

The Visible Woman

**A Collection of Blogs on
Gratitude**

By Irene Brankin

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Thankfulness, Appreciation and Gratefulness

By Irene Brankin

Especially at this Festive Season time of the year, it is usual to be grateful for what you have, what you are receiving and giving to others.

I wonder though how many of us only pay lip service to this giving and receiving from family, friends, the world? I also wonder if you actually take the time to really see what is being expressed behind the gifts? It's not something we think about usually.

It may be that you only pay lip service to how you're supposed to respond, 'Oh thank you... that's lovely... just what I needed... Oh, you shouldn't have...'

Thankfulness

I don't actually care what your normal response is! What I am saying is, can you allow your thankfulness to shine through? This would mean that you would be coming from your heart. You could be open to seeing the effort and time that has gone into the choosing of the gift (small or large).

Don't worry, I also know that you know that some of those gifts that have been picked up somewhere or passed on to you, with no thought at all!!

Heartfelt

I'm suggesting that it would be heartfelt for YOU to look whoever in the eyes and give them a genuine appreciation of the gift. It will make your heart swell. And they will also receive from you in this way. And you can then do whatever you want with it! It'll be up to you.

Celebrating, gratitude and appreciate

Why would you do this? Because this would be celebrating your big heart, showing gratitude and also your ability to appreciate any gift you receive. You see there is space between our breaths.

Whispers of your Soul

This is a space for magic, pause and creativity and so you will be genuinely listening to the whispers of your Soul in that space between.

Life

Life in all its complexity can give us great pain and great pleasure – hope and despair, comfort and disease. You can polarise into one or other or embrace it in all its fullness – with a peal of laughter, a cry of despair and everything in between.

Energy

Even although I have written a book called 'I Don't Care – the Art of Divine Indifference', I want to say that, for me, the now belongs to those who do care about what's important and those that believe that we, individually and collectively can make a difference to those who follow us.

Don't waste your energy on what doesn't matter to you and then really go for what does matter to you. Be grateful for when you make the choice to do this.

Die young or old

You die young or you get old and that's it! Life is just too bloody interesting to get involved in the minutiae of 'who said or did what to whom'. Use your energy for more important heartfelt issues.

Hence, being thankful for when you wake up in the morning and so can now choose how you want to be in life. And being grateful for being alive.

Life is a choice, it's your life, so choose with Awareness, Wisdom and integrity – Choose to live your life with thankfulness, appreciation and gratefulness.

What a relief!

By Irene Brankin

What a relief, as where I am the weather has been 30 degrees and then we have had thunder and lightning storms like you have never seen before.

Can't believe what's been happening here in the South East of England, and also to me (never mind anyone else).

For example, I shower every morning – then go to say my exercise class and need to shower again – or go out and about and come in and I look as though I have just had a shower. The sweat is running off me, I'm all hot and sweaty and I look like a red tomato in the face – lovely!!

So what a relief to come in and let go – take off my bra (let it all hang out or down); change into the most comfortable shorts and 'T' shirt I can find and go barefooted around the house or into the shade in the garden.

Also what a relief it is to have the rain – maybe not the thunder and lightning though. I went out into the garden and it was lovely to feel the rain on my face and body. I didn't care as my hair simply goes curlier and curlier so no problem.

You just need to have the pressure allowed out/taken off so that you can breathe into the stillness that comes and everything is greener and fresher – even if still warm.

Sometimes too, I am so busy trying to avoid the heat that I don't take the time to simply accept that I am lucky in that I can take care of myself by say showering, bra off, casual clothes ...

When I give full acceptance of that reality, that I have that freedom, then I can have gratitude that my life is what it is. And it may change - but right now it is what it is.

I am what I am – 'Sweaty Betty' or Irene.

Grace with Ease

By Irene Brankin

Has there always been something you have, secretly or not, always wanted to do? A gift to yourself.

Well I've had something that pops into my head every now and again over the years, and I have visualised myself doing it.

Do you want to know what it is? I can picture myself dancing on a stage very gracefully, with no one else around and to my own inner tune. A little like a ballerina except it is not so structured and more movement in line with the music.

We, as women, can so easily put our dreams, wishes or whatever you want to call it, aside and leave them on the back burner somewhere – all alone and forgotten or hidden away. Mine re-connected with me in a big way.

I was fortunate in that I allowed myself to do this in a group I attended. There was some beautiful music playing and we were sitting in a circle with our eyes closed. I was so touched by it, the atmosphere, the others and myself that I arose, took my beautiful scarf and silently moved to the other part of the room.

I stood, twirled, swayed and moved myself and my scarf in time to the rhythm of the music. I opened and closed my eyes when I felt like it. I was in heaven and I was allowing out my grace with ease purely for myself. I was listening to the sound of my own tune. I gave myself a gift from my heart.

I cried and my tears were tears of pure joy as this gift to myself was spontaneous – not planned. I was giving centre stage to what is inside me and allowing it out. Simply allowing my expression of grace out.

I am so, so fortunate that I gave this to myself regardless of any reaction or fears that I might have had. I was in the right place at the right time and I am also pleased to have been part of the space I was in.

I would love to hear from you about your gift to you – whether it is still a secret or not. I won't tell anyone, I promise. xx

Moments of being at peace

By Irene Brankin

Today I am enjoying my 'downtime'. We have had our family, who are on their way to Tenerife for a week's holiday, for a couple of days. They will stay with us for a week on their return.

So life is good having had the pleasure and busyness of them staying especially with a 10 and 7 year old. The youngest decided that he would cut everything that grew in the garden (with the help and encouragement of his father!).

Everything turned out fine, I have to say, so pure enjoyment for him.

We went for a long walk in our Country Park and ended up for a slow-moving lunch which was just what we needed to rest, be at peace and relax after the heat of the sun and the ups and downs of the terrain.

This brings me onto that sense of peacefulness we all crave and can pursue it far and wide by reading, writing, attending courses and so on. It is so elusive – at least for me!

It is not, in my opinion, a 'to do' thing that we have to achieve by sitting cross-legged on the floor and 'ohming' – don't all rush now to complain as I do know that this is the way for some of you.

It is about including and acknowledging your thoughts and not about trying really, really hard to stop them. This won't happen with all the will power in the world, I can assure you.

Whether you practice meditation, chant mantras or follow your breath or not, I want you to see that in your everyday activities, this feeling of being at peace with yourself can come in the middle of a rather crazy cafe through being part of enjoyment of life.

Love to hear how you have your moments of being at peace.

People coming together and uniting for a great cause

By Irene Brankin

“So much has been given to me I have no time to ponder over that which has been denied” - Helen Keller

What a nation we are here in the British Isles! It's time to stand up and be proud of ourselves. Once again millions of pounds were donated to the Children in Need charity (over £31m). And, all of this when the Philippines' Disaster Fund was already receiving donations from us! To see the children (and their parents) brought tears to my eyes as well as joy and admiration not only for the spirit they have but also for the love and care around them.

Personally, I don't know a country that does so much for charity and I am saluting you. I don't mind if I get challenged on my statement. I know our country deserves the salute.

Sometimes life doesn't make sense at all especially when we hear and see what is happening in the world as well as personal experience. And life is about passion, finding something that makes you feel you are part of something bigger than yourselves and makes you grateful to be alive.

Gratitude is a great antidote to misfortune as we hardly notice the abundance or little miracles that happen for us.

We can all co-create a better world that we know in our hearts is possible. It may not happen in our life-time (we may not see the fruits of this) but we can enable the steps toward for generations to come.

See yourself as lucky and nurture yourself as you deserve it because you're worth it.

And finally, be happy with what you have while working for what you want!

xx

Thank you for reading.

If my words touch you and you want to know that you really matter, then visit my [website](#) or [contact me](#) and let's see how I can do that for you.

A handwritten signature in white ink on a blue background. The signature appears to be "Drene" followed by a small flourish or mark.