

The Magic of Intentionally Raising Our Vibration

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“Give yourself a gift of five minutes of contemplation in awe of everything you see around you. Go outside and turn your attention to the many miracles around you. This five-minute-a-day regimen of appreciation and gratitude will help you to focus your life in awe.” Wayne Dyer

A teacher and mentor of mine once suggested that I live my life in a series of 30-day experiments. After giving it a try, I’ve discovered it’s a wonderful way to try out a new way of thinking, develop a new habit or help us decide if we even want to commit to a daily practice. In my experience, making a simple 30-day commitment has helped me increase my water intake, got me into the habit of taking daily vitamin supplements and has helped me develop a new daily practice.

Lately, I've been feeling scattered. A short trip to Florida to see my 86-year-old Dad for a week turned into a rather challenging experience. After a wonderful visit, we were getting ready to head to the airport for my return flight. I was on the porch enjoying a wonderful sunrise. Dad was in his bedroom having a stroke. The stroke earned him an ambulance ride, a seven-day hospital stay, a fourteen-day admission to rehab and a six-week home care plan that made it impossible for him to be alone. In an instant, my short visit got extended to over a month and sent my family into crisis mode.

Adult children supporting aging parents know all about crisis mode. A single event can quickly alter best laid plans and be challenging for all involved. We are busy and living full lives with work, family and home responsibilities. Becoming a sudden caregiver in response to a clinical emergency can certainly disrupt the plan!

I own a lodging property and retreat center in the beautiful White Mountains of New Hampshire. Owning a historic retreat center on a lake in the mountains sounds wonderful to many, and it truly is, but there is certainly a lot involved in

maintaining a circa 1903 property and running it as a profitable business. One thing I've learned about being a solo entrepreneur; if I'm not actively doing the work or coordinating the work, the work doesn't get done and the bills don't get paid.

It was April. I was in Florida caring for Dad and the summer season was fast approaching. Instead of getting the property ready for guests, I was 1100 miles away consumed with hospital visits and coordinating care plans with nurses, doctors, social workers, physical therapists, occupational therapists, and rehabilitation facilities. When I wasn't chasing down health care providers or dealing with paperwork, I was taking care of whatever my Dad needed to get through the frustration he had being trapped in bed and unable to do much of anything but wait.

As the days ticked by, my anxiety level increased. Covid had caused me major financial challenges and this was going to be the season that would make or break my lodging business. I needed to return to New Hampshire to my pre-season To Do List. I needed help! Asking for help has never been my strong point. I'm the oldest, the only girl and the only health care professional in the family, so as my parents aged and health issues arose, I was naturally the one who answered phone calls, coordinated their care and hopped on a plane to manage a crisis. But this time, I really needed help.

I contacted my three brothers to take my place as Dad needed support once he was discharged from rehab. I was relieved when they each committed to stay with Dad for a couple of weeks when he came home. My brother, Keith, was the first to arrive.

Fifteen minutes after getting home, Dad had an episode that returned him to the emergency room and hospital admission with more tests, rehab and follow-up appointments.

It took everything I had not to jump on a plane back to Florida and let everything back home go for another summer, which more than likely would have meant letting go of my property forever. Instead, I asked for help again. I asked my brothers to pitch in more time to cover Dad's new eight-week rehabilitation period so I could stay home, take care of business and monetize my summer and fall rental seasons.

I remember breathing a big sigh of relief and feeling an immense wave of gratitude come over me when my brothers agreed to cover for me. I could feel the stress flow out of my body as I looked over my To Do list. I slept peacefully for the first time in a long time, knowing I was off Dad duty.

The next morning, I woke up with a plan. I got dressed, put my coffee in a to-go cup and drove to the top of Cathedral Ledge. It was there on the top of that tall granite ledge, overlooking the spectacular view of the White Mountains, Echo Lake and the Mount Washington Valley. I remembered the Rampage of Uncommon Appreciation activity that my mentor told me about. In that moment, I committed to the practice for a 30-day Experiment.

Today, and every day for the past several weeks, I make coffee, pour it in my favorite mug, head out to a sunny spot on the deck and sit in my favorite chair with Sundae, my cat, purring at my feet. In this state, I close my eyes, take a few deep breaths and begin my new morning ritual of practicing uncommon appreciation. It certainly beats waking up to the news or my email box or my social media feed.

Once I've taken a few deep breaths, establishing a rhythm, to the count of three and out to the count of six, I bring into my awareness something I am grateful for. Sundae is my go-to if nothing else immediately comes to mind.

I imagine my heart expanding in my chest as I focus on just one thing I'm grateful for.

And then I dig a little deeper.

I relish the first sip of coffee. I immerse myself in the feeling of the morning air on my skin and the slight breeze or the sun shining on my face.

I listen to the sounds: birdsong, the buzz of cicadas, the leaves rustling in the breeze, the rooster cock-a-doodle-dooing in the distance, and Sundae purring next to me and the feeling of her fur when she stretches and rubs against my skin.

I open my eyes and look out over my yard. The farm off in the distance, the view of Mount Chocorua from the deck, the brook that runs along the border of my property, the garden that needs tending, the tall grass near the brook that needs mowing.

Wait! Stop! No adding things to my To Do list! All I need to do right now is simply breathe and focus on feeling uncommon appreciation.

I take a deep breath. I feel the chair supporting me. I reflect on the chair, the wood and the oak tree that supplied the wood and the craftsman who built this wonderfully comfortable rocking chair. My attention moves to the delivery truck, the driver and the infrastructure that delivered it and set it up on my deck. If I keep going, I can express gratitude for the gas station that fueled the truck, the food that nourished the driver while he traveled across the country. I could go on and on.

My attention moves to the pot of flowers. The lovely pink blossoms that attracted the hummingbird. I imagine the plant's origin and express gratitude for everything that brought this plant to my deck. I go deeper and imagine the seed in the greenhouse. My attention moves to the garden shop where I bought it and the family that works so hard to make sure that they have everything I need to enjoy my flowers every summer.

My attention shifts to the large tree in the yard. When it got struck by lightning, I thought it would die. Instead, it sent off a young shoot that is quite well established and provides wonderful shade for the hammock.

Oh, wait, there I go again, naturally trying to add things to my To Do List. I remind myself to stay immersed in my Rampage of Uncommon Appreciation for a little bit longer.

The grass is so green this morning. There are at least 100 shades of green I can see from where I am sitting: natural greens from the national forest, grasses and other green vegetation in the hay field and the bank of the brook, the green leaves, the pine trees, and manicured green lawn. I am grateful for the man that rigged up an irrigation system that uses the water from the brook which got replenished during last night's rain.

I could go on and on.

My attention drifts back to my coffee cup, and I'm grateful for the miracle machine that brews it easily and tidy for me. My thoughts drift to a friend who despises the pods and the impact they have on the environment.

Wait. Stop. Back to gratitude and appreciation!

For me, I fully appreciate these pods that I use for my first cup of coffee each day and the simplicity they offer me so early in the morning. Later, when I am more awake and the work day begins, I'll switch over to the coffee pot. But not now. For now, I love the simplicity of this ritual with the pod that fills my cup and provides me with that wonderful first sip during my Rampage of Uncommon Appreciation.

I take another sip and reach down to pet Sundae. Her purr gets louder and her fur is so soft since I've been feeding her the new food the veterinarian suggested.

So, you see, this Rampage of Appreciation might never end. There is so much to be grateful for all around us and allowing ourselves to go deeper into a Rampage of Uncommon Appreciation for just a few minutes a day is a powerful habit to build.

Now, that it is a habit I've incorporated into my daily practice, I find myself doing it intentionally throughout the day to raise my vibration in any given moment.

For example, the other day, I found myself getting frustrated with the long line at the grocery store. Instead of allowing my frustration to grow, I simply picked something in my cart and followed it to its origin and to all that was involved in it getting into my cart. I chose Sundae's new bag of cat food. I'm grateful for my phone that was able to take a picture of the cat food label so I would recognize it when I got to the store. I thought about the plant and the workers who manufacture it, ship it and stock it on the shelf so I could buy it. My attention shifted to the cashier who would soon ring me up, her supervisor who hired her (she is so pleasant).

I have noticed that, when I am in the space of gratitude, magical things happen and my days flow much easier. Sometimes I don't feel grateful, so I simply focus on my breath. Before long I find myself slipping into a Rampage of Appreciation around my breath, and how breathing delivers oxygen to all the cells of my body so each cell can do what it does to support me through my day.

My morning Rampage of Uncommon Appreciation is turning on a switch in my mind to access the magic of Universal flow.

I invite you to give it a try. Just 5-10 minutes a day. Be sure to have something to write with nearby. It can be a powerful, creative time for you realizing how much you have to be grateful for in your environment.