COLUMN

It's all good

Appreciation, Acknowledgement, Celebration

Writing 10 things you are grateful for... 10 things you acknowledge yourself for... and celebrating it all, in all ways, all the time— especially with your people.

by **Maran Banta**

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Going through the checkout at my favorite little grocery store, one of my favorite cashiers, Trish wasn't her usual favorite chipper self.

"What's up?" I asked while loading my stuff onto her conveyor.

"Aw, it's this Hurricane Wilma comin at us."

"Why?" I asked, I mean *this is* South Florida.
We are winding up Hurricane Season 2005. Both 2004 and 2005 broke records. Sure, we're all tired, but criminey, this is just Wednesday; Wilma ain't due til breakfast Saturday.

She said, "Awh, I'm gonna have to take care of two houses, do all the prep, get all the stuff and run around checking on my Mom and..." her voice trailed off, her head down as she slid my purchases over the scanner.

"Sweetie, you're a Daughter, A Mom and a Grandma, get over it."*

"You're right. I have a lot of people to love!" And suddenly she was beaming.

Being a 50 year old woman, something I have been for the past 18 months, has brought this knowing:

It really is that easy to shift from seeing the glass as half empty to seeing it as half full.

This from a woman who used to see the glass as not only half empty, but all chipped up at the rim with possible glass shards floating in the drink.

It wasn't easy coming to this awareness, not easy, but pretty simple (kinda' catchy formula there.)

Teresa Romain was coaching me and she gave me a three part formula for strengthening my ability to make this kind of shift.

Appreciation
Acknowledgement
Celebration

She strongly suggested I start keeping a Gratitude Journal. It was not a new idea to me, I'd read *Simple Abundance* years before— that and I thought that just saying 'Thank You' a lot and bringing appreciation into my daily prayers, and once in a while sending a card would be enough. And I know all of you know it, and still I'm going to say again, there is power in writing it down— whether it's your Intentions or Goals or Gratitude.

So, the Gratitude Journal became a part of my life. Writing 10 things every day I am grateful for. Simple, not easy, especially not at first.

At first, was nearly five years ago, and my life has dramatically improved on every level, though, honestly five years ago things were pretty good— but I had such a strong habit of focusing on what was wrong, on what I

didn’t have, on what else could go wrong, and I thought I was a pretty positive person— sheesh.

I had to really start with baby steps and gradually build this appreciation muscle that brings me so much joy today.

Oh, and the second part of the Gratitude Journal was even tougher— writing 10 things I acknowledge about myself.

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'Teresa, could you clarify that part of the assignment please?'

Certainly. Write 10 things you did that day that you can acknowledge yourself for doing.

Ohmygosh! There were many days that taking a shower and brushing my teeth made it onto my “I acknowledge Myself Today for” list.

Please don’t get the wrong idea, it’s not like I laid around all day, every day watching TV, but the idea of formally giving myself an “Attagirl” just seemed so... so weird.

Soon, I was really looking forward to making those acknowledgements.

We all want to be acknowledged and appreciated, and two really fun and unexpected things started happening when I began doing my lists:

> ***I started acknowledging and appreciating the people closest to me out-loud and much more often, too. And all kinds of people popped up all over my life***

acknowledging and appreciating me.

Maybe weirder was the next part of the mix.

Appreciation
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Celebration, well sure when someone graduates or gets married or has a baby or a birthday and you celebrate. You get all dressed up and buy a present and it takes a couple hours or even the whole day. That's a celebration, right?

Right, and how can you incorporate celebration into your day?

How about every time you complete something you celebrate a little— black tie and gowns not required— just a little. Just something that feels good.

Maybe a walk...
A cup of tea...
A round of Online Yahtzee...
A brief chat with a friend...
A piece of good chocolate...
A good full body stretch...
Maybe even saying out loud to yourself, "AttaGirl!' or 'AttaGuy!'

Then back to business.

Make your celebration proportionate to the accomplishment— You just made Triple Diamond Star Fleet Commander in your business, by all means go black tie (personally, I just know that when I make that one my shoes are gonna' cost more than I once budgeted for my annual wardrobe!)

Most of all celebrate your accomplishment based on where you are.

I do not have the time, it would just be too distracting if I celebrated every phone call or email I originated or responded to in the course of my business day. But if someone on my team is brand new to the business and is struggling with the four hundred pound phone, you bet I'm going to coach them to make a baby step number of calls— less than five— and take a break to celebrate themselves as soon as they complete the baby steps for that day.

As for me, I have just completed the first draft of my first column for this magazine.

I'm expressing appreciation for Trish showing up the way she did today. I'm acknowledging myself for lovingly chiding her into a better mood. And my new Spiritual Cinema Circle DVD just arrived and I'm off to celebrate by watching a 19 minute movie titled "Miracle Mile."

See ya' round the playground…
— Maran

The best thing about network marketing for me is learning life skills that have immense value.

The skill of being truly present and listening without agenda, and without judgment, which gifts the other person with the all too rare opportunity to show up as how and who they really are.

The skill of having fun even when— maybe especially when— working really hard.

The skills of Teamwork— not just working as part of a Team— really learning how to follow and support the leader, which turns out to be the very best way to learn how to be a leader.

And having this bundle of skills in my toolkit adds up to being magnetically attractive and a whole lot'a fun.

If ever there was a servant leader, it's Maran. "It's all good" is something she lives— whether in the chaotic aftermath of a South Florida hurricane or facing the frustrations of a seething subscriber who can't get into the site. "Take a deep breath", she says, and goes about her business of turning straw into gold.

I've been together with Maran for more than five years now. Tough and high times both. She is a rock. One of those highly polished, swirling blue Lapis lazuli ones with the word *Creativity* etched in platinum. Maran is all that good!
— JMF

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