

Pearls of Leadership Wisdom: Finding Delight and Gratitude

Greetings from my backyard in the mountains. Since our world is full of so many things we cannot control, like chaos, rancor, predictability, uncertainty, I want to zero in on a few things I can control. A few years ago in one of my books, I wrote a pearl called, "Finding Delight." I want to expand that Pearl just slightly for today and call it "Finding Delight and Gratitude" every day.

So recently my niece posted a wonderful series of interactions on Facebook between her and her four-year-old daughter. So I want you to imagine for just a moment that it's 6 a.m. and your sound asleep and your four year old pitter patters into the room and nudges you awake and asks these questions, "Why aren't there any clouds today?" "Are you having a loud nap or quiet nap?" "Why do villains have to be villains?" "Why isn't my brother awake yet?" "What does the sky taste like?" After I read this post, all day I was delighted. I found such delight in this child's questions, and I believe that if we just look closely enough, it doesn't have to be with children, you can find delight in everyday things that bring us joy. But this story about finding delight led me directly into finding gratitude.

Now there is a mindfulness exercise that some of you may have used already and that I know some of my friends have used, individuals who have gone through chemo, individuals who are struggling with something in their lives, individuals who just need a break from what their world is like, they have found this exercise to be extremely helpful to them and they do it, every day. The exercise is simple and it goes like this: Every night before you go to bed, you acknowledge five things for which you are grateful. Five things that happened in the day that you feel gratitude about. You can say them or write them down or whatever you want to do, but find those five things. Yesterday my five elements of gratitude went like this:

- I'm grateful for the sound of thunder in the middle of a rainstorm in the mountains.
- I'm grateful for the support of my friends whom I saw today on a zoom conversation.
- I am grateful for my husband, who reminded me today that he's my biggest cheerleader.
- I'm grateful that I'm healthy enough to be able to enjoy being out on the golf course, and
- I am grateful for the senior executive I'm coaching who trusts me enough to be vulnerable.

Those are my five. What are your five? Think about those at the end of every day. I truly believe that finding delight and finding gratitude are disciplines that we need for our emotional well-being. They are disciplines that will help us have a foundation to do the things we need to do in our world. I wish for you that you each find delight and gratitude.