

Happy Thanksgiving!

As we welcome the beauty of Autumn, cooler weather, and the promise of the coming winter, Thanksgiving brings to mind the blessings in our lives. A grateful heart comes in all shapes and sizes and those blessings are as individual as we are. Whether you are appreciative of a healthy body, mobility, a supportive and loving family, or having great friends, we can all find something to be thankful for.

There is a well-known poem called *Footprints* that refers to being carried during one's darkest hour – it reassures us that we are not alone during challenging times. This poem has provided me with great comfort, but as time passes, I realize that my life's journey is filled with many footprints – footprints of those who have loved, supported, and guided me through many challenges.

The greatest blessing for our family this year was the arrival of our newest granddaughter who entered our lives this spring. We are grateful for our son's paternity leave which not only allows them the opportunity to stay with us and enjoy island living, but also gives us this time to share in their lives and watch the little ones grow. The footprints they leave behind will warm our hearts for years to come as we treasure the memories of their time with us.

I have come to realize that we carry each other and every time we do, that we leave an impression or footprint behind in the life of that person. It never ceases to amaze me how one person or act of an individual can affect or change the course of another's life.

A footprint can be as simple as a one-time experience or someone who carries us for great distances. I think of first responders who save lives but never meet the people who are indebted to them. Or the good Samaritan who stops to help someone in distress and never gives a second thought to how it affected the recipient's life. Even a simple act of kindness can change the attitude of someone who has given up on humanity. Every time we step into someone's life, our actions have some kind of effect on that individual.

We often hear stories from people where a professional such as a teacher, nurse, or doctor, goes above and beyond and leaves a lasting impression by influencing a career direction. Even a coach whose encouragement can change the life course of a player. Footprints can be the everyday effect that a neighbour, employer, colleague, or friend may have on our lives.

Perhaps the most lasting and enduring footprints that are forever imprinted in our lives are the care, love and support that we receive from friends and family. We can all ask ourselves, what kind of footprint do you want to imprint in someone's life? This is truly the time of year to be thankful for the footprints that have already affected or influenced your life and for the footprints yet to come.

Wishing you and your family a very Happy Thanksgiving!

Neibarah