

## Thanksgiving Message from Rabbi Sara

Hakarat hatov-recognizing that which is good; in other words, gratitude. The appreciation of gifts we have been given, and the recognition of our benefactors. But tradition teaches us that there is more to gratitude than saying thank you...

The word Hoda'ah in Hebrew is both an expression of thanks, and is the word used when conceding to another person in an argument.

According to Jewish tradition, the connection between these two things is that when we receive a gift, we are humbled.... when we say thank you to another person we are admitting to the them that our lives would not be the same without them.

Most of us have stories of random acts of kindness. When people we didn't know did something that made such an impression on us that we tell the story years and years later. Because even the smallest gift— a kind word, a hug, a conversation, a bus fare.... Can make an incredible impact and change a life. So when we say thank you, we are letting the other person know that as independent as we strive to be, we cannot go it alone, and we are grateful for their help in making our lives better. Their gift humbles us, because without it, we would be lessened .

When we concede an argument, we put our ego aside and admit that we do not, in fact, know everything, despite what we tell our children. We have learned something new, and that in and of itself is something for which to be grateful. Our lives are enriched with the new knowledge and insight shared with us by another person.

The more gratitude we show, the more come to realize that our natural gifts are nurtured by others, our accomplishments stand on the shoulders of others, and if not for those with whom we have walked the meandering paths of our lives, we would not be standing where we are today.

According to Jewish tradition, one must say 100 blessings a day. We must recognize, and show gratitude for, the miracle in a hundred different things, experiences, interactions, and/or wonders within each 15 wakeful hours per day...

To say a blessing is to ensure we never desensitize ourselves to the majestic mountains we see from the Albertson's parking lot.

To say a blessing is to never blind ourselves to those in need, and to never take for granted all that we have in our lives.

To say a blessing is to remember the wide eyed excitement and curiosity in children, even when they are loud and driving us crazy.

To say 100 blessings is to challenge ourselves to live every moment in gratitude.