

The Journey Journal

September 2025 Edition

Feel Good Stories: *



Growing Up Grateful By Joseph J. Mazzella

When I was a boy growing up, we didn't have much materially. I spent most of my childhood living in my Nana's 75 year old house with my Dad, Mom, Nana, and two brothers. It was built with lots of lean-to's, porches, and other rooms built on as the years went by. I can only remember my Mom buying me new clothes two times. The other times I was given my two brothers' hand-me-downs. Yet, I never felt ashamed because of this. I didn't have any fancy toys either. I had a bike, a basketball, and a football. In the summer I had the outdoors and my imagination to play in. And in the winter I had the wood stove to sit by with my shelf full of tattered old books to read.

We never went hungry, though. We raised hogs for meat and had 4 huge gardens that gave us vegetables that lasted throughout the year. And every Sunday afternoon after church my dear Nana and Mom would make us a huge spaghetti dinner with pasta, potatoes, meatballs, chicken, and even steaks slow cooked in Nana's homemade red sauce. It was a feast that filled the soul as well as the belly. Most of all, we were rich in the things that mattered. Our house had a lot of laughter, a lot of smiles, a lot of joy, and a lot of Love. The truth is, if I could go back in time to my childhood, I would only change one thing: I would try to be more thankful for every meal, for every smile, for every hug, and for every moment of love we shared.

The truth is happiness is not what makes us thankful. It is thankfulness that makes us happy. May all of your days be filled with gratitude. May all of your days be filled with Love. May all of your days be filled with the happiness you create with each choice you make.



Older Man Made Me Cry In A Restaurant by A Friend

I was at a restaurant with my three year old son, just the two of us. An older gentleman at a table nearby finishes his meal, walks over and said "I've been listening to you with your son and just want you to know you're a great dad."

I didn't have much of a father figure growing up, and I wish I could have expressed to him how much this compliment meant to me. It felt like a dad saying "I'm proud of you" even though he was a stranger. I teared up after he left and still do thinking back on it.

Thank you, stranger, who took the time to share kind words.

**From: <https://www.sunnyskyz.com/feel-good-stories>*

Pray With Us

~ Divine Perfection ~



Father Richard Rohr considers how dualistic thinking is at the root of our illusions of human perfection:

Some traditional Navajo weavers include an intentional imperfection in their weaving pattern—a space sometimes called a "spirit line." It is said to be the place where the Spirit moves in and out of the design. The Semitic mind, the Indigenous mind, the Eastern mind (which, by the way, Jesus would have been much closer to) understands perfection in precisely that way. Eastern thought is much more comfortable with paradox, mystery, and nondual thinking than the Western mind which has been much more formed by Greek logic, which is very clear, very consistent, and very helpful by also being dualistic. It seems to me that we first have to succeed at good dualistic thinking before we can also experience its limitations. But many in the West just stop at dualism and then find themselves struggling to deal with death, suffering, the illogical nature of love, any honest notion of God, Mystery, or infinity.

Quaker teacher and activist Parker Palmer shared:

It's been a long time since I imagined that I would ever arrive at perfection in this aspect of my life or any other aspect of my life. I actually think that perfection is a kind of nightmarish wish dream. If you think of it socially, the people who promise perfection on earth are actually the totalitarian dictators who want to run everything themselves and are offering a false promise in order to seduce people into some sort of political or social pathology. And I feel the same way about spiritual teachers who promise perfection. I have never felt that wholeness, that human wholeness, a word that has meaning for me, had anything to do with perfection. Wholeness has to do with embracing the whole of who you are, which includes your shadow as well as your light. It includes the broken parts of you as well as the whole parts of you.

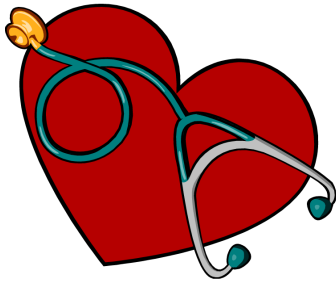
Father Richard emphasizes:

Perfection is not the elimination of imperfection, as we think. Divine perfection is, in fact, the ability to recognize, forgive, and include imperfection!—just as God does with all of us. Only in this way can we find the beautiful and hidden wholeness of God underneath the passing human show. This is the pearl of great price (see *Matthew 13:45–46*) in my opinion. Nondual thinking and seeing is the change that changes everything. It makes love, mercy, patience, and forgiveness possible.

Shared by Jim O'Hern, spiritual counselor



Nurse's Corner



Fall Prevention for Seniors

Fall prevention for seniors is crucial for maintaining independence and quality of life. Many falls are preventable. Some ways to reduce the risk of falls include: *regular exercise, home safety modifications, review of medications as well as hearing and vision checkups.*

- ◆ **Exercise** that improves strength, balance, and coordination are key. For good workouts to try include walking, water workouts and Tai Chi.
- ◆ **Home safety modifications** means eliminating clutter, getting rid of throw or loose rugs and other trip hazards such as cords. Improve lighting around the home so areas are well lit – you need to see your walking spaces. Adding grab bars to shower and tub areas is essential.
- ◆ It is a good idea to **review all medication** with your doctor to determine if anything can cause dizziness. Ask your doctor about adding vitamins for bone health.
- ◆ **Yearly vision and hearing checks** can determine if vision or hearing is deteriorating. If you need assistive devices such as glasses, hearing aids, canes or walkers, please use them. *As the old saying goes “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”*

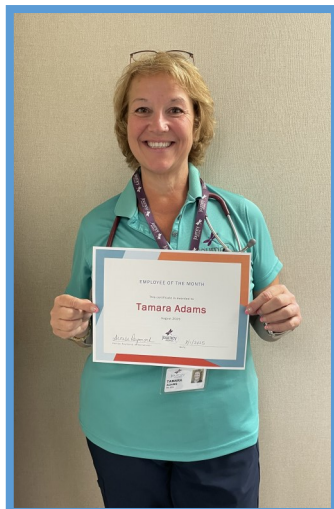
How Many Words Can You Make From the Words,

Autumn Night

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____



Congrats to Our Employee of the Month



August's employee of the month **Tammy Adams**

Tammy Adams, RN,CM, is our August Employee of the Month. Tammy is an asset to our team who joined us with years of hospice experience and is the epitome of a compassionate nurse.



DEMENTIA EDUCATION WORKSHOP

Tuesday, September 30
10:30am - 11:30am
Ocean City Library
1735 Simpson Ave
Ocean City, NJ 08226



Presented By:
The Shores, a UMC community
Alzheimer's Association
HomeWorks, a UMC service
Journey Hospice



10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's

What to watch for in yourself and others
Alzheimer's causes changes in memory,
thinking and behavior that are not normal
aging. Learn:

- *The difference between normal aging and Alzheimer's*
- *Common warning signs.*
- *The importance of early detection and benefits of diagnosis.*
- *Next steps and expectations for the diagnostic process*



Brain Health

Learn preventive strategies and techniques that may reduce the risk of cognitive decline. Discussion will include memory-enhancing exercises, stress reduction methods, and tips for maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Join us for an empowering workshop that focuses on the common concerns of dementia along with actionable advice and support.

This workshop is free and open to the public.

Light refreshments will be served.

**RSVP by 9/24 to Michele Musto at
609-391-6321 or
mercolanl@umcommunities.org**

September Coloring Page





September Crossword

ACROSS

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1) Petri dish gel | 40) Combine numbers |
| 5) Shoulder-bag feature | 41) Natural fertilizer source |
| 10) Compass drawings | 42) Jazz legend Fitzgerald |
| 14) Be a nomad | 43) A Muppet |
| 15) Conversation piece? | 44) Market used merchandise |
| 16) Type of bean or milk (Var.) | 46) Fly-trapping sticky stuff |
| 17) "As before," in footnotes | 49) Like a noble gas |
| 18) Numbered highway | 51) Stands totally apart |
| 19) Diplomat's skill | 57) Quote, as a passage |
| 20) Shun caution | 58) Salk vaccine target |
| 23) Slightly burn | 59) ___ Major (Big Dipper constellation) |
| 24) Pure-and-simple | 60) Oscar winner Guinness |
| 25) Bundling cotton | 61) In any way |
| 28) Itsy-bitsy parasite | 62) Spellbound |
| 30) Slack-jawed | 63) It gets on one's nerves |
| 31) Attack, as a wasp | 64) Is allowed to, to Shakespeare |
| 33) Greedy sort, animal-wise | 65) What anything can be in front of? |
| 36) Abet | |

DOWN

- 1) Seed case
- 2) Vast desert
- 3) Tel ____, Israel
- 4) Make a new preliminary sketch, e.g.
- 5) Bounded
- 6) Minimal bikini bottom
- 7) Blush
- 8) At times it's upped
- 9) Your equal in society
- 10) Very perceptive
- 11) Celebrity ribbing event
- 12) Word with "business" or "life"
- 13) Mythical goat-legged reveler
- 21) Racket
- 22) Income's opposite
- 25) Cake with a kick
- 26) Like fine scotch
- 27) Amount of laundry
- 28) Japanese soup
- 29) ___ and outs
- 31) Leave in haste, as a cat
- 32) Baker's dozen minus three
- 33) Gomer of Mayberry
- 34) "___ do" (faint praise)
- 35) Word screamed by soccer announcers
- 37) FBI worker
- 38) Junkyard canine
- 39) Burnout preventer, often
- 43) Split down the middle
- 44) Rise in opposition
- 45) Major time period
- 46) Part of a sportscast
- 47) Napoleon's punishment
- 48) Building locations
- 49) Mosaic, for one
- 50) What manicurists do
- 52) Email filter target
- 53) Itsy-bitsy amount
- 54) Caspian Sea tributary
- 55) Priority Mail agcy.
- 56) Final check?

YOU ARE HERE

By Timothy E. Parker

