ... open its doors ... APPRECIATE ... count your blessings ... whom have you touched today? ... who has reached out to you today? ... what is their gift to you? ... what change in your life can you be grateful for ... be open to possibilities...choose gratitude ... SHARE.



Joyful Observances

Family Stories Month

[Military Family Appreciation Month](#)

National Adoption Month

[National Family Caregivers Month](#)

National Inspirational Role Models Month

Pursuit of Happiness Week (Nov. 7-13)

[National Hunger & Homeless Awareness Week \(Nov.9-15\)](#)

[World Kindness Week \(Nov. 10-16\)](#)

Better Conversation Week (Nov. 24-30)

National Family Week (Nov. 24-30)

Nov. 6 - National Men Make Dinner Day: 6 Must Cook. No BBQ Allowed! :)

Nov. 13 - World Kindness Day

Nov. 18 - Mickey Mouse Day

Nov. 19 - National Educational Support Professionals Day

Nov. 24 - Celebrate Your Unique Talent Day

[Nov. 28 - National Day of Listening](#)

Administrivia

My Constructive Choices Audience...

- * Professionals wanting to be at choice in their career and daily work,
- * New managers (and aspiring leaders) transitioning to establish a leadership role in their communities,
- * Individuals wanting to sort through the choices, build a more fulfilling life, live their voices, and...
- * Coaches who choose to step out, show up, and say - YES, it IS all about YOU!

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