

Gratitude Is A Nutrient Underutilized

"I want to encourage you to join my daily quest to explore the beauty and grace found in moments of genuine gratitude."

Since our bodies are approximately 70% water, factors that can affect the water within us knowingly or unknowingly can have an effect on us. I was touched by the passing of Masaru Emoto and his work with "water crystals". He developed a procedure to freeze water at -13F for three hours and then while the samples remained frozen he and his team could observe and photograph results.

Although his research remains controversial, I find it fascinating. He claimed that certain conditions represented life and conversely others represented an absence of life.

Conditions that represented life took the form of a crystal. When he or his team used tap water it would not form a single crystal. Also water from a contaminated source would not form coherent crystals. However natural water taken from natural springs, underground rivers, glaciers, the upper reaches



of rivers or rainforests yielded beautiful crystals.

One of his team members suggested playing music to see its effects on the water. To their amazement, music had a profound effect upon the water crystals. For example, distilled water would not produce crystals, but a glass jar of distilled water placed between 2 speakers produced definite results based on the type of music played. His research claimed that classical music yielded distinct beautiful patterns while violent heavy metal music resulted in frag-

mented and malformed crystals at best.

Next they labeled words like "thank you" or "you fool" to the glass jar containing the water. Interestingly, the result was seen in the different crystals. Positive words formed beautiful hexagonal crystals similar to the classical music. Negative words generated malformed and fragmented crystals at best.

Photographs were also used and positive pictures produced beautiful unique crystals where destructive images produced crystals similar to the negative

words. Whether it was the intention of the person attaching the written word or picture on the jar, or the frequency of the written word itself which changed the water, the pattern was consistent for thousands of pictures. Dr. Emoto mentioned that this crystal, one of the most beautiful and delicate crystals he had ever seen, was created by the words "love and gratitude".

Whether his findings are conclusive or not, I do believe that somehow words, music, and images have an effect on the water in our cells. So let's consider love and gratitude for a moment.

Have you ever observed how some people can survive tragedy, for instance the death of a child, and still maintain their sanity and capacity to live a normal life? Or noticed two people can go through the same horrific accident, be the victim of a major crime and somehow one person can return to normal life and yet the other is stuck in a type of "victim" mode the rest of their lives?

After interviewing hundreds of people who have gone through devastating life changing events and returned to normal life, Dr. Brenee Brown, author of several books including *The Power of Vulnerability* says gratitude is a major factor. After years of research she has found one of the most powerful emotions we can experience is gratitude.

The people who heal and move on in life somehow have learned an uncanny ability to be grateful. She is quick to say that she is not talking about an "attitude of gratitude" but rather the conscious daily practice of gratitude. And we are not talking about the big things. From the people interviewed Dr.

Brown says "people find ways to be grateful for small things throughout the day: a sunset, the smell of fresh coffee, the touch of a loved one.

Why is gratitude so powerful? One reason is that emotions affect our endocrine system. We know, living in a fight or flight lifestyle propels us to secrete excess cortisol. Long term cortisol exposure causes a thinning of the intestinal layer in our small intestine, i.e. leaky gut, thinning of bone, poor digestion, depletion of key minerals, and hormone dysregulation, etc. Excess cortisol causes short thoracic breathing stimulating the sympathetic nervous system. Experiencing gratitude does the opposite.

Take a few moments and think of something you are truly grateful for. What happens? That's right, a full tummy breathe that activates the parasympathetic nervous system, the part of our nervous system that facilitates digestion, detox, balanced hormones and tissue repair.

So whether we are talking about the effects water has on every cell in our body or the ability to recover from tragedy, gratitude is a "nutrient" that is underutilized. I want to encourage you to join my daily quest to explore the beauty and grace found in moments of genuine gratitude.

Life can be hard. And we can all find good reasons to complain. However, I think we can all agree we have many blessings in our lives. Remind the people closest to you how much you value them. Not only will it bless them but the water in your cells will be affected as well.

Happy New Year to you and your family.