

**The #1 Rule of Happiness:
Appreciate the Little Things**

Robyn McComb

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Introduction

They say to appreciate the little things in life. But why should the little things matter? Aren't the big things more important?

People spend their days worrying and thinking about the big things: acing that big test, getting that big salaried job, going on that big date. They fail to notice the sweet little things that make life so special. The bird that is warbling in the tree branch outside of your office window is a call to enjoy the prettiness of Nature rather than the stress of work, yet you probably do not take the time to notice it because you just have to get your proposal done for your demanding boss. The smell of baked bread can awaken pleasant memories of your childhood visiting Gramma, yet you are too busy thinking about what you will make for dinner to enjoy the nostalgic loveliness. Life is full of small, beautiful things but you fail to notice them because you are so focused on the future. As a result, you feel harried and depressed. The world seems dark. Where did all the beauty that you remember from your childhood go?

The world is not actually dark and the beauty that you saw as a kid did not go anywhere. You have simply stopped seeing the world's subtle beauty. Noticing a million little things that make you feel joyful can sum up to one big joyful mood in your heart. The little things really do matter. You should open your eyes and ears and take in the little things in life. When you appreciate the little things, you begin to appreciate life as a whole. You become happier. Throughout the day, you receive little tidbits of happiness to even out the stress and depression that your job and other worries poisons your heart with.

I found out the hard way how important the little things are. When I lost my child and my husband in the same year, I thought that I might break. All I could focus on was the huge, intense tragedy that had blown a hole through my world. Life would never be the same, that much I knew. I felt that the world was evil and that I did not want to be a part of it anymore. It can be hard to enjoy life after a trauma or tragedy shows you that the worst that you can imagine is indeed possible.

After my loss, I had little to live for. But I needed some sort of relief. I remember one day, while crying, I noticed how the crystal charm in my windows was breaking the sunlight into a million rainbow flecks across my room. It was so beautiful. For just a second, I began absorbed in that prism light, and I did not feel sad for the duration of my absorption. When I returned to focusing on my grief, I was slightly less sad because I had had a chance to feel happy for at least just a moment.

That taught me to appreciate the little things in life. Just a moment of happy observation could do wonders in lifting my mood. The little things in life gained a certain importance to me. I am frequently surprised at how blind others are to the most special moments in life. People make the mistake of thinking that these little things are not important, but they are.

The first rule of happiness is to appreciate the little things. The little things really do matter. A thousand little things add up into one big thing. So be sure to appreciate the little things in life and let the brief moments of happiness that the little things give you lead to a great deal of happiness.

With this book, I hope to teach you how to appreciate the little things. I hope to reawaken your interest in life and your appreciation of it. I hope to help you find happiness in what you already have. Just a few moments of happiness throughout the day is better than no happiness at all. Take a few moments to reflect on the beauty of the world around you, and you will begin to fall in love with life.

Chapter 1: The Ease of Appreciation

Once you begin the habit of appreciation, it becomes quite easy. It is a preferable way to look at the world, rather than ignoring the beauty in life to focus on the bad and the worries swirling your head.

All you have to do is appreciate the little things that you encounter throughout your journey on Earth. Your appreciation will make you feel happier and more fulfilled. You will feel better, and so will the people around you who have the privilege of experiencing your joy.

There is nothing hard about appreciating life, except maybe getting out of the habit of negativity. As adulthood has put distance between you and your child self, you may have fallen into the habit of worrying about things and thus taking the world for granted. By doing this, you have created some very bad habits. But these habits can be broken. Just by taking the time to survey the world around you once a day, you can begin to take on the better habit of loving life and loving yourself.

Anyone can do it. And everyone should do it. But we often overlook things or take things for granted. As a whole, the world is very preoccupied. People hurry along, looking at their phones, worried about dinner or the upcoming meeting. They fail to consider that these worries they have are not very significant at all. The worlds that they have built with their worries, their responsibilities, and their smart phones is not actually grounded on anything concrete. Half of the things they worry about will not even come to pass, or will not be relevant in just a year. Yet people give a massive amount of power to these worries and fail to focus on what is real and what is concrete.

Many people get into the terrible habit of ignoring the world around them. They get so wrapped up in their worries and concerns that they no longer appreciate the looks on their children's faces in the mornings or the sound of birds singing in the trees in the park. They think that the world will hold still for them while they take care of the next big project or concern. They take the stillness and security of their worlds for granted. Then, one day, a terrible tragedy alters their world completely. Or they wake up and realize that a lot of time has passed and they have missed out on so much out of willing blindness. They wish that they had paid a little more attention and appreciated the things and people around them more.

The large amounts of mental illness like anxiety and depression often arise from this habit of ignoring the world around us. As people fail to appreciate the beautiful little things in life, they give all of their mental energy to trivial worries that seem so monumental at the time. Usually they devote this energy to work, because we all need money to survive. Unfortunately, the need for money can grow into the inadvertent abandonment of life outside of work and non-material things that have nothing to do with money. There is no happiness in that cold world of worry and work that offers no play. It is a fake world, and a sorrowful one. No one can stay full of vitality and lust for life if they focus on such a world.

Depression and anxiety grow because people lose what is most important to them. They stop really living, and they stop enjoying life around them. They become automatons, and they hate every minute that they are stuck in. All they think about is the little fake world that they have created, which offers none of the warmth of Nature and family. These poor people do not realize that a simple readjustment in thinking can reawaken their spirits and their will to live.

I do not want to see you become depressed and empty as you focus on a world that offers you nothing beyond the material. I do not want to see you wake up one day with the world as you know it gone, and your heart full of regret that you never once stopped and smelled the roses. I am sure that you do not want those things for yourself, either.

After reading this book and learning to appreciate the little things in life, you can become at least ten percent happier. But I'm sure that you will become even happier than that. You will renew your lust for life as you realize how much there is to live for. Your gratitude and positivity will flourish, and there will be no more room for depression and boredom.

I suggest that you begin to treat every day as a new adventure. Imagine yourself as Indiana Jones, undertaking a new treasure hunt the moment you wake up. Instead of just hurrying to work or going about your normal routine feeling like you do not have time for anything special, go try that new coffee place, sniff the roses in the park, or stop to admire a scenic view. Instead of crashing in front of the TV with a beer after work, too exhausted to do anything, actually start to undertake that project that you have been putting off, play a new game with your kids, or try to cook a new kind of food that you have never attempted to cook before. I guarantee that your energy will grow exponentially when you start to act, because you are not tired after work, you are just drained of energy and uninspired.

Start trying new things and exploring yourself and the world around you. Have conversations with strangers and try new classes and new workout routines. The world offers a great deal to explore, and you may just find something you really enjoy doing. There is no need to lie around, doing nothing and feeling trapped by your mental blockages, when the world is ripe for the picking.

But you do not have to try anything new to renew your interest in life. Just taking a moment to appreciate the activities you already do and the things you already have can restore your vigor and vitality. Your life is actually quite full and wonderful, you have just gotten used to it and you have started to ignore it. You will be surprised when you look around and realize all the joyful, beautiful things that you do have that are there to make you happy.

Chapter 2: Appreciate that You are Alive

Why not start with your appreciation journey with the most fundamental thing of all? The fact that you are alive. You are actually alive! You are still breathing and your heart is still pumping blood. No matter what you have been through or how poor your health is, you are still here, ready for another day. If there is something more to be grateful for, I sure do not know what it is.

Being alive technically is not a little thing; rather, it is a pretty big thing. But your survival often feels like a little thing because you take your bodily functions for granted.

Appreciate each day you wake up is a new chance to do better. You woke up this morning and there is a whole new day ahead of you. You can do whatever you want with this new day. You can actually do better than you did yesterday, if you put your mind to it. Just be grateful that you still have a chance.

Appreciate the things that give you sustenance. You have the elements needed to keep your body alive for another day. You have food, and you have clean drinking water. Appreciate those things. Not everyone is as blessed as you. Life may be bad in some ways, but at least you get to taste yummy, nourishing food on your tongue. You do not have to go to bed with your stomach panging in hunger. You also do not have to feel the raspiness of your parched tongue as you trek twenty miles to get water that you may get dysentery from. As you eat and drink water, enjoy the taste and the nourishment that you gain. Let it fill you and sustain you for another day of wonderful life.

Appreciate shelter. The roof over your head may not be perfect for whatever reason, but it is a roof. You are shielded from the blazing sun, the cold wind, and the heavy rain. You have a place to keep your possessions, no matter how few or many things you own.

Appreciate breath. You are able to enjoy the beautiful things in life because you are still breathing. You would not be here if it was not for the constant rhythm of breath that goes in and out, in and out, in and out of your chest, even while you are sleeping. You have been breathing all day and every day of your life so you probably do not even notice your breath most of the time. Your breath is an automatic function that your body performs for you. But with that breath, you keep going. The day that breath stops is the day you no longer can appreciate life and rise up each day to greet new opportunities and possibilities. As you breathe, really feel the rush of air along your throat and the way your chest fills and then collapses. Appreciate every breath as it seeps oxygen into your bloodstream and regulates your body temperature.

From there, you should go on to appreciate the rest of your body as it toils just to keep you alive. Your heart, your brain, your nerves, your liver, your kidneys, your bones, your lymph nodes, and the countless other parts of you are all performing the miraculous task of life as you read this. They have since you were conceived. You do not have to even think about your body to make it work. It just does what it supposed to do. Even in sickness, your body tries to keep going. Even when you are injured, your body

tries to heal itself. Your body is a complex organism that runs on its own and actually grew from just one cell. It is nothing short of miraculous that you are even here.

Appreciate the disasters that you have narrowly escaped. Almost all of us have had near-death experiences. Somehow, you are still here. You have survived stupid stunts and accidents and the bad intentions of others. You overcame bacteria and viruses that invaded your body, and you healed from injuries that could have become infected and killed you otherwise. You are here, despite the many threats and dangers made against your life.

Appreciate the people that make your life possible. Your parents, however close to them you may be or may have been, gave you life. Your employer, even if he or she is unbearable, helps keep your lights and your heat on and food in your refrigerator. Even your kids and your spouse, if you have a family of your own, give you the motivation and the purpose you need to go on.

There has been a very long chain of other people who have also made your life possible, though you may not even know them personally. Farmers, truck drivers, AC installers, home builders, doctors, nurses, and countless other people have tirelessly worked and contributed to your life somehow. The way you live now is all because of their efforts. If they had not been there, would you be as comfortable? Would you even be alive? Take a long moment to appreciate the vast network of people responsible for your life as you know it.

Finally, appreciate that today you are alive on this Earth. No one is in your exact position on the Earth right now, looking at the world the way you do. No one is you. You are unique and you have a definite place in the cosmos, however small that place may be. You are lucky to be alive, and you are lucky that this planet is inhabitable. You would not be alive otherwise. Appreciate that Earth is your home, that the atmosphere is breathable, and that you are here today reading this book.

Chapter 3: Appreciate the Good Things in Life

The good things in life are often the small things, the things you do not have to buy for a lot of money. They are there, even if you can't see them right now. They are things that give you joy and pleasure and fill you with excitement. They make life enjoyable.

When you were a kid, you were more in the moment. You found that the small things made the world go around. For example, if you found out that your favorite food was going to be served at lunch at school, you appreciated that very much and your excitement to eat washed out any sadness or stress that you may have been feeling at the time. Now, as an adult, you may gotten out of this habit. So take some time to appreciate the good things in life and regain your appreciation for life as a whole.

Appreciate the smell of food. The smell of baked bread or chocolate chip cookies, filling the air and making your salivary glands activate. The smell of a freshly sliced tomato or cantaloupe. Let these smells consume you as you cook or as you walk through the aisles of the grocery store. These foods give you life and they are so yummy. Their pleasant aromas provide you with at least a brief moment of olfactory pleasure.

Appreciate the first sip of coffee or tea. Appreciate how the taste overwhelms your senses. That first taste only happens once a day. Enjoy it, savor it even.

Appreciate laughter. Hilarious comedy routines, inside jokes with your friends and family, and laughing with your kids are all times when you abandon the world's worries and have a good time at the soul level. You reach a point where you feel nothing besides the force of your laughter and the sore feeling that a good laugh leaves in your belly muscles. You may even cry a little. In this moment, you are gone, in a good, happy place.

Appreciate feeling of your first morning stretch when you first get out of bed. Your muscles are stiff and stubborn but you make them comply. The feeling is so comforting that it is hard to describe. The stretching sensation reaches deep into your cells, into your core. You feel it all over and it feels good. You then feel refreshed and more prepared for the day ahead.

Appreciate the feeling of the cold, bright and fresh on your exposed skin. Appreciate the pretty way that your breath plumes in front of you. There is nothing like cold to wake you up and give you vitality. Then appreciate how good the warmth of a fire or heater and a hot drink like cocoa feels when you break out of the cold outside.

Appreciate the sensation of a pool enveloping you in its cool, inviting water on a hot summer day. You may have been burning up getting to the pool, and the soles of your feet may feel burned from the concrete at the pool side, but now you are refreshed and relieved from the heat.

Appreciate the scent of your fabric softener, so familiar yet so sweet. Appreciate the smell of your favorite fragrance as you first spray it on and it cloaks your body in scented mist. Appreciate the smell of your lover's fragrance too.

Appreciate the comfort of an old movie. You have seen it a million times, but it brings back nostalgia from childhood or a different era in history. Appreciate your popcorn and your loved ones around you as the TV makes the walls of your living room flicker different colors. This is home. This is comfort.

Appreciate the smooth, soapy feeling when you first slide into a bubble bath or when you take a hot shower after a long day. Feel the suds race down your skin and over your feet before they swirl down the drain. As your tension and your dirtiness drains away, you can clear your mind. Appreciate the softness of your towel as you get dry, and the sensation of your clothes sliding on over your clean skin.

Appreciate having a picnic or barbecue with the people that you love. While you try to fend off flies and ants, you connect with Nature and your family. You enjoy good food and the sunshine. You make a memory. You enjoy the smell of barbecue smoke and meat dripping with sauce, or else you enjoy the skewered veggies if you are a vegetarian. Appreciate how you have all united to share this experience and to enjoy the sustenance of life, food.

Appreciate that moment that your favorite song randomly comes on. You have your iPod on shuffle or you are listening to the radio and out of nowhere, you hear those familiar first few chords. Your soul alights in excitement for the rest of the song.

Appreciate opening a box of chocolates and trying to select one that you like. You feel suspense. What if you picked one of the nasty ones? Then, when you get the tasty one that is your favorite, appreciate the delight of the bright sweetness and the resulting pleasure of each bite.

Appreciate every moment of sex. The sweat, the body scents, the pleasure, the breath, the sense of being close to someone. Sometimes the best things in bed are not sex itself, but the sensation of skin contact and tactile touch. Appreciate how just the brush of a fingertip or the flick of a tongue can feel so purely and shockingly amazing.

More than anything, appreciate what seems good to you. Appreciate the simple and even weird pleasures that make you smile and feel whole. We are all unique. Some of us love certain sensations that are inexplicable to others. Find that happy sensation or activity, where your cares fade away and you feel only satisfaction, enjoyment, and contentment flood your body.

Chapter 4: Appreciate Nature

Nature is all around you and it is beautiful. Nature offers you a free show every day. Learn to watch the show and appreciate it. You will be filled with awe more often than not.

The stars are perhaps the most spellbinding elements of Nature. Take some time to stargaze. Appreciate the way that the stars twinkle. Appreciate the random constellations that they form. Make up some constellations of your own. Appreciate that many of the stars we see now are in fact dead, and that the true picture of the sky is unknown. What a great mystery. Appreciate that you got to see the radiance of these stars before they died. They got to be a part of your life, even when they are no more.

Appreciate the rain. Appreciate its soothing pitter patter. Appreciate its clean scent. If you live in the desert, you can appreciate the scent of rain even more than those that live in other climates. Appreciate how rain nourishes the Earth and gives life to the greenery around you and the food that you eat.

Also, appreciate the snow. Appreciate its fluffy coldness and how it transforms the world around you into a snowy winter wonderland. It can change the shape of buildings and trees and the land itself as it makes drifts. It serves as a canvas for snow angels and as a material for making snowballs. You can even make snow-cones or molasses candy with it! Appreciate the fun that snow offers for sports like skiing and sledding. Appreciate how snow days used to be Heaven for you as a kid, and is or will be Heaven for your kids as well.

Appreciate rainbows. The simple science of a sun ray refracting into all the colors of the spectrum on the prism of raindrops creates beautiful spectacles. Appreciate the fact that you can never reach the true end of a rainbow.

Appreciate the sun and the way it feeds the plants around you without even trying. Appreciate the bursts of color the sun makes when it sets and rises. Appreciate how the sky transforms and you can see the stars and the moon once the sun gives up its reign over the sky for the night.

Appreciate the feeling of the air on your skin as you jog or as you power walk to your next destination. The cool breeze or the hot, muggy air always has a unique quality to it. Every climate is different. We get so used to living in our particular climate that we forget to feel it in its full splendor.

The feeling of water on your hands and on your skin in the shower, or when you wash your hands, is unique. Nothing feels quite like water. Other liquids or sticky or toxic or feel heavier than water. Appreciate its unique, life-giving qualities and its special texture.

Appreciate even the ground under your feet as you walk to the grocery store or work. The solidness of the ground is something reassuring and easily taken for granted. Take a moment to really feel this solidness, and to appreciate it for being the one sure

things that you have always relied on. Sometimes the earth does collapse or an earthquake turns it to dubious solidity, but usually the earth is always there, solid beneath your feet, holding you up.

Appreciate gravity. This may seem so silly. But Earth's gravity is perfect. It is preventing you from floating up into space and freezing to death as you drift into nothingness, and it is keeping you from tumbling down to the ground, unable to breathe as the atmosphere crushes you.

On any other planet, you would not be able to survive. The particular chemical cocktail of our atmosphere and the level of gravity and the heat we get from the sun makes Earth inhabitable for you. Appreciate this.

Appreciate flowers. They are beautiful. They smell sweet. They add bursts of color to yards and walkways, and they grace Nature with unabashed, brilliant beauty. Because of flowers, bees and other pollinators are able to eat, and keep foods like avocados and mangos on your table. They also keep plants alive, which enable you to breathe the right level of oxygen. Flowers play a more major role in your life than you realize.

You should also appreciate animals, and the birds and the bees. The fragile ecosystems of the world sustain you. Your pets love you and keep you from feeling alone sometimes. Animals are your fellow souls. They come in all shapes and sizes. They share the earth with you and provide you with food, pets, and amusement. Your survival is dependent upon them in some way or another.

Appreciate the ocean. The way it smells, the sound of the waves caressing or even striking the beach. Appreciate the vast depths of the ocean that we have not been able to reach even with sonar, and appreciate the secrets and mysteries that these depths must hold. Appreciate sea creatures, funny looking as they are, and the yummy seafood that the ocean yields for humans to eat. Appreciate how the ocean catches fire with the colors of the sunset or sunrise, and how it turns amethyst or black with nightfall. Appreciate how it caresses you, and how salty it tastes when you accidentally swallow some of its brine.

The exotic animals that you see at the zoo are bizarre and beautiful. They are unlike you have ever seen in your environment. Appreciate them. Appreciate that they grace this Earth and that they are here for your viewing pleasure. Take a stroll through the zoo for no reason except to enjoy all the mysterious, amazing, and inexplicable things that Nature has to offer. Whatever you believe in. creation or evolution, you should find this spectacle awe-inspiring.

Appreciate the birds and their songs. Appreciate how they toil to build nests that balance perfectly in tree branches. Appreciate how they can fly effortlessly, and how they teach their babies to fly too.

Appreciate how predators like owls and hawks can spot tiny prey in the grass. Appreciate how woodpeckers can hear worms tunneling in tree bark. These animals

have very fine senses that enable them to provide population control for many species. They are essential links in the food cycle.

Appreciate the changing of the seasons. Just as you start to get tired of the weather of one season, another comes around to relieve you. The spring builds you up with excitement for the fun of the summer, like playing in the pool and floating on the river. Meanwhile, the fall builds you up for the excitement of trick-or-treating, carving pumpkins, building snowmen and staying in by the fire or woodstove with hot tea or cocoa. Through the seasons, you watch the tree foliage and the garden plants change. You witness the migration of birds and butterflies as they head south and then north. Every year, the cycle is the same, yet you experience it through new eyes. As you mature and change, you enter each year and go through the seasons just a little bit different and a little bit the same. The cycle of the seasons never grows old.

Appreciate the very cycle of life. For every death, there is also birth. In Nature and in your home life, youth and old age form an endless cycle of give and take. A balance is always struck between loss and gain. While this cycle can be bittersweet and even painful, it is also necessary for life. Appreciate how it keeps populations balanced and gives new people the gift of life and old people the gift of experience and wisdom.

Chapter 5: Appreciate Comfort

Comfort makes you feel good. It also separates you from extreme hardship. Comfort is essentially a luxury that you are lucky to possess. Even just having a comfortable couch sets you apart from people who are homeless and have no comforts in life. Comfort can give you something to look forward to, and it can make you feel better after a long, hard day. It is something that you should definitely appreciate.

Appreciate warmth in winter. Whether you get warmth from a heater or a woodstove or a fireplace, this heat is comfortable. Appreciate the comfortable warmth that coats, mittens, boots, and hats can provide your body when you venture out into the frigid weather. Appreciate hot drinks, like apple cider, that fill your body with warmth and comfort.

Appreciate coolness in summer. The feeling of the air conditioning, the coolness offered by shorts and tank tops, and the coolness of the pool are all comforts that can dissipate the annoying heat of the summer. Nothing feels better than knocking back a cold drink or entering an air conditioned room when it is insufferably warm outside.

Appreciate the softness of your bed. Some people do not get to sleep on a mattress. Your mattress is a luxury that cradles your body through the night, making sleep more enjoyable and relaxing for you. Appreciate your soft blankets and the gentle warmth and the sense of safety they give you as you snooze. Appreciate the comfort of sleep when you are tired. Sleep feels like a soft cloud, descending over you and lulling into a place where you do not have any cares or worries.

Appreciate the comfort of thick-soled shoes. Appreciate the way they protect your feet from hot pavement, cold snow, and soreness from standing for too long. If you work in a field where you have to stand or walk a lot, you will appreciate this comfort even more.

Appreciate the comfort of a familiar voice. Even when you are scared or the world seems to be falling apart, hearing the voice of someone you love can ground you and relieve your fear.

Appreciate the comforts of food. Even food that is bad for you and causes you some guilt can be a wonderful treat now and then. Appreciate how good food makes you feel full and content. Appreciate how food can elevate your mood. Appreciate how when you are sad, a bite of chocolate or ice cream can make you feel better. Above all, appreciate the comfort of your mom's or grandma's specialties.

Appreciate the comfort of certain textures. A silk robe, plush pajamas, and deep slippers can make you so comfortable. They embrace your body and ease your soreness or tiredness. They help relax you and dissipate the tension in your muscles. All day, you can look forward to curling up in your favorite comfortable clothes.

Appreciate your comfy clothes. These can be sports clothes, or sweats that are falling apart. These could be pajamas. These can be ugly, oversized, stained, and stretched-out

clothes that should be in the trash. But you save them because they are just so comfortable. You may never dare to go out in public in these clothes, but you can look forward to relaxing in them.

Appreciate the comfort of routine. Structure can prevent you from feeling stressed. You can use the routine of your day as guides for how to live and pass the time. There is comfort in structure rather than chaos and confusion.

Appreciate the comfort of family tradition. Old traditions can be very comforting. You can find comfort in watching the same holiday movies with your family in the days leading up to Christmas. You can find comfort in eating the same dishes at Thanksgiving. Tradition can remind you of the nostalgic past, and reassure you that no matter what happens, the things you love are still there.

Appreciate the comfort of electricity. Not everyone in the world can flick on lights whenever they want. Electricity is something that we take for granted, but it really is a luxury. You do not realize how much you depend on it and how easy it makes life until you don't have it.

Appreciate the comfort of running water, especially hot water. You can wash your hands in warmth and take a hot bath. You can enjoy warmth without any effort on your part.

Appreciate the comfort of cars. You can go anywhere you need at any time with cars. They make life easier. They, too, are a luxury that many people do not have. If you don't own a car, appreciate the comforts of easy public transit.

Appreciate the comfort of your job. Your job keeps your bills paid. There is comfort in knowing that you have a paycheck coming soon. Even if times are hard financially, you are not starving. There is comfort in that. There is also comfort in knowing that money comes and goes, and one day things will be better than they are now.

Appreciate the comfort of furniture. If you have ever gone camping, you will understand how life feels without furnishings. They add so much comfort and character to your home. You have places to sit down and set things down on.

Appreciate the comfort of silence. Sometimes, quiet is what you need. Appreciate quietness and let it envelop you in calm. Let the voices in your head fall to a hush to match the silence around you. Let the din of the world fade behind you, to be dealt with at another time.

Appreciate the comfort of being able to get food at any time. You can just pull through a drive-thru at a fast food restaurant or order pizza or Chinese. Now you can even use a few buttons on an app in your phone to order food. You probably no longer have to slave away at a garden or farm field just to provide for your family.

Appreciate the comfort of knowing that there is an entire team of firefighters, EMTs, and other first responders there to protect your safety. You are fairly safe.

Chapter 6: Appreciate Art

There is much fine art so appreciate it. Art gives you new ideas and perspectives on the world. It makes you think and even feel. Even the art you don't like can elicit some sort of feeling from you. Some say that art makes life worth living. Whether or not you agree, art can certainly add flavor and joy to life. It can add rawness and authenticity that the world often lacks, too. Take some time to appreciate art in all of its forms.

Appreciate movies and the massive amount of work that goes into making them. Huge crews of people participate in the magic of making mere scripts on paper come alive on screen. A good movie will suck you in. You will feel like it is real and you will stop paying attention to the real world around you. Appreciate the little mental vacation that movies offer you.

Appreciate pretty jewelry. The effort and talent that go into making jewelry is astounding. The fine details, the curves and whorls in the metal, the beauty and color of the jewels, are there just for your delight. Some jewelry is minimalistic and its beauty lies in its simplicity. Other pieces are unbelievably complex and intricate.

Appreciate murals and street art. Lurid graffiti and murals add special beauty to the bare walls and streets. Even if you do not like graffiti, you can at least appreciate its uniqueness and the color it adds to streets. If you walk about a city long enough, you will start to notice the little, tiny unique things that people paint or draw in public places. People leave their marks. Appreciate that these are people you may never meet, or else you have passed them on the crowded street. Wonder about their stories and what drove them to leave the mark that they did.

Appreciate literature. Someone poured his or her heart and soul into the words that you are reading. You are basically staring at the slivers of a dead tree and drifting into other worlds. Words printed on a page are triggering you to imagine worlds that do not even exist. Books have the unique power to make you imagine. They educate you and awaken your creativity.

Appreciate colors. Appreciate how they add character and uniqueness to the world. Appreciate how they blend together or stand apart, and blaze in striking beauty. Appreciate how color affects your moods and shapes your experience in life. Certain colors probably resonate with you; appreciate how they make you feel and how your body has such an amazingly strong emotional response to mere reflections of light on a spectrum.

Appreciate unique clothes. Clothing sets you apart and lends you part of your unique style. You own clothes that no one else does, and you possibly own clothes that other people do. Either way, clothes are a part of your culture. You feel wonderful when you wear nice clothing. Clothes help you feel warm or cool, secure, and even attractive. Some clothes are truly stunning and complex in their design.

Appreciate dance and the finesse and physical strength of dancers. Appreciate the complex choreography that somehow everyone in a troupe is able to remember. Appreciate how simple physical movement can be used to create a story line.

Appreciate the unique ability that music has to make you feel something. Music is a powerful medium that can entrance you and transport you to other dimensions of feeling and thought. There is nothing better than the moment when you identify with the lyrics of a song. You may feel alone, and then you find another musical artist who feels just the way that you do. The swells and crescendos of music can invoke drama and excitement in your soul. The beat of a song may drive you to dance or walk fast. Music can take hold of you in a way that few other things in the world can. Appreciate its power and the special effect it has on you.

Appreciate finely made musical instruments. Appreciate how an interest blend of physics can create beautiful sounds. Appreciate the aesthetics of these instruments too. They are able to look beautiful and sound beautiful too.

Appreciate finely made furniture, as well. Beautiful furniture can make or break the functionality and appearance of a house. The furniture of a home has the power to change the entire mood and appearance of a room. There is a difference between a house and a home, and furniture is part of what makes that difference.

Appreciate the art of different cultures and how different people are in their forms of expression. Cultures are reflected in their art. You can surmise a lot about the nature and the religious beliefs of a culture by its art. Since art is a reflection of life, cultural elements are packed into art. Art resonates with the people of a culture and it can resonate in you too.

Appreciate the unique perspectives that different people can add to art. Give ten people a pen and ask each of them to draw a tree. You will get ten very different trees. People all see the world in different ways and this manifests in artistic expression. No two paintings are alike. Even fakes are not true copies of the original.

Appreciate the countless mediums that art can use. Art can be made with just a piece of cardboard and crayons, like the famous painting *The Scream*. Music can be made with plastic buckets or shoeboxes or straws. There are even artists who create with sand or salt and other simple household items. Art can be created out of nothing; if the artist has a will, he or she will make a way.

Appreciate the creative genius and talent of artists. Art is part of humanity. The ability to recreate the world in new perspectives calls for great imagination and sensitivity to the world's sensations. People with amazing dexterity are able to create the most miniscule details. People with amazing hand-eye coordination are able to paint and draw lifelike images, and play complex musical instruments.

If you make art, appreciate the beauty of what you create and how much you enjoy it. Art is one those passions that can fuel your lust for life. You can spend hours creating art, lost in the timeless vortex of creativity. Appreciate the artistic gift that you

developed naturally, and appreciate the mentors you may have had that helped you hone your art. Appreciate your medium of choice and the ease with which you have learned to use it. Appreciate being part of a very special community of artists and creative types.

Chapter 7: Appreciate Scents

Olfactory pleasure is one of the greatest pleasures available to humans. You can feel better just by smelling something pleasant. Your nose is a powerful mechanism that shapes your experience of the world around you. Scents can be nasty, but they can also sharpen your senses and make you feel good. Some scents are even designed to provide you with relaxation.

Appreciate the smell of baking cookies and food. Food smells delicious. As your mouth begins to water, appreciate the anticipated pleasure that is filling your body.

Appreciate the smell of a garden. Not just the scent of the flowers, but also the scent of the fresh plants and the fresh soil. Appreciate how it smells after rain or after a watering.

Appreciate the smell of the air. If you are in the desert or the forest or by the ocean, the air will have a distinct scent. But the air of any place that you call home can have a familiar scent that you can appreciate.

Appreciate the scent of the freshly mowed grass in your lawn or the local park. Even if this scent irritates your allergies, it is the scent of summer. It is the scent of plant life so abundant that it must be trimmed back with lawn mowers and weed eaters.

Appreciate the perfume or cologne that you wear. There is a reason that you chose it. As the new scent envelops you, enjoy it and appreciate how it makes you smell. Appreciate how a unique blend of chemicals created a scent profile that appeals to you and to others.

Appreciate the perfume or cologne that others wear. As good-smelling people walk by you, appreciate the way that their fragrances bring you pleasure. Appreciate how these people made an effort to appeal to your nose.

Also, appreciate the unique smell profiles of different people. If you are close to someone, you have gotten used to the smell of their skin and sweat. Gross or not, this smell is comforting. It is uniquely theirs. Appreciate that they have a unique scent to comfort you and assure you of their presence. This scent is how you can identify them, even if you cannot see them.

Appreciate the scents you use for your house. Things like Febreze, Glade, and incense add unique fragrances to your home. When you smell them, you feel calm, like you are at home.

Appreciate how you can also influence your moods by using certain essential oils, like lavender. If you feel down, use a scent to boost you back up. If you want to relax, use a scent to mellow you out. The powers of scents are incredible. Appreciate that.

Go smell some roses, perfumes, or candles to remind you how beautiful the world can be. Surround yourself with scents that make you happy and satisfy your olfactory senses. Appreciate how you can elevate your mood just by smelling something good.

Chapter 8: Appreciate Tastes

Like scents, flavors are another form of sensation that can bring you so much joy and happiness. Flavors are unique and hard to describe. They make you love food, wine, and cocktails. They allow you to relish mealtime and snack time. Scent and smell are related. They are major parts of your appetite.

Appreciate sweet flavors. The flavors of ice cream and your favorite candy as a kid are probably nostalgic for you.

Appreciate savory flavors. The flavors of Chinese and other savory foods are robust and deeply satisfying.

Appreciate the fine flavor profiles of wine. Certain flavors, like buttery or woody or floral, are unique and you can only gain a sense of them through experience. These are unique flavors, the elevated flavors of expensive and acquired taste. The same unique flavors accompany whisky and craft beers.

Appreciate the smoky flavor of some sausages and cheeses. Smoke is a hard flavor to capture. It can put you in mind of grilling out and camping trips.

Appreciate the flavor of roasted hot dogs and s'mores. Barbecue and camping favorites are not only delicious, but they probably can transport you back to your past as a kid. They can put you in mind of warm summer days, spending time with your relatives.

Appreciate salty goodness. The unique flavor of salt is perfect in the right amount. Too much is nasty and too little is plain; when you strike that perfect balance of saltiness, food tastes just the way you like. Your idea of the perfect level of saltiness is unique. It is probably not the same as the next guy's. However salty you like food, appreciate that wonderful satisfaction you get when you hit that perfect amount of salt.

The same goes for spicy food and seasonings. Appreciate when the seasoning is just right for you. Appreciate that perfect level of seasoning or spiciness that is just for you.

Appreciate the flavor of your favorite hearty stew. Appreciate how it makes you feel full and warm, especially on cold days. Appreciate its unique aroma that makes your mouth water.

Appreciate how different ingredients join together to create a unique flavor. This is especially true in alcohol mixology. Three or four different liquors taste terrible by themselves, yet blend together to make things like Long Island Iced Teas and ADMFs.

Appreciate the interesting aftertastes of certain foods. Sometimes, the aftertaste is what makes food good. An aftertaste can linger for a long time, reminding you throughout the day of the deliciousness of food that you ate.

Appreciate the taste of your favorite soup, both hot and delicious. Whether you like thick, creamy soups like clam chowder or lighter soups like chicken broth or lobster

bisque, the flavor of your favorite soup is something that you thoroughly enjoy. Appreciate that the flavor exists to make you say, "Yum."

Chapter 9: Appreciate People

The people in your life can make life more stressful. But they can also make it more wonderful. The people around you are unique. You will never meet the same exact people again. Their time is limited, so appreciate them while you can. The people in your life are a fundamental part of your life and you would be much emptier and lonelier without them around.

Appreciate that you know the people that you do. Their quirks, their eccentricities, and their flaws all make them interesting and unique. Their stories fill your head, giving you ideas. Their presences are interesting and even comforting. Without them, life would be much more boring.

Talk to friends and appreciate their presence. They are there for you. They like you. They could be with anyone else in the world right now, but they choose to spend time with you! Consider that if circumstances were not just right, you two may never have met. It was through a long, bizarre chain of circumstances that you two happened to meet. There is a lot going on behind your friendship. It is very special indeed.

Call up people that you have not spoken to in a while, just so that you can appreciate their voices and their presences in your life. Show them that appreciation. People love to feel appreciated, and you will feel the joy that you give others just by showing your love. All you have to do is take a few minutes to say hi and show that you care. It is not hard and it makes everyone feel good.

Appreciate when people call you up just to say hi, too. Appreciate that there are people who think about you.

Appreciate your family, despite their quirks and flaws. Without them, you would not be alive. No one's family is ever perfect. Even if your family is particularly bad, they are still family. You probably never would have picked this random group of people as your friends if you had not been born into them. Therefore, you are lucky to know them. You may have never met them otherwise.

Appreciate the things that family does for you. The favors, the protection. Your family is the one thing you can fall back on.

Appreciate the fact that you have known each other for a long time. Your closeness over the years has given rise to many memories and many inside jokes. Even if your relationships are strained, blood and time mean a lot.

Appreciate that your family has made you who you are today. Your family has shaped you into who you are over the years. You would not be the same without them. Even if you dislike certain things about yourself, there are probably many good things that your family helped you attain or become.

Appreciate the service people around you that make your life easier. Without them, you would not have the luxuries and comforts that you do. You would have to do

everything yourself. Appreciate the smiling grocery store clerk, the butcher, the baker, the florist. Appreciate the bank teller and the manager. Appreciate the mailman.

Behind these people are entire networks of other people working in agriculture, floriculture, mail, trade, etc. These people all play a role in the comforts and luxuries that you now enjoy. A great deal of work goes on behind the scenes. Appreciate the vastness of the production behind each little thing.

Even go so far as to appreciate the people who manage your utilities. Life would be so much harder if there were not so many people working to remove your trash and sewage, keep your home powered with electricity, and pipe natural gas or ship propane for your heaters and stove. The people who work to keep your streets and roads smooth and safe are also good to appreciate. Life would not be so easy without them.

Appreciate the people who work tirelessly to keep you and your loved ones alive and safe. Appreciate doctor and the nurses. Appreciate EMTs and firemen. Appreciate first responders. Even though sirens can be annoying, each siren you hear is potentially saving a life. One day that life could be yours.

Appreciate the heroes out there. They may or may not have intended to become heroes. But because of their actions, they have made the world a slightly better place. They even touch you. Do you recall the last time you received help from a good Samaritan, or saw a story on the news about a hero saving somebody, and you felt the joy well up in your chest? This is how heroes have touched you.

Appreciate the kind strangers who brighten your day with just a smile or a nice gesture. These people are like heroes in small, subtle ways. They can certainly rescue you when you are low and depressed. Kind strangers do not have to be nice to you, but they are. They surprise you with their helpfulness. Usually, they never expect anything back, and they vanish back into the wood work from whence they came.

Appreciate the people throughout history who have worked to make life what it is today. Countless people have worked to create our modern society. As they have improved civil rights and invented helpful technology, they have shaped the world into what it now is. Appreciate their brave efforts. Appreciate the differences that they have made. Who knows what life would be like without their marks on history?

Chapter 10: Appreciate Pets

Dogs are man's best friend. No matter what kind of pet you have, though, it probably brings you great joy and comfort. Your life is more wholesome with a pet. If you do not have a pet, have you considered getting one? They can increase the enjoyment you experience in life.

Appreciate how your pets love you no matter what. They depend on you totally for everything. To them, you are the epicenter of the universe. You are both provider and friend. They need you and they love you.

Appreciate how your pets accept you as you are. They see you in your rawest form, but they do not judge. You can dance around like an idiot to your favorite song and your pets will not laugh at you. They also will not spread rumors about how odd you are.

Appreciate how your pets cannot betray you the way humans can. This is not to say that humans are terrible and that you need to shut yourself in your house with only animals for companionship. But it is great how loyal and faithful pets are. Even if they wanted to betray you by talking about you behind your back, they can't.

Appreciate how soft their fur feels when you pet them. Petting pets is incredibly soothing. Enjoy it.

Appreciate how they look up to you. You have mastery and control. You are God to pets.

Appreciate how animals keep you from being alone. Even when you are all by yourself, your pet is faithfully there. It can keep you company whether you have other people in your life or not.

Appreciate being able to do fun things with your pet, like going for walks in the park and playing fetch. You get to go out and have fun together. You get to share special moments.

Appreciate the differences that separate species. Your pets probably have all sorts of little eccentricities that make them different from you. These differences can be very entertaining or interesting to observe. As your dog kicks and barks in his sleep or your cat chases lasers, you get to enjoy the evolutionary traits that make your pet unique to its own species.

Chapter 11: Appreciate Culture

American culture, and most other Western cultures, are unique melting pots of many different cultures. The large number of immigrants that have settled in America make it one of the most unique places in the world, creating multiple subcultures and contributing the overall culture that all Americans share. Britain, Australia, and Japan are some examples of other countries that host many immigrants and are influenced by immigrant culture as well.

Other countries also have very unique cultures. The different elements of culture, from cooking to art to manners, create unique frameworks for the minds of culture members. Your culture is part of who you are because it has influenced how you look at the world and how you use your mind. The way you imagine things and express through art is probably influenced by your culture, too.

You should appreciate how your cultural background has made you into who you are today. All of the cultures that you have experienced have also left their mark on you. Appreciate how they have contributed to your worldview and your artistry, if you are an artist.

There may be some cultures that resonate with you. For example, many Americans find resonance in East Asian culture. If a foreign culture has had a profound impact on you, then appreciate that culture. Appreciate how it inspires you and how it makes you feel. Appreciate the beauty that draws you in.

Appreciate the holidays that you celebrate. Appreciate how you anticipate them. Appreciate how they provide an excuse to celebrate and spend time with your family. Also, appreciate how you probably get days off from work for holidays. If you have to work on holidays, appreciate the fact that you are there for other people who need your services on holidays. Many businesses shut down on holidays so your holiday work is valuable to many people.

Appreciate the food unique to your culture. The smell and taste of this food probably takes you back to childhood and makes you feel like you are home. You will always have a special place in your heart, and in your taste buds, for your native food. If you are American, you get to appreciate many foods easily, especially Italian and Chinese. Everybody loves pizza.

Appreciate how ideas move across the world. Now we are a global society. The distances between people that used to create almost total isolation between cultures is now almost nonexistent with the Internet. As our world shrinks, appreciate how you get to meet and learn about people all over the globe.

Chapter 12: Appreciate Your Body

Everybody has physical flaws and complaints about their bodies. No one is perfect. But rather than just complaining about your belly flab or cellulite or varicose veins, appreciate how much your body does for you. Your body is actually quite great. It does the miraculous every day by keeping you alive.

Appreciate your every cell. Each cell in your body has a unique job to do and it tirelessly does its job even while you are sleeping. Your cells never really get a day off.

Appreciate your eyesight. They let you see the beauty of the world and the light in your loved ones' faces.

Appreciate your other sensory organs. I already told you to appreciate your sense of smell and taste. But be sure to appreciate your sense of touch too. Your sense of hearing lets you experience the beautiful sounds in the world. If you are impaired of any of your sense, appreciate the ones that you do have that let you experience the world. Your sensory organs let you develop awareness and appreciation. Without them, you would be little more than a rock.

Appreciate your face. Your face makes you recognizable. Even if you don't think you are very attractive, someone else does. Your loved ones love your face.

Appreciate your other unique characteristics. Your traits are made by genes that have formed slowly over the years. You were created through an amazing blend of pieces of all of your ancestors. Your traits have a long and complex history behind them. They make you uniquely you.

Appreciate your physical strength. It lets you accomplish things. It keeps you going. If you have to lift something or move something, you are able to thanks to the amazing abilities of your muscles and bones working together with your brain.

Appreciate your brain. Not only does it make you uniquely you, but it lets you feel. You can experience great joy. You can experience gratitude. You can feel even bad things, which help you appreciate the good things even more.

More than anything, appreciate your life functions that are keeping you alive. Your entire body is to thank for that. That is why you are here today, reading this book, and filling up with gratitude for life.

Chapter 13: Appreciate Your Feelings

Your feelings give you a unique perspective on life. They fill you and transport you to other places. They give situations and people meaning. Both the good and the bad feelings that you experience make you human, so appreciate everything that you feel. It is easy to appreciate the good things. But remember that the bad things also have a purpose and a place in your heart.

Appreciate joy. Joy makes life worth living. Joy is one of the best feelings that you can experience. The things that give you joy are things that you come to love and want to engage in again and again.

Appreciate nostalgia. Your mind has a great way of forgetting the bad things in the past. Instead of recalling the hardships and bad feelings that you undoubtedly experienced in the past as part of life, your mind recalls the good things. Your memories of the past are probably fond. You almost wish you could go back. Nostalgia feels good, in a bittersweet way.

Appreciate sadness. Sadness means that you loved something, and now you grieve its loss. You grieve a person, or the end of an era, or a shortcoming within yourself. Sadness makes you human and shows that you have a heart. It also makes you appreciate happiness all the more.

Appreciate anger. Anger lets you know that something is wrong and you have an opinion about it. Anger reflects your right to have an opinion on how life should go. It also lets you defend yourself and call people out when they do wrong.

Appreciate fear. Fear protects you. That fear instinct prevents you from partaking in dangerous activities and preserves your life.

Appreciate love. Love can hurt you and it can overwhelm you. But it is electric. It consumes you and makes you both loyal and generous. Love shows that you have a heart and that you are not a sociopath. Love also ingratiates you with your loved ones, who enjoy being loved by you. Appreciate the sensation of being loved, too. It is a warm feeling that makes you feel wanted and worthwhile.

Appreciate appreciation itself. Appreciation fills you with joy and gratitude. It gives you a sense of belonging on this earth and a reason to keep living. It makes the things in your life seem especially precious and worth having around you.

Chapter 14: Appreciate without Excess

This is just a brief warning. Some things are so good that people want to partake in them a little too much. Excess is always bad. You can appreciate some of the great things in life without going overboard.

A good example is alcohol. You should appreciate the taste of a fine wine or whisky or your favorite fruity cocktail. At a Mexican restaurant, you can appreciate the taste of an ice cold margarita as you dig into your spicy dish. You can appreciate the flavor profile of a nice craft beer, or the comfort of a familiar brand of beer that you have always drunk. But you should never indulge too much.

Appreciate the good things in life in a way that keeps them good. Anything can become bad if you overdo it. You begin to neglect the pleasure of things as you chase after more and more and more. You become hard to satisfy. You also drown in guilt when you go too far.

Use the bad experiences of over- and under-indulgence in the past to find a balance. This balance is the key to healthy appreciation and gratitude. You can enjoy things if you do in moderation.

Conclusion

Appreciation is important. You see the beauty in the world. You feel full of joy and gratitude, both wonderful feelings. Appreciating the little things helps you find happiness when it seems that there is none. Never despair, for there is so much to love and live for.

You will now start to feel so much better when you become more receptive to the beauty of the world. Even the little things will be special to you. You will be full of joy and happiness as you look around you, absorbing the preciousness of the world around you.

Now that you have finished this book, hopefully you have regained a childlike innocence with which to view the world. Instead of focusing the unimportant worries and cares of adulthood, you can focus on the beautiful little things in life. You are able to let go of mundane cares and worries to let in some joy and a sense of freedom.

Look up from your phone or away from the TV. Drink in the world around you. There is so much out there to experience fully, to appreciate, to love. As you begin to appreciate the little things, you will begin to feel more alive. The dullness of depression will suddenly dissipate when you become aware of the worthiness and beauty of the world. Your lust for life will become stronger.

Thanks for reading - Robyn McComb

About Author

Robyn Margaret McComb is an author and nursing student living in southern New Mexico. She grew up in a homestead in western New Mexico and has lived briefly in all the continental regions of the United States. When she isn't buried up to her neck in biology homework, she likes to write inspirational stories for the betterment of mankind. She loves hiking, playing with her terrier, and drinking mimosas in her free time.

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