



Gratitude

is not just a word - it's a *way of life*

Nicole Hintz





Gratitude

the quality or feeling of being grateful or thankful.



Introduction

This book is dedicated to my two beautiful children, Lachlan and Lily, who I love and adore. You both make me so incredibly proud. I hope to teach you to focus more on what you are thankful and grateful for, and less on the negative things in life.

I want you to know that gratitude matters and as a family it's important that we make it a way of life. Remember, there will always be many, many more reasons to emphasise gratitude rather than dwell on despair.

To my husband, Jason, who I'm eternally grateful to have in my life, some of the greatest moments in my life, and the last 20 years, have been the ones spent with you. I hope we continue to fill our lives with moments of gratitude and I know we will continue to love the life we have. Your patience in putting up with the crazy life we lead at times is commendable and one of your best traits. Your help with the projects I am involved in means the world to me. I love you so much.

This book is not only for my children, but I want for each one of you to get to know the

people who have influenced me in these first 40 years of my life.

To my dear friends, Lyn and Charlie, who I believe are always present and watching over me, you both taught me to be grateful and that in every situation - whether good, bad or devastating - there is always a lesson to be learned and something to be grateful for.

To Nanna Eisel, as you took your last breath a bird flew to the sky, it's gentle feather softly landing close by. It was a message from above that the angels had called, in that very moment everything stalled.

I held onto your hand and softly I cried, and whispered 'I love you' as I sat by your side. I knew all too soon I would have to let you go; I will miss you Nanna, more than you know.

You taught me so much and enriched my life, a devoted grandmother, mother and wife. So please never fail to stand by my side, my guardian angel, my lifelong guide.

My broken heart aches; a river of tears I still cry, but I know full well that your spirit won't

die. As each new day begins we'll not be apart, you are always and forever here in my heart.

To my Mum and Dad, thank you for supporting me and being there for me. I have only just recently understood the sacrifices you made in raising me now after having children myself.

To the many friends and family who have generously given up their time to first write and share their inspirational story of gratitude. These wonderful people have shared their stories and touched and influenced my life - although they may not realise they have. To you all, I thank you.

Thank you, thank you and thank you again for reading this book.

I am eternally grateful for the life I lead and while reading this book that's filled with inspirational thoughts, stories and quotes from others, I hope you will be reminded of all the things you are grateful for in your life too.

Nicole x







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My story

Gratitude is a way of life - Louise Hay

Everybody has a story to tell and the one story I believe has influenced me the most in my short life is a tragic one that has made me the person I am today. We all have a choice in how we let an experience affect us and our reaction shapes the outcome.

Gratitude is not the result of things that happen to us; it's an attitude we cultivate by practice - Alan Cohen

Early one Saturday morning, as a 16-year-old, I rode my bike up to the steepest hill to Lyn and Charlie's house, which I did every second Saturday to clean their house. Lyn and Charlie were a hardworking couple who lived on a farm, so they were very early risers. Lyn gave me a job cleaning her house and was teaching me how to save. I would clean the house for two-and-a-half hours, completing all items on a list, and at the end she would deposit money into a bank account she opened for me. Together we would then add up how much I had saved. We would also do craft together and sell what we made at the markets on a Sunday.

This particular Saturday morning I arrived at their home, knocked on the door, called out and went inside. There was no reply so I went down to the shed but again couldn't find them. I returned to the house and called my Dad, who I woke up, and said: "Dad, I can't find Lyn and Charlie".

We both thought it was strange, but didn't think much of it. I began cleaning the house; wiping down all the services. I noticed empty bullet shells down the hallway so I picked them all up not really thinking much of it. They were country people, who had parsley crops, and I knew they'd had problems with hares recently, so I just assumed Charlie had gone out hunting during the night and dropped the shells.

While I was in the hallway, I noticed their bedroom door half open so I called out again but still there was no response. I peeked around the door and could see they were still in bed. I didn't think it was normal, but I continued cleaning anyway and I would check on Lyn and Charlie from time to time. I even looked to see if there was movement, which I thought I'd seen at one point.





A little while later, Gavin, Lyn and Charlie's second son, had come home and asked me where his mum and dad were. I said they were still in bed asleep. He looked at me with a puzzled look and went down to the shed and caravan where he lived. More time passed. Gavin came back to the house and asked me if they had woken up. By this time I was a little worried and Gavin appeared to be worried too, so we both went down to their bedroom and opened the door.

What I saw that day will remain with me for the rest of my life. I ran to the phone and called my Dad and said: "Dad someone has shot Lyn and Charlie". Dad told me he'd be there soon - and he was. I don't think he even got dressed. He was there within what seemed like seconds. He came inside and went to the bedroom, even though I told him not to, and then I remember seeing my strong father buckle at the knees using the walls to hold himself up.

By this stage, Gavin was nowhere to be seen and Dad told me to wait outside for my mother. "I'm finding Gavin," he said. Mum arrived and she called Triple Zero, but under the stress she couldn't remember where she was so I took over the call and gave them details. I remember at this stage feeling no emotions. I was in shock and said to Mum, "why am I not crying?". I told Mum I was worried because I had cleaned up all the evidence and what if the police thought it was me who had done it. I wanted to know why Lyn and Charlie and who would do this to them? They were the nicest and kindest people I'd ever met.

The ambulance was first to arrive and I remember the officers coming up to me and saying. "I'm sorry, there was nothing we could do". I didn't say it to them, but thought, "no shit, tell me something I don't know".

I don't remember too much else of what was going on around me, only that my Dad had taken control and told the police quite firmly that I wouldn't be going to the police station in the police car with Gavin. "I will take her myself," he said, which he did.

I had to wait at the police station for quite a while until it was my turn to be interviewed. I can't recall much more than that, other than people asking me if I was alright. After growing up being taught to be polite, I replied that I was when I really wanted to say I wasn't. I promised myself I would never say that to someone grieving. Instead I would say, "I know nothing I say will make it better, but I want you to know I'm here for you".

When it was my turn I was interviewed by a lady who was very kind and gentle towards me.

I learned a lot from that terrible experience that I am grateful for.

I'm grateful to be alive because the week before I went to the house, I was with Gavin at the property when he got his guns out. He tried to hand them to me, but I refused to touch them as I'm not fond of guns. I feel very sure that on the day of the event when he disappeared to his shed (before he came back and we walked into his parents room) that he was thinking of doing the same to me - although I can never prove that. So I am grateful to still be here. Although it was emotionally tough for me to get over what

happened, I really believe the things I have achieved and the people I have met wouldn't have happened without this event.

What you read in the paper isn't always the truth, and kids and adults can say cruel things. I learned you are the only one that can allow anyone else to hurt you. Nobody can hurt you unless you allow them to. It's something I have to practice all the time and it does get easier.

Sickness can make people do awful things and I have learned to forgive this, but I will never forget. We also all handle stress in different ways and we must respect these differences.

Life can sometimes be too short and you must live life to the fullest and not to sit around waiting for the perfect time to do what you want. Make it happen now. I have learned that like Lyn and Charlie I too must make sure I give back



even if it's in a small way and add value to the community we live in.

This event will always be part of me and I will always remember how I saw these two people, who meant the world to me, taken way too early. But in the little time I knew them, I learned so much and I know they are always looking out for me like they did that awful morning.

Since this terrible event I have met some amazing people who continue to be part of my life today, so I am eternally grateful for the lessons I learned on that day and the many years that follow.

Nicole Hintz





Jason Hintz

It seemed like such a simple request; write a short paragraph outlining “What am I grateful for”?

As I delved into my inner feelings I discarded the obvious thoughts of ‘health’, ‘security’, ‘freedom’, even ‘family’; and looked further down into the deepest, darkest areas of my emotions where fear and anxiety hide and asked myself ‘what is the most valuable commodity that, if lost, would cause me the greatest sorrow? When I’m lying on my death bed, what is the one thing that I would wish for? The answer became abundantly clear, as it’s the one thing that is held most precious by all, but considered by few...it is ‘time’. Time gives us the means to do all that we consider important; yet we often squander it without consideration of the consequences.

I am grateful for time.

As I reflect on my life, I think fondly of all the wonderful moments in my time. I am grateful for the time I’ve spent with my two beautiful children and my equally gorgeous wife. Time

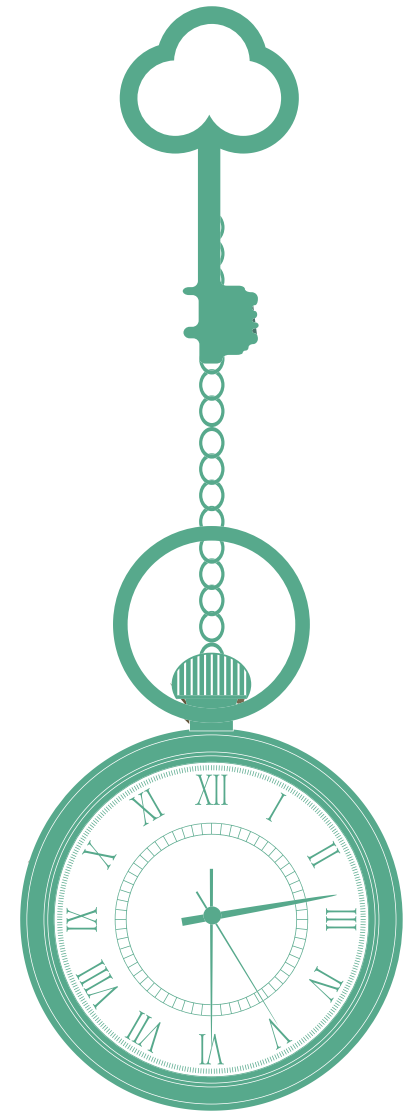
spent with family and friends, enjoying the precious moments that we shared together, and the memories that I can take with me though the rest of my life.

I am also saddened by the mistakes that I’ve made with my time. Time squandered chasing promotion and trying to please others that don’t really matter to me. Years wasted in the service of others; at a cost so great that it’s seeming unrecoverable. Time that I should have given to my wife and children.

Time is a gift; and each day we get to choose how we spend our time. We can squander it, keep it to ourselves, or we can re-gift it by spending our time on those that matter most to us.

I am grateful for whatever time I have left; and I choose to gift my time to my beautiful wife and my wonderful children. If spent wisely, time is the key to happiness.

Spend your time well.





Lily Hintz

All that I am
All that I see
All that I've been and all that I'll ever be
Is a blessing
It's so amazing
And I'm grateful for it all, for it all

So I lift up my hands now
And I open my heart
And my gratitude goes out
To everything near and far



DON'T *underestimate* me.
I KNOW MORE THAN I SAY,
THINK MORE THAN I SPEAK,
& NOTICE MORE THAN
YOU REALISE.

Lachlan Hintz

'Always go out on a limb,
because that is where the fruit is'

Ingrid Barclay



I know Nicole through online personal training. Movement, family, friends, nature and my dogs makes me happy. My mother, Meri, an amazing woman inspires me the most.

Kirsten Engels

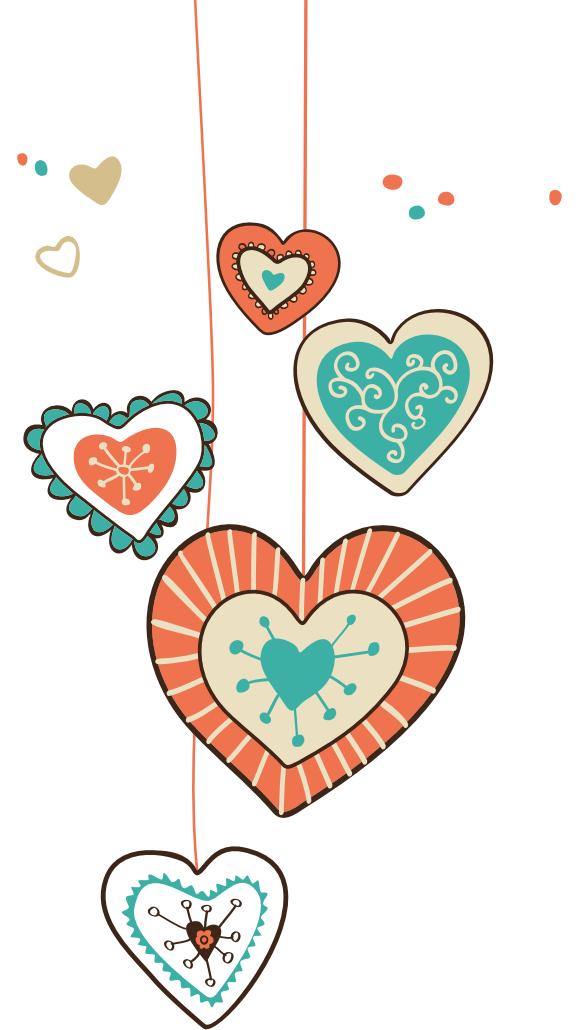
I started this gratitude story over a year ago. I hate what I wrote and I'm starting again. I'm grateful for the opportunity to do so. This world has a way of ever-changing, ever reminding me of what is important and what isn't. I had no real idea of how to quantify gratitude until I spent 6 months working in a remote community some 350km south west of Darwin, with no access to mobile phone or internet. I was trapped for hours in a vehicle with a colleague who insisted on playing 'The Magic' through the car radio again and again and again.... I couldn't help but hear a message that just kept resonating - "negativity cannot survive with gratitude and love". I gave it a try and started articulating ten things per day that I was grateful for. Sometimes it was just the coffee machine. Other days it was the sunshine. Mostly it was my kids, my husband and my family. It dawned on me just how many years I had spent giving so much attention and 'air time' to the things I hated, the people I despised, the situations that had caused me pain and anguish. I realised that there is a delicious feeling that comes with wallowing in the negatives, and it took me until 2013 to start realising and relishing the beauty in rejecting this temptation and instead taking

time to say thanks for what I have!! I'm far from perfect but these days I am so bloody grateful for so bloody much! My children, my husband, my family, my friends, my career, my experiences - both good and bad, and my future. Life is so good.

Here's something I am also very grateful for; my work. I have a little extra energy to give and I've been blessed with a career that allows me to work with the world's most vulnerable little people. I am honoured and truly grateful to spend my work days offering a snippet of hope to those who have none. Just like I was given hope when I was struggling.

You know - at times I detest social media, as a beautiful morning can take a dive with a picture or message depicting news that isn't good for someone I care about. But I'm grateful that it offers a way to follow the story and see the outcome. I'm grateful for you Nicole. You are a savvy businesswoman with a huge heart. You've looked after us for years now and you lent me dumbbells when I needed them - that's a true friend for whom I am very grateful.

I met Nicole in 2006 when I began working with her husband at the Eagleby Police Station. The feeling of reaching my potential, whether it be as a mother, a wife, a police officer, a coach or in my own training makes me happy. My husband, Rob, inspires me to do better every day with his beautiful heart and never-ending support.



**'Negativity
cannot survive
with gratitude
and love'**

Kath Barker

This is a word that I have only recently really understood and connected with. I have been extremely fortunate in my life, even though I have had some rather large hurdles too. I am certainly grateful for each and every experience that life has given me. Those hurdles have shaped me into who I am today.

Firstly I am grateful for my parents. I had a childhood filled with love, even though my parents separated when I was just 7. I am grateful for being able to have the opportunity to live with my Dad in the Whitsundays. I am grateful that my Mum shared her love of travel with me, and that now I am able to share that love with Dan, Alex and Danial and my friends.

I am grateful for having a difficult first marriage as I was blessed with two amazing children. It also taught me a lot: how strong I am, how to make tough decisions, how to stand up for what I believe in, how to not settle for second best. I am grateful that this experience showed me that everything in life changes and no bad situation will last forever. It also proved to me that if you don't like the situation you are in, just change it!

I am grateful to Dan. He has taught me patience, he has been my biggest support, and shown me that marriage really is teamwork - and we really do make an amazing team! I am grateful for his unconditional love and friendship and his ability to make me laugh!

I am very grateful that I have my own businesses and that I have the ability to not only create a wonderful life for myself and family but that I can also give back to the community.

On a larger scale I am grateful to live in a country without war, family and political unrest and I am able to live in safety and security with plenty of food on the table and a roof over our head. I think this is something we all need to be grateful for.

I am grateful for all the people that have touched my life; no matter if it was for a minute or a lifetime, as each and every one of them has had an impact.

I met Nicole through the gym in 2007. Spending time with family and friends, travelling, helping others, hugs from Dan and the boys and my pets make me happy. Kobe Steele and Oprah Winfrey inspire me, both women have overcome adversity and gone onto great things by helping others.





Easmie Cary-Jones

Dare to be

When a new day begins, dare to smile gratefully.
When there is darkness, dare to be the first to shine the light.
When there is injustice, dare to be the first to condemn it.
When something seems difficult, dare to do it anyway.
When life seems to beat you down, dare to fight back.
When there seems to be no hope, dare to find some.
When you're feeling tired, dare to keep going.
When times are tough, dare to keep going.
When love hurts you, dare to love again.
When someone is hurting, dare to help them heal.
When another is lost, dare to help them find the way.
When a friend falls, dare to be the first to extend a hand.
When you cross paths with another, dare to make them smile.
When you feel great, dare to help someone else feel great too.
When the day has ended, dare to feel as you've done your best.
Dare to be the best you can,
At all times, Dare to be!

Steve Maraboli,
Life, the Truth, and Being Free

'Yesterday is history,
tomorrow is mystery,
today is a gift,
that's why it's called the present'

Kung Fu Panda



*Donald &
Christine Geer*

On reflection, there have been many people, animals, jobs, events and activities throughout my life that have made me the person I am today. For all of these I am extremely grateful and always will be. In saying that, people and animals have been the creators of the jobs, events or activities and for that reason my gratitude goes to all of the people and animals in my life.

Nicole is our neighbour and friend. The antics of small children and animals, people enjoying life, laughter and living in Australia makes us happy. Richard Branson inspires Donald and Angela Jolie inspires Christine.



'Live life to the full'

'Never say never'

Jennifer Gale

Nicole is a friend who I respect dearly and truly enjoy catching up with, I really need to make more time for her. Family, health, friends and new experiences make me happy. I am inspired by the person who comes last in a marathon to the person who comes first. I am inspired by everyday people doing out of the ordinary things. The older I get the more I realise how amazing my mum was.

I am grateful for everything that has lead me to today. I have the most amazing family, I have met some wonderful people and experienced some incredible things in my life. I am even grateful for the sad and heart breaking things. All of my experiences have developed me into who I am today and I am pretty happy with who I am

Donald Waters OAM

I start my day with an old quote, 'Who do I want to be today, a victim of life or a master of my own destiny?'. This mantra gives me a direction in life of gathering the positive, and discarding the negative. With this mindset, I glean an incredible amount of positive direction from people around me, I listen, and from this interaction a sense of gratitude prevails.

Over my life it has been wonderful to work with and be surrounded by people who believe in me and for this reason I have immense gratitude, for without this support it would be very hard to move forward.

As I advance in years and achievements the understanding of gratitude given and received is a very grounding and levelling experience.

Internal gratitude must start with yourself, for without this deep seeded respect of being and sincerity, you cannot bring joy to not only yourself, but those around you.

I met Nicole on life's journey. Being surrounded by friends, red wine and a great painting makes me happy. Everyone inspires me; including myself.





'My gratitude smiles
Each morning a breaking dawn
Opening eyes wide'

Marg Waters



Donna Gates

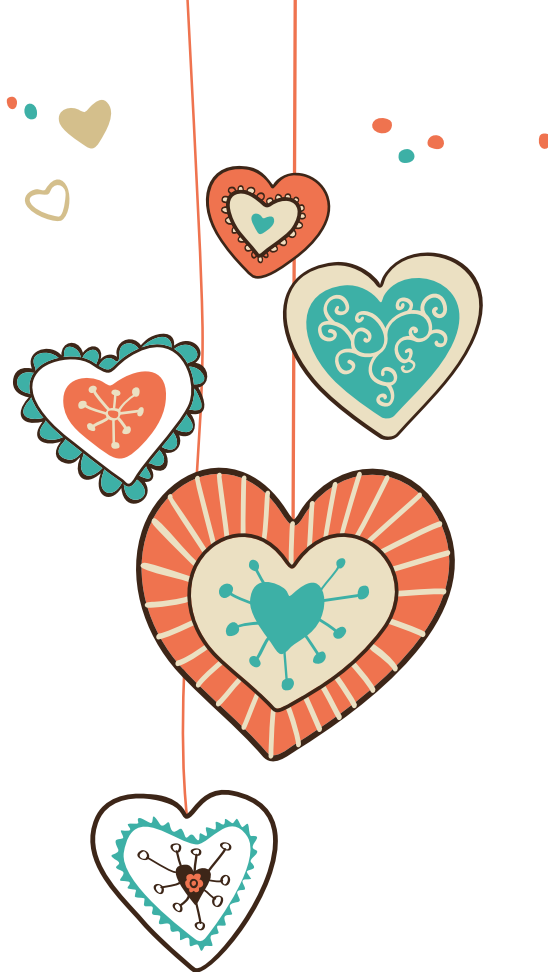
Firstly and foremost, Nicole, thank you for the honour of contributing to your 40th Birthday project. It's been a joy getting to know you. You put much before yourself in all aspects of your life and I hope your 40th is followed by decades of health and happiness.

My personal epiphany occurred in 1985 – a time when I suddenly became more thoughtful about everything that was a part of my world. I was 33 weeks' pregnant with my first child, when I suffered a myocardial infarction. It was unbelievable at the time but, yes, a major heart attack, whilst my baby was still growing. So, from the heights of anticipation and excitement and the miracle of a new life, my world turned upside down, but, eventually, with extremely positive outcomes. A healthy baby was delivered although, sadly, there would be no more children. (My son, Matt, by the way, is 30 years old and an absolute cracker). But the uncertainty of good health made me take stock of everything. Simple

things ... the sun, the wind, birdlife The realisation of how often we take people, places, nature and "things" for granted. No sooner was I discharged from hospital, than a breast lump was diagnosed and an operation proceeded very quickly. Still breast-feeding my baby boy who was three months old, this would be a sharp reminder of what is important in life - but this time, with so much more at stake.

That is all well behind me, but this message is a chance to reflect on the impact of those events. I became more aware of the importance of the values we hold; the love of your family, care for your friends, the enjoyment of giving; passion for the wider community and those less fortunate. It made me stop and think every step of my journey since, and how fortunate I am to have a full and rewarding life with my family who remain at the core of all that is important.

I met Nicole through business originally, her incredible heart for community and more recently has become a true friend. My family, my friends, my job and my life makes me happy. Volunteers inspire me.



'Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says I'll try again tomorrow.'

Deb Frinke

It's not happy people who are thankful - it's thankful people who are happy.

Even when the darkest clouds gather on the horizon, we can always find something to be grateful for. I always understood this principle but it took on new meaning when my life was one giant dark cloud.

I often refer to 2014 as my year of loss - the first 4 months saw me lose my brother, a 21 year old friendship, my business and my husband was made redundant after 30 years' service. Normally I would rely heavily on my faith to get me through but with so much going wrong that I had no control over, I was angry, disappointed and frustrated at God. I was at risk of losing my faith too.

A friend introduced me to Nicole and despite my brokenness she gave me an opportunity

I met Nicole at a job interview in 2014 when she employed me as a Sales Agent. Walking along the beach, hugging my family, helping people less fortunate and seeing my family who live abroad makes me happy. My Dad inspires me. I lost him when I was 19 but he was the most positive person I've ever known and he overcame so much by never giving up - ever.

to work. It also gave me the chance to focus on something I could control. Barely keeping it together some days, I headed down a path I thought I would never travel again. Real Estate had chewed me up and spat me out once before but I would give it my best shot. Nicole's support upheld me - nothing was a drama and she kept telling me I could do this, everything was always "all good". Slowly I healed and my belief was restored, not just in the industry but in my ability to be successful. Instead of focusing on my problems, I shifted my energy to being grateful for this opportunity.

A wise person once told me to remember that when I feel like my little hut seems to be burning to the ground, it just may be the smoke signal that summons the Grace of God.



Andy Kirk

When I think of the word 'GRATITUDE' I can't go to without thinking of God. Now before those reading think that this is just a religious rant from a Pastor I can assure you it's not and in fact it's a challenge to me to actually be a better person.

You see I am ever grateful for all that God has given me, allowed me to go through, helped me go through those things and the people in my life that enrich my existence. In fact the way I see God at work is often through people around me and so in life I have tried and still try daily to position my heart to be grateful for each person that brings something into my world. Yes sometimes these things are not great but there is a lesson to be learnt out of this or on the other side of the spectrum there is the people that are constants in our life that we sometimes forget to be grateful for like

my wife and children who are so amazing yet because of human nature they are the ones you just 'expect' to be there that I get caught out not being grateful.

You see I do believe in a God that has blessed me and my position can be that of gratefulness or expectation. When I expect then I don't value, when I don't value I often hurt so this word that we have all been asked to write about is one that needs to come into focus more and as we are grateful the things of priority and importance like family and good friends are magnified and we shift our attention outwards not inwards.

This is where it becomes challenging because I want to be a person that when they are thanking God for that my name is mentioned....

I want to make life a better place and I want to be an answer to problems in society but that will only come when I am firstly grateful myself and then my attention shifts to others.

This gets me onto Nicole whose birthday it is and I am grateful to God for her and her family as they are people who look outward and serve their community which is no surprise as she is someone who is grateful large and small in life.

So from Christie and I happy Birthday Nicole, we are Grateful to God for you as you inspire us to look up and out into life.

I met Nicole through Highway Church and her commitment to community.



Fiona Bressan

Gratitude starts at the beginning and I am grateful for my for my parents Peter and Christine and the way they raised me to be who I am today. I believe that showing gratitude is one of the greatest things we can do.

I am grateful I have a loving Sister Amanda, a loving Husband Mark and our 3 Beautiful loving Children Beau, Zac and Chiara who all fill my life with love and happiness.

I am grateful to have married Mark and created an extended loving family who enrich our family values and give our children a greater sense of family importance.

Having our 3 children to love and raise has made my life complete. I am grateful for all of my wonderful friends who I surround myself with. I love the way in which they all make my life enjoyable to be around them in their own individual special way.

The diversity, knowledge and support my friends offer enriches my life.

I am ever grateful for our active healthy lives that we continue to live.

Whilst thinking about gratitude it has made me realise that whatever life's troubles and challenges, it's important to appreciate all that we have.

Margaret Keech

I am grateful to God that He has created a woman of such strength, dignity and kindness in Nicole Hintz. A woman, who for her 40th birthday, blesses others with a gift of this beautiful book full of inspiring and courageous stories.

I am grateful to God that I and my husband Peter have been able to raise our three children in not only the best country in the world but also the very best part of our nation. Over many decades I have seen our northern Gold Coast community enriched through the generous heart of Nicole Hintz. Whether it be the Ormeau Christmas Carols, the Easter Egg hunt, the annual Ormeau Show or so many other activities, Nicole is always the very first person to offer her financial and personal support to ensure local families enjoy community fun events.

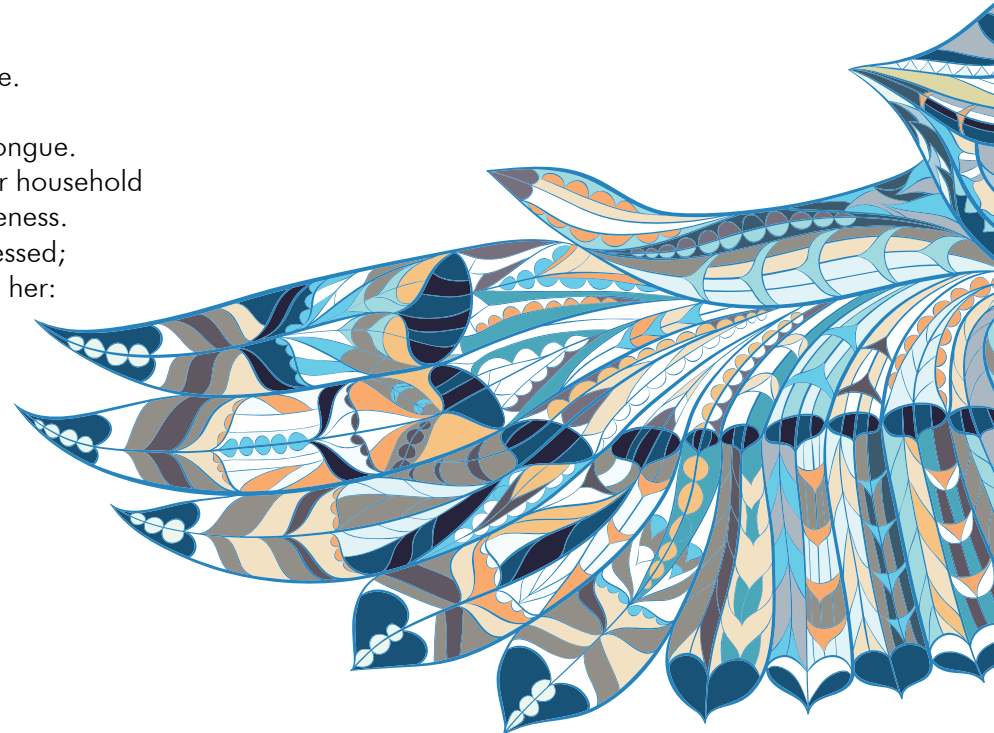
In her own quiet leadership style Nicole lovingly sows into the lives of family, friends and strangers with much compassion and unconditional support. As a wife, mother and community champion she continues to give and give, always putting others first.

This book "Gratitude" is a testament to the heart of Nicole Hintz, who is:

Clothed with strength and dignity.
She can laugh at the days to come.
She speaks with wisdom,
And faithful instruction is on her tongue.
She watches over the affairs of her household
And does not eat the bread of idleness.
Her children arise and call her blessed;
Her husband also, and he praises her:
"Many women do noble things,
But you surpass them all."

Proverbs 31:25-29

Nicole is a dear friend of more than 15 years. I first met Nicole in her role as the major supporter for many Ormeau community events. Bushwalking and adventure holidays with my husband Peter. Spending time with our children and first grandchild Joseph Peter makes me happy. Nicole Hintz and Irene Gleeson AO inspires me.





Words to live by...

Life isn't fair, but it's still good.

Your job won't take care of you when you are sick;
your friends and parents will: stay in touch.

You don't have to win every argument; agree to disagree.
Make peace with your past so it won't screw up the present.

Don't compare your life to others, you have no idea what their journey is all about.
Over prepare, and then go with the flow.

Be eccentric now; don't wait for old age to wear purple.

Frame every so-called disaster with these words "In five years, will this even matter?".
What other people think of you is none of your business.

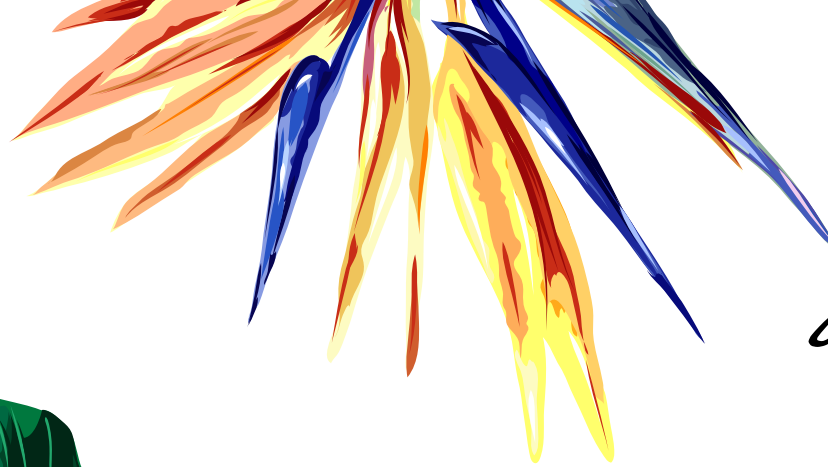
Your children only get one childhood.

If we threw our problems in a pile and saw everyone else's, we'd grab ours back.
Envy is a waste of time. You already have all you need.

No matter how you feel, get up, get dressed, show up.
Life isn't tied with a bow, but it's still a gift.

Regina Brett, 90 years old.

Eracy Erott



Jane Doogan

We embark on this wonderful experience of Life with expectations that all will be joy, success and happiness... but as we start to mature we learn that Life intrinsically is all about the highs and lows - the joys and sorrows - that is the reality.

For me, I'm so grateful to have experienced the challenges and to welcome adversity - I actually have taught myself to use them as a learning tool and to hope that as a result of meeting them head on - I have become a better person, more empathetic and better able to cope with the next one.

This has led to me believing that happiness comes as a choice - sometimes you have to struggle to see happiness - but it is so worth the effort - after all, there is something quite infectious about happiness - about smiling and about the energy that happiness gives out.

So... Life is not a smooth journey - this is not a dress rehearsal - this is the real thing - so embrace it, warts and all and have an attitude of gratitude - you'll be amazed at the joy it can bring- not only for you, but to those who love you too.



Nicole is a colleague. Giving back, family, laughter and hugs makes me happy. Dalai Lama inspires me.

'This above all: to thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man. ' Shakespeare

I started to write a gratitude story and thought better of it. Life has not treated me as harshly as some and every day I have much to be grateful for, so no one story would stand out or stand up to represent me.

Therefore, I decided to submit an inspirational quote. I am a bit of a Rudyard Kipling tragic and thought to submit the poem "if"... but then I thought of the first stanza from The Elephants Child...

'I keep six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew);
Their names are
What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who.'

The Elephants Child

Sharon Booth

Nicole is one of the generous and warm-hearted women I have met during my real estate journey. Family get-togethers of all sorts, discovering new places, losing myself in a great book, working in my garden and my husband makes me happy. Air Chief Marshall, Sir Neville McNamara inspires me.



Daphne Williams

I am grateful for the guidance I have received throughout my life. This has come about in many different ways. It has been through a book that has come to my attention, a line from a movie, a remark from someone, sometimes a person I don't know, or it can even be just a thought that comes to my mind which I follow up.

These things have led me to a better understanding of others as well as many major decisions and turning points in my life, in belief systems, relationships etc. At the time I just know it's the right way to go. When I look back, at times I can't believe the steps I've taken, but I am grateful that I was given the courage to follow my path. This isn't always welcomed by others, but if nothing else, I've learned that we have to be true to ourselves, be our authentic selves, and I am still following leads at this time of my life, aged 65.

I met Nicole as we worked for the same business. Seeing my children, facing and overcoming life's obstacles makes me happy. My inspiration is the person who shows unconditional love, teaches the value of forgiveness, imparts wisdom and whose life is driven by the words "treat others the way you would like to be treated".

A major understanding recently came to me about myself. I've always felt like a misfit, that I don't really belong on planet Earth and I have been again led to something incredible. Whilst to many it would likely be a negative thing, I have learned I have Asperger's Syndrome and so many questions that have plagued me all my life have been answered. It is a very large spectrum and even with those on it, the ways it manifests are very varied but sometimes we have very useful strengths that others don't. I would have liked to have known at least fifty years earlier, but that's one of life's funny little mysteries. Again I have to trust that things always happen at the right time even if we can't see it.

So my message is pay attention to what may seem the small things in life - they can lead to great things.



Kylie Courtie

I am so grateful that I lost over 1 million dollars!!

With a huge vision of being the best Franchisor offering a health and fitness club model like no other to create a happy and healthy world, my dream soon came crashing down with loss, liquidation, litigation and hate mail packs. To be honest I felt like I'd woken up in a really bad dream... a really bad episode of Days of Our Lives – someone ELSE's life!!

It was Christmas 2014 and the reality kicked in, we had lost EVERYTHING!! Our empire had come crashing down around us. We had done all the right things. I had the right university degrees, great coaches & mentors, I had worked hard and helped others.... So how could it have all ended so badly??

I was about to celebrate my 40th Birthday, a milestone where I had previously thought would be when "I'd have my shit together" and be responsible and all grown up!! (feel free to insert laughter here). Instead, I felt like my life was a nightmare! Here I was with 2 kids, massive debt and no income!!

My journey of learning, forgiveness and letting go over the next year had me realise how this

had all been such a blessing, one that I was truly grateful for. You see I didn't lose everything, in fact I GAINED EVERYTHING!!

I found what made me happy! I found what made my heart sing and nourished my soul!!

It wasn't the fancy car, the nice house, flashy boat, multiple businesses and all the other material possessions we'd accumulated over our lifetime...

What I realised was so important was my husband, my beautiful children, time in nature, travelling, my health, my mindset, meditation, journaling and yoga! I also realised what was not important and let go of many ideals, things, people and practices, such as watching TV!

Suddenly as a family we had so much more quality time being present with each other, laughing, having fun and immersing ourselves in nature. Walks to waterfalls & spotting wildlife, swims at the beach, playing, cooking, communicating and oh so many cuddles!! I became way more connected with my husband, falling deeper in love than ever before!! I became more present and in love with my children, their arms wrapped



around my neck bringing me so much joy & happiness. I also found a new love for yoga and continue my practice as I continue to still my mind, improve my health and let go.

The universe closes doors to allow you to open one that leads somewhere even better. Today I have a new holiday club business where I can choose when I work so I can always be present with my family. We get to travel the world as a family, earn a great income and help others to do the same. This was all possible because we "lost it all".

I am so grateful to the beautiful heart-centred entrepreneur Nicole Hintz for allowing me to share my story of gratitude in this book and I am so grateful to have found love and created a life that makes my heart sing.

I met Nicole as she was a member at my gym, we went on to create a community business event together. Richard Branson inspires me.

Peter Baines OAM

Committing over a decade ago to do the best I could for a group of children who had all lost their parents in the Boxing Day tsunami was something that I thought I was doing for them. Like a lot of people who commit to doing something for charity they believe the beneficiary is for the recipient. How often do you hear the statement “it’s an opportunity for me to give back”. But what I have learnt over the last decade is the more you do the more that comes back to you.

Of course if you start the giving only looking for the return you may miss out altogether, but when intent and integrity are aligned to the giving, my experience is the donor will benefit so much more than the recipient.

In every area of my life I am “richer” than a decade ago. The relationships that I have which are most important to me, are all deeper because of the shared experiences that I have had over the last decade. My I know that I have banked some memories with my children, my dad and my wife which can never be taken away. They have shaped us as individuals and they have shaped us as a family. All of this has occurred while observers from the outside would think we have been giving to others in our time, resources, knowledge and love. But the

secret is the whole time, in giving we have been receiving more than we could ever have expected.

The deep gratitude I have is for the opportunity to share this journey over the last decade with my kids in their teenage and formative years. I wasn’t smart enough to engineer the last ten years, it was just the right thing to do. Sure, we’ve made an impact on the kids that we started to support in Thailand following the tsunami. I know their opportunities in life are very different. The kids we support in our HIV home, well frankly many would not be alive today had we not provided the resources to halt the death rate when we started. What we have done in Thailand on all measures has had a positive impact - there is no doubt.

But on a deeply personal level, perhaps even a selfish level its the shared experiences I’ve had with my family and how it has made us all better people where my deep gratitude exists. Humbled by the support along the way and indebted to the Thai communities who have allowed us into their lives.

It certainly stays true for me that the more you give means the more you get.





Cathy Kay

My story of gratitude is for bubbles.

Yep, I am grateful for bubbles... particularly champagne bubbles. I often say that life is full of bubbles.

However the bubbles I am really grateful are those lovely soft protective bubbles that we and our loves ones are wrapped in. I really hope your bubbles never burst. I don't think we really know they are there until they burst. And when they burst, it sucks.

Too many of my bubbles have burst, some big, some small. Losing my mother to brain cancer was the biggest bubble of them all. I was suffering acute renal failure, and more, through no fault of my own.

I am so grateful I got to be there with Mum. I still cry when I think of her. I can also celebrate the good things too now. Bless. I have watched my dearest friends and family member's bubbles burst. That sucks. Every

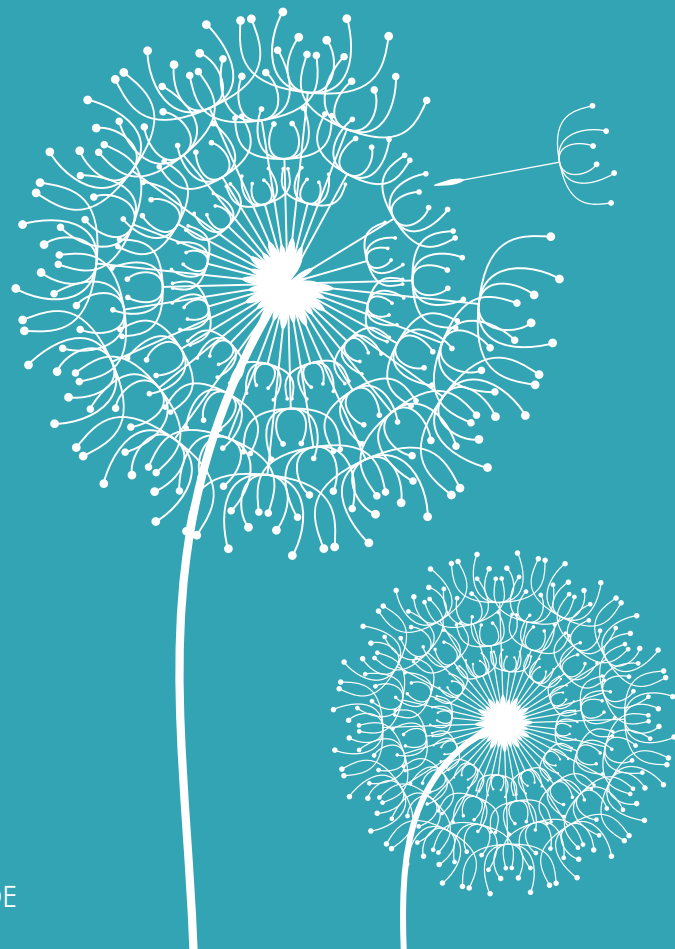
day I meet too many who have had their bubbles burst. It really is about how we learn to cope with our bubbles bursting. I am so grateful I am still here and able to support others whose bubbles burst. Even in some small way.

I hope you can too even if your bubbles have not burst. Be grateful. Give gratitude. Life can be so very, very good.

I am so grateful every single day.

I met Nicole when I was at work and she instantly inspired me. Life's simple pleasures; good food, good wine, good friends and family, oh and dogs, cats, birds and all our wildlife and nature makes me happy. St Therese inspires me.

Caitlin Baker



I am grateful for being strong, strong enough
to leave and survive an abusive relationship
and start again, and start again with my head
held high,
I am grateful for all of the people who've
supported me through the tough times and
who encourage me to be confident, to believe
in myself and be the best I can be,
I am grateful for the challenges in life, that
allow me to appreciate wins,
I am grateful for the laughter and fun I have
in my life,
I am grateful for only knowing what I know, so
I get to learn and grow,
I am grateful for the sun on my face,
particularly on a winters day,
I am grateful for the music that moves my soul
and feet, and makes me sing like no one is
listening and dance like no one is watching,
I am grateful for love, love of friends and
family and I look forward to the love of my life
finding me,
I am grateful everyday for the air that I
breathe and the life (and opportunities) I
have,
I am eternally grateful for the most important
people in my life, my parents and gorgeous
daughter, without you, my life wouldn't be the
same.
I am grateful to be me, and the best version
of me that I can be!

Cecille Weldon

Musings on Gratitude

Gratitude, for me, is a state of openness to the world. Sometimes it comes naturally, without effort, rising to the surface in moments throughout the day. At other times when I'm feeling overwhelmed it's harder to find and I have to dig deep inside me and intentionally "call gratitude out" to find it hidden like a gift within the situation.

Gratitude then has many forms; there's the real "gut feel" gratitude for our life here in Australia, the things we sometimes take for granted, the safety, diversity and richness of our country and its ancient and contemporary culture.

Then there's the deep thankfulness that overcomes me when I feel a warm connection with people, a feeling of belonging, an understanding that we're travelling together

through life's ups and downs, whether it be in my role as mum, daughter, sister, friend or colleague. This is the gratitude that celebrates our ability to come together, to live meaningfully and caringly with each other, to create a community.

For me a sense of gratitude can rise in the quiet moments of wonder when I'm in surrounded by nature, whether it be walking along the beach barefoot at sunset, or watching the waves roll in from a distance, or high in the mountains looking way out to the horizon, or hearing the joy of bird song clear and true, the raw beauty of gum trees, the perfection of a magnolia in full bloom or the delicacy of flannel flowers.

And then there's the gratitude that you have to work for... that you have to summon up because you're in the thick of it and honestly, gratitude is the last thing you're thinking or

feeling. When all around you appears to offer no reason for gratitude this is when I have trained myself to look for it, the golden thread, some tiny element to be thankful for that will lead me, step by step, to a better state of mind.

And finally there's the gratitude that's usually only accessible in retrospect. This is the gratitude you feel when you are afforded some distance to understand that things really do make sense. When even failures can be seen as the necessary steps to success and that all those challenges have built your spirit, your resilience, your creativity and your wisdom. This is the gratitude that brings with it a sense that things will be ok, that our paths, although self determined, are guided somehow.

Elizabeth Campbell

Every day I wake up and get to do the things I love and be with the people I adore and who adore me. I'm grateful that I broke down, almost losing my business and my sanity to get back up again to reach new highs and discover the real meaning of life and myself as a person.

I'm grateful I experienced a toxic relationship because I am so much more self-aware now. I have boundaries and know what I want. I won't ever settle again.

I'm grateful I had very little self-esteem, even though people who know me best wouldn't believe that because I'm also a very good actor and can put on a brave face very easily. It's how I coped. I now have very high self-esteem and that is absolutely amazing feeling. To look in the mirror and tell myself "I love you" is a huge feat and one that took more than 12 months to achieve.

Nicole and I met many years ago when she almost sold my ex-husband and I a house in Ormeau. Years later I would attend a business breakfast that she hosts and from there form a nice working relationship, and then friendship.

I'm grateful I got sick and broke down because now I place a lot more focus on my health. I had to stay focused while going through divorce too, so doing things that better my physical and mental health are part of my daily routine now.

Now each day I get to live by my set of personal values and inside and out are in sync, and for that I am eternally grateful.



Shane Colquhoun

Gratitude cannot be simply summed up as a feeling. We feel happy, we feel sad, but to feel gratitude is something much deeper. I can say I have gratitude for my family, my friends, my animals. I can say I have gratitude that I have a nice house and feel safe. I have gratitude that we have money and can afford nice cars and holidays. The list would be infinite as to what I am grateful for.

However, I believe gratitude is so much deeper than a feeling. Gratitude is a decision. We decide how we will react to events, other people, our own joys or misfortunes. We can hold onto negative memories about experiences we have had on our journey or we can let negative feelings go and replace them with positive thoughts.

I believe in destiny and a higher energy and I'm grateful for every moment or event in my life where things didn't go as planned, as it's led me to where I am today and the person I am today. All past events have shaped and

moulded me and every day I am grateful for the events where I questioned why this happened to me, or why I didn't get what I thought I wanted or deserved.

The more people dwell on the negatives and hold onto inner turmoil, the less room for gratitude. To make a decision to live in a state of gratitude is to make a commitment to forgiveness. Not just forgiveness of others but most importantly, forgiveness of self. Love yourself, live in an eternal state of gratitude and your energy will be returned by those who come into contact with you.

I met Nicole through business as a part of the LJ Hooker network. Knowing everybody is happy and healthy makes me happy. The selfish answer is that I inspire myself, but otherwise my Mum is next on the list.



Katharine Ettenhofer

OMGoodness, where to start.

I pondered on this for months and yes as I would have said to myself and as you told me, stop procrastinating and being a perfectionist. That is the epitome of our relationship. I saw a quote years ago and to this day still reflect on the below:

LIVE Simply
LOVE Generously
LEARN Constantly

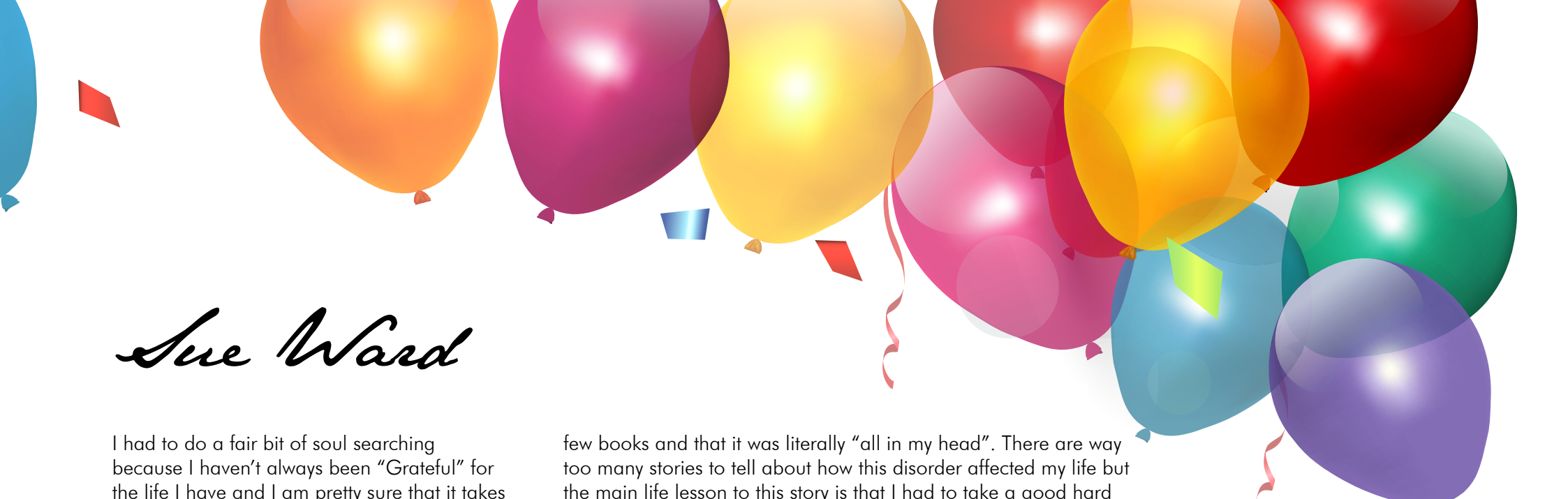
I met Nicole via our work industry which first brought us together but have since formed a friendship I now would say is an unbreakable bond between two stubborn mules!

When I see this quote my heart fills with joy and most of all I think of your nature and the integrity you exude. Your spirit is infectious, like glitter being spread over a rainbow that has no choice but to cover the world with happiness, kindness and laughter.

I always say that great humans and like-minded people magnetise to similar personalities but, you my love, are all the GOOD that this world is made up of, plus the stars in the galaxy and for that I am so very thankful to have you in my life and to call you my friend.

So on my parting note, I look forward to being the crazy little old ladies (well I will be little but you will shrink too) who grow old together, giggle until their bellies ache and most of all have you by my side.





Sue Ward

I had to do a fair bit of soul searching because I haven't always been "Grateful" for the life I have and I am pretty sure that it takes a bit of adversity in your life, for you to truly start the journey of living a life of Gratitude.

So what do I know about the Journey to Gratitude. I wouldn't say I had the easiest of starts in life, but that's not a story for this book. Why this is important though, is that it led me to a series of events that caused me to suffer a debilitating Panic & Anxiety Disorder that took control of my life for over 10 years. At the time, I felt robbed of my time with my loved ones, my ability to function & move forward in life and most importantly my ability to enjoy life. I was angry even. This disorder stole 10 years of my life, the best years of my life.

When I first started having "Panic Attacks" I was in my late 20's and there seemed to be no apparent reason why and because it was not something Doctors knew too much about at that stage, I was told to go read a

few books and that it was literally "all in my head". There are way too many stories to tell about how this disorder affected my life but the main life lesson to this story is that I had to take a good hard look at who I was and work out how I was going to get myself off of the Anxiety Groundhog Day treadmill and start living my life as the person I was meant to be.

The main thing that helped heal me was learning to focus on the positives in life, to leave the bad stuff in the past where it belongs. I learnt to truly be happy, you need to be a positive sponge, be grateful for each day, each encounter, each milestone, each and every experience with everyone, because that makes for an interesting life, lived with true purpose. You need to be your True Self, give of yourself and people will react in ways you could never have imagined.

I feel I am truly blessed to have been given my life & its lessons at such a young age. I have learned to live a life of purpose, trust in positive energy, embrace honest good people and let go of anything that does not serve me because the saddest thing would be to have a life and not truly live it to the best of my ability.

I feel truly grateful to have Nicole in my life as she lives a life of true purpose and enriches many lives within our community. What an inspirational woman.

*'When we focus
on our Gratitude,
The tide of
disappointment
goes out and
The tide of love
rushes in '*

Kristin Armstrong

Steve Eite

I have had the opportunity on several occasions to head over to the Philippines to help a friend of mine who lives there as a missionary. The first time I landed and was driving through the city of Cebu from the Airport to catch a ferry south, I was staggered by what I saw. People, men, women and children living their daily lives in the roadside. Makeshift shelters, no running water, no sewerage, dogs, stench, rotten you get the picture.

I got to Tagbilaran where he lives and asked him about the state of the conditions these people were trying to live their lives in, bringing up their families. It became apparent that this was not unique to Cebu but as time went on it was pretty much everywhere we went.

He took me out onto some of the many islands that make up the Southern Philippines in his boat and again the poverty that these people live in was mind blowing. No real medicines, no regular electricity, no police

which leads to the abuse of children and women on a big scale, hell on earth in my eyes, normal to them.

I could recount about going into the prisons and areas that most foreigners wouldn't dream of entering but it just gets more evil and heart breaking.

In Australia, we are so blessed to have the way of life that we do. Whenever I start to dwell on what I am dealing with and feeling like I got a bad hand dealt, I reflect and look around at just what I do have. The thing that I am most grateful for? The ability to choose my own destiny.

Thank God my homeland is Australia and thank God my eyes are open to what really counts, life, family and friends.

Nicole has been a client for many, many years. Seeing joy in people's eyes makes me happy. My wife, Tracey, inspires me.





Amy Sanderson



April 1st 2012, I was flying to London – 3 days later I awoke in a hospital in St Petersburg, Russia. Mid-flight, my heart and lungs stopped; I was kept alive for 2.5 hours by the team at Virgin Atlantic with resuscitation, defibrillators and adrenalin shots; resuscitation usually ceases after 30 minutes.

The flight was diverted and emergency landed in St Petersburg. Emergency landings in Russia hadn't been allowed for the previous 10 years, another piece of good luck. I briefly awoke in surgery; naked, blind (no glasses with a minus 30 myopia) and hand cuffed to a bed and the sudden realisation that no one spoke English.

Panic took over and then control as fear of struggling would see me in a psych hospital, never to be returned home. They cut my stomach and inserted a drain, to this day, I still don't know why.

On day 3, after several days in an infectious diseases clinic in isolation (they weren't sure what was wrong with me) I awoke completely to the hospital kids peering at the foreign woman, they had phones ready with Google translate and this is where we started to piece together what had happened. I was led to believe that my then partner had flown to London, as he wasn't granted a visa to stay, much to my horror – he had my glasses and contact lenses.

A couple of days later, he greeted me, he had been driven 4 hours out of the city, as the authorities were after him, and locked in a room, told to hide under a bed with his passport in his pants and to not open the door to anyone.

My doctor got him an emergency visa, so he could then safely stay with me in the hospital. The hospital was nothing like Australian hospitals, exposed hallways to the minus freezing outside, people stranded in hallways waiting for beds, very basic equipment.

I was very well taken care of, the nursing staff were amazing. At this point, I have broken ribs and pneumonia and no knowledge of why I died – there is no scarring or evidence anywhere in or on my body that anything occurred.

After 3 weeks, they decided I could fly home, with oxygen and a doctor by my side. Another 3 weeks in hospital in Sydney and then a blood clot.

I am grateful to be alive and grateful for the perspective it has given me.

With my second shot at life, I separated from my partner (we had different life goals), went to IVF, found out that freezing my eggs at 37 is near pointless, became pregnant by 38 thanks to a donor and IVF and had my baby before I was 40 – Nicholas Valentino arrived 7 weeks early and today is a big, happy 2 year old.

For all this I am ever so grateful.

”

DO WHAT
MAKES
YOU HAPPY

Natasha Greig

Throughout life, we are faced with challenges, and at what can at times seem to be insurmountable odds. I have been so very blessed to always have the love, support, kindness and compassion of those closest to me to help me get through these hard times.

I have encountered so many special people who have taught me so many wise lessons, which have in turn helped me get through to the other side.

I have made mistakes. Big ones. I have done amazing things and achieved a lot as well, and it is because of this that I do not regret the choices I have made in my life because they have all contributed in some way to the person I am today - and that is a person who I am very proud of.

I experienced the 'real world' early, leaving home as a teenager, and then being put in the position of a full time carer for my partner at the time who was involved in an accident and unable to care for himself.

Relationships came and went- with challenges every step of the way, including dealing with alcohol abuse, as well as physical and emotional abuse.

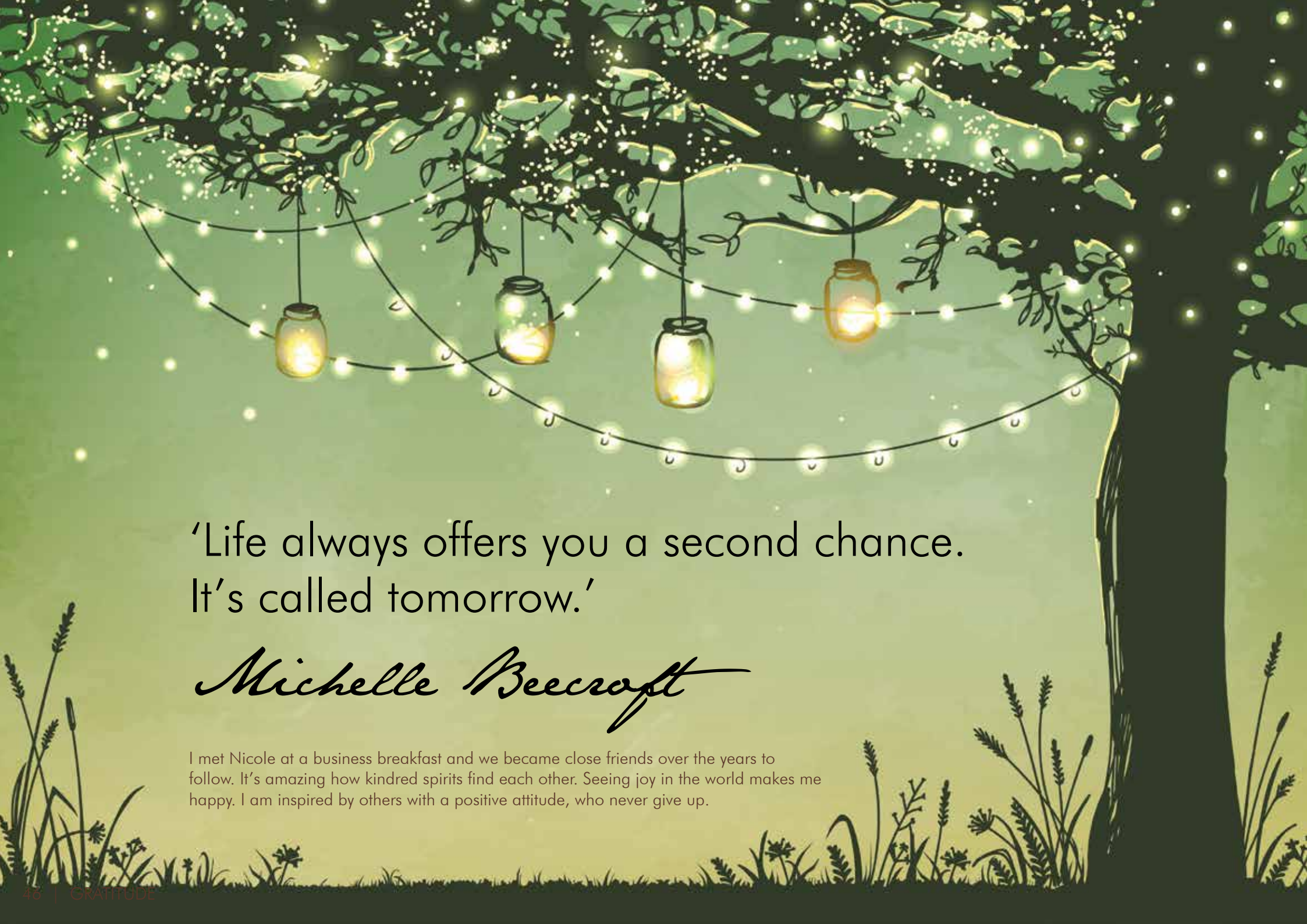
I made friends and I lost friends. I carry many scars, but along the way there have also been so many smiles and it is for this reason that I would not change a thing if I could have my time again.

I now have my wonderful husband and three beautiful and inspiring daughters.

Throughout all of this, I have learned to really love hard. Because you never know what is around the corner. You never know what life has in store for you and those around you.

So embrace the people who love you, who lift you up and support you, but also be that person for others as well.

Life is short it's a cliché for a reason. And I am proud of the path I have taken and am content in the place I am in with my family and friends. I try hard not to regret the things that have happened in my life, instead trying to be thankful for the person these experiences have shaped me into. Without them, I would not be who I am today.

A whimsical illustration of a tree at night. The tree's branches are silhouetted against a dark, starry sky. Strands of warm white string lights are draped around the tree. Several glass jars, some containing candles, are hanging from the branches, glowing with a warm light. The overall mood is peaceful and magical.

'Life always offers you a second chance.
It's called tomorrow.'

Michelle Beecroft

I met Nicole at a business breakfast and we became close friends over the years to follow. It's amazing how kindred spirits find each other. Seeing joy in the world makes me happy. I am inspired by others with a positive attitude, who never give up.





Gratitude

is not just a word - it's a *way of life*

Nicole Hintz