

getting closer everyday

a project facilitated by ashley neese  
for the infinite exchange gallery  
in conjunction with the Olsj biennial  
san jose, california  
6 june 2008

this book is for you

winter 2008

most of my life i have felt there is a missing piece...i've often thought if i had more success or better jeans or was liked by every person i ever came in contact with than i would magically be okay. i've spent years and years seeing the glass half empty and wishing and dreaming for a different life. like if i was just born a bizillionaire or if i were more outgoing or if my teeth were not so small or if people liked my art enough to invite me to speak at a fancy institution or if i were on the cover of w magazine.....then i would be happy....

over the last few years i have become aware of a need to cultivate gratitude in my life. i started developing this practice of writing things i am grateful for down on a sheet of paper. some days all i could write was that i had food + shelter + my health. other days i could write a little but more.

before i knew it i was creating these long gratitude lists and i was honestly grateful for what was on the lists. my family, my friends, my desire to grow, my education, my past, my ability to connect with other people, my willingness to show up for life even when things were messy and even when i was not all pretty and put together. i learned through this process that i am a good friend, sibling, daughter, partner, worker, listener and i even have a weird often dark sense of humor that most people find totally offensive. and i could live with that. the more i am in gratitude the less my life appears empty and full of useless bullshit. the more i am in gratitude the more i see the beauty and feel the bittersweetness in every little thing.

and most days i get that i am okay and i find the energy to face the world with a smile.

project statement:

getting closer everyday is a book, an exchange and an invitation. as a result of making gratitude lists often my outlook on life and connection to people, places and things has greatly improved. i want to share this useful tool with others and encourage interested parties to start their own gratitude practice. in exchange for a handmade gratitude book, participants will write on-the-spot gratitude lists that will be scanned and made into a publication.

findings:

on june 6, 2008 i exchanged 62 books for gratitude lists in san jose, california with the infinite exchange gallery. this experience was more eye-opening and rewarding than i imagined possible. the wonderful conversations i had and the people that participated were truly amazing. in the following pages of this book i hope you will be able to relate to what someone wrote and if you feel so moved, create a gratitude list of your own.

thank you:

to everyone that participated in this project - you made this happen. lori, jen, robin, brion, san jose, wickie, my family, josef, aimee, randy and kirk.

this book was created on august 20th, 2008.

I'm so grateful for :

the sun

my lovee

water

Kindness

skills from within

hand shakes (warm)

green tea

artists

inter-active art

You

change in president (san)

my hands

my mother

my creativity

my personal interactions

my job

my childhood

amelie

The little prince

my abba



my mom

my dad

my nephew Lucian

Brian & Sara

friends

Portland.

food.

bicycles.

healthy bodies

music

forgiveness.

forgetting

hugs.

bodhi, my dog

my house

Good food

water

Andrew

6/6/2008

I'm Grateful

That it isn't raining today  
I have a wonderful dog

I'm Super today

I have enough -

I have lots of friends

I am having fun

I can laugh easily

"ugly" landscapes. Everything has a beauty about it, even damaged, abused places.

Finally, pleasure, happiness, and the more serene type of beauty all feel so much fuller when you're allowed yourself to fully experience the other side.

Of course I'm grateful for those things too... but those are probably the things everyone writes about.

# What I'm grateful for...

my husband	
my children	
my health	our journey
the sky	vegetables
the moon	our family
Barack Obama	Bob & Betty
my pillows	Ginny & Bucky
my bed	Jacob → dogs!
my exercise	Schatzy
my chetiz	LAUMC
our practice	the monterey pines
loved the clear air	the beach sunsets
swimming in clean water	
travel adventures	tears that help us grow
happy dreams	Love
my garden	Peace.
GOD	

I am grateful for you  
asking me this question,  
because it like ?'s.

So if I think a little further  
I guess I am grateful that  
I am here + that people are  
open and sincere. That nature,  
sun are still existing ...

HEALTH

SUPPORT OF MY FAMILY

LOVE OF MY FRIENDS

PRIVILEGE

I met adlee at the gratitude chair  
I have good friends  
I have Family  
I love my job  
my house  
my dog coco  
my friend Brett  
my friend Sidney  
my car  
my job in SF  
my hair  
my ability to see color  
my decorator skills  
my great contractor Richard  
my sexual appetite  
my good taste  
working out at gym  
having lived in Paris  
having traveled around the world

gratitude

4 Susie

4 EVER

4 TUNE

4 Spirit of creativity

4 KNOWING CHILDREN

4 SAVING LIFE

4 LEADERSHIP SKILLS

4 FUN

4 MY HEALING

4 HOPE

My health.

My children.

My mind.

My curiosity.

My children's health.

My intellect.

My curiosity.

My Abundant love of all.  
of my friends.

My friends.

My freedom — my unity.

Diversity + ethnic differences  
Not much the world.

My parents & brother.

I AM GRATEFUL  
FOR THE  
FOLKS  
IN SAN JOSE

I am grateful to

Marianne (my wife; partner)

Being excited about what  
I do, where I live

who I know, chuying,

the world, my friends,  
my dad

I am grateful that  
I live each day at  
work hard

I am grateful that I  
have hope always

I am grateful for  
good friends, good  
health - my children  
& family, for all the  
kind people of the  
world - for living  
in such a great place -  
Northern California.  
Please all - "Compost"

Thank you

Carolyn  
♡☺



I am grateful for the family that still survives. I am grateful for all that nature provides us: oxygen, water, food, vistas, a connection with the all. I am grateful for mass production, industry, science, and finance that makes so much possible. And I am grateful that nature has not yet completely succumbed to it. I am grateful that our political system still guarantees some rights. I am grateful that our civilization provides many opportunities for expression and fulfillment. I am grateful that I have been asked to document what I am grateful for, because it is so easy to forget. It is always time well spent.

life  
my wife

flowers

my husband

my parents

air

the sun

stars

my sister

my church

long hikes

sleep

music

Adhis

my friends

peace


Oh how Allah




Love

BARBARA RACHIA, BECCABIO; RATT.  
STUDYMAN PROBLE.

FREE MARKETS. RAINMAN.

MITCH, NATALIE, JOEL, ALOK, MIKEAS,  
WELLER, SARAH, IT'S ALL ABOUT  
PEOPLE.

I am very grateful for 

1. The gift of life & the whole spirit or what ever the heck it is that is so beautiful and generous & fun <sup>and gives me</sup> life
2. my healthy body 
3. my comfy home  especially my bed + PJ's + blankets 
4. every one is OK. Jokes! Bird songs too!
5. my family + friends childish glee
6. opportunity to notice uncomfortable feelings + become more present games
7. I Love San Jo - This overgrown hick town.
8. were finally on the right track!  $\emptyset 1$  + No more grand prix race
9. my bike, bike + all my friends
10. KKUP + metro (where I'm a journalist)
11. The Sun, clouds, blue sky, ocean, city
12. Listening  $\rightarrow$  13. Love 14. freedom
15. Funded + supported art projects

my cool new handmade book

- My parents for being there for me  
of the family.
- + My siblings to whom I owe  
a lot of what I learned in life.
- To Allah to whom I owe a  
lot of my fondest experiences of  
political success.
- Being epileptic on the national  
scene so that I have a relatively  
normal life.
- To Palestine, for which I identify  
with & feel humbled to be a  
part of and wait to see it free  
of occupation.
- The love of my past girlfriends
- The love of my friends, especially Larry,  
Cindy, & Robby.
- The love of family!



9 in  
lots of food - no famine  
warm summer  
nights

my family

Loving Family

2 home land water

love Friends Comfortable house  
Good health

enough money

very (x∞) caring  
sister  
time  
together

friends + family  
nice relatives

each other  
the internet and all it offers.

helping  
each other  
with chores  
(it's fun!)

time to play  
with my brother

living close to Grandma + Papa.

I'm grateful for being sober  
I'm grateful for being alive  
I'm grateful for the crushing  
of my ego  
I'm grateful for my God  
I'm grateful for my  
family  
I'm grateful for being  
on a spiritual quest.  
I'm grateful for my  
transplant  
I'm grateful for my  
health  
I'm grateful for my  
sense of humor  
I'm grateful for being  
aware  
I'm grateful for my  
Subconscious

I am grateful that nothing I own  
is not too valuable.

I am grateful for books.

I am grateful for my family and  
my friends.

I am grateful for water  
sky  
color  
warmth  
grace  
caring  
bread  
butter

I am grateful for rest.

I am grateful for love.

I am grateful for my own strength  
when things get difficult.

I am grateful for you!

kosher marshmallows

opposite - think

thought reversal

ORange clothes

smell of hot dogs

PRETTY!

that you can't read my thoughts

that you might give me the benefit of the doubt.

Goldfish

typewriter

old times

Old Grandad whisky

I'm old enough to DRINK!

buses

Carriages

mobius strips

WTF

Raspberry beer

opportunities to promote

SCORN

I am grateful for:

My little sister,

my dad

My best friend

my education opportunity

My boyfriend

San Jose weather

Ska music

Thrift stores

50% OFF everything day at  
Salvation Army

Always living by water (lakes,  
rivers, now the ocean)

YouTube

Zombie Movies

Thunderstorms

Netflix

My rad job

The memories of my mom

Bike Lanes

I am grateful for:

my happy nature;

my compassion,

my family (chosen & birth)

my ability to finally legally  
marry ...

my health & most  
importantly,

my partner, our home, our  
family & our friends!


I am grateful for... First of all life, then of course comes the people who help me live that life - Every little piece of me that comes from each person I meet. The superficial also comes to mind, I'm grateful for my abundance and the ease of accessing all I need.

I'm most grateful, however for my mother, who gave me everything that comes after. My upbringing that allowed me to think the way I do, to question what's put in front of me. The empathy she showed me allowed me to feel it for others. Her strength and intelligence is all that is in me that I have esteem.

1. SENSE of SELF (still developing)
2. CLOSE friends
3. musical talents (my own)
4. email (not spam though)
5. the SUN
6. TJ and DAVE (long form improv  
in Chicago)
7. animal collective
8. that the electric guitar  
was invented
9. curiosity (of humans)
10. space

FOOD  
family  
friends

I AM GRATEFUL FOR ---

my wonderful piggy! 

people who let me put my cold hands in warm places ☺

LOST as a show that brings my friends together to laugh and shush each other at the end of commercial breaks

the people who are comfortable telling me things that make them feel uncomfortable

the random things that happen + make me think that everything always works out for the best

hot stone massages!

that I have a job

that I don't have to start the job for another 4 1/2 months

that after a while you sometimes forget the bad things that happened

~~the~~ I feel like I should end my list in a very grand way but I'm not going to!

I am grateful for...

- the many wonderful, supportive people in my life who love me
- the many creative, giving people in my life who inspire me
- dark chocolate & red wine
- my history - personal, family, & community from which to grow, learn, & reflect
- my family - present & past
- my friends - present & past
- my cats, Peonid & Jam
- finding a partner who loves, supports, & understands & who inspires me to complete myself
- my health, my heart, & my mind
- being able to be a creative being & make art
- art
  - baking
  - beauty
  - community
- love
  - beauty
  - communication
- sun
  - spirit
  - pleasure
- snow
  - connections

- family

- My family is the most important thing in my life. They are the people that gave me life, keep me grounded, support my every decision, call me on my bullshit, and make sure I don't go crazy

Friends

I find peace being with those who identify with my everyday life and love my idiosyncrasies. They make my days palatable and keep my life educational

Music

This probably most defines me. Without which I would be lost and have no purpose. I listen, play, breathe, and feel it all day, every day of my life. Songs and albums wake me up in the morning, propel me at work, and put me to sleep at night

- ① I AM GREATFUL FOR MY HEALTH, THAT MY PHYSICAL + MENTAL STATE ARE NOT HINDERING MY SPIRITUAL STATE TO AN UNMANAGABLE DEGREE.
- ② I AM GREATFUL FOR MY FRIENDS, THAT TIME AND DISTANCE ARE RELATIVE.
- ③ I AM GREATFUL I HAVE A HOME, THAT MY SHELTER IS WARM.
- ④ I AM GREATFUL MY MOM IS SOBER. THAT I HAVE A MOTHER
- ⑤ I AM GREATFUL THAT TAMERA LOVES ME. THAT I LOVE HER.
- ⑥ I AM GREATFUL THAT KENDRA LOVED ME. THAT I LOVED HER.
- ⑦ I AM GREATFUL OBAMA ~~IS~~ MAY BE MY PRESIDENT. THAT CIVIC PARTICIPATION ~~IS~~ MAY INCREASE.
- ⑧ I AM GREATFUL I AM SOBER. THAT I DIDN'T DRINK OR DO DRUGS, OR GET ANGRY WHEN MY CAR GOT TOUED TODAY.

⑨ I AM GREATFUL FOR ART  
THAT CREATIVITY FROM MY  
FRIENDS IS VALUED.

⑩ I AM GREATFUL FOR  
EMMA & SAM. THAT THEY  
LOVE ME AND I LOVE THEM.

I am grateful for so many things...

my mom and dad, sorta hippies who raised me nice and liberal in San Francisco. my amazing job and passionate coworkers who aren't so jaded that they can't appreciate the struggle for a better society.

my love of nature, of beauty, art, people, curiosity, song, dance, conversation, civil rights.

I'm grateful for gay marriage. For Barack Obama, for curiosity, wonder, dorkiness, nerds, crushes, reuniting with cute boys from elementary school.

for creativity, always  
wanting to improve, even  
if I don't know what.

For laughter and  
tears that come easily,  
for wearing my heart  
on my sleeve.

Tamara  
San Jose

# Things that I am Grateful For



First I would like to say...

1. I AM ALIVE
2. I feel with the upmost feelings
3. I see life with rose colored glasses, (but not in the way some might think).
4. I speak to my parents again.
5. I have finally started to realize that I really do love myself.
6. I can see things in a way that bring design to my thoughts.

7. the sky really is falling
8. I did things in my life that have affected the way I think and that's ok.
8. I will be there when it's all over.
9. "somebody loves me"
10. I am grateful for others who feel passionate about expressing themselves even if it means risking being shunned.

San B & thank you.

Lana Chung

I'm grateful for  
A good job and I have a place  
to lay my head

Please



I am grateful for  
my husband who  
is amazingly calm.

I am grateful for  
living in The Bay  
Area with such  
beauty around us.

I am grateful for  
being alive, having  
food water + shelter  
unlike many people  
in the world.


This is something I did not realize  
was a blessing until now. I am grateful  
for family and friends that supported me  
as I was going to school.

Other things I am grateful for.

1. God
2. Public transportation
3. The Viking Pub
4. Pets
5. A chance to travel around the world.
6. a home to come back to.

1. My husband Maximilian.
2. The baby growing in my belly.
3. My kittens. They bring me unconditional love every day.
4. My art practice.
5. The beautiful city I live in - San Francisco.
6. My amazing friends, like Ashley, who continue to show me how thoughtful and caring people can be if you let them.
7. The reciprocity of strangers.
8. That Bush's presidential term is almost over.
9. Canadians' sense of humor.
10. Each new day is an opportunity to do it better.

my life  
my health  
my husband  
my cat  
the sky  
nature  
happiness  
being grateful  
my friends  
my house  
air  
food  
colors  
art  
creativity

beautiful people  
collaboration  
exchange  
happiness  
joy  
feelings  
emotion  
being me  
living life  
smiles  
technology  
culture  
travel  
learning  
peace  
conversation 

Olm grateful for

air

water

love

health

family

friends

Barbara & John

art and the sea

and the mountain



## I'm thankful

- that my mom's alzheimers medication is working
- that David is still my number one best friend after 20 yrs of marriage
- that the temperature reached into the high 90's last month
- that I'm a critical optimist
- that my sister is my cheerleader
- that I have options
- that I'm in good health
- that Bush will be gone soon
- that I have caring friends
- for my support system
- for my local CSA &
- for San Jose hosting Zero 1

Matt Van Horn

Things I am grateful for:

Friendship

Peace

God

Love

San Francisco

The air I breath

The chance to live through another  
day that is given to me.

You out

## WHAT I AM GRATEFUL FOR -

- THE CURATOR OF THIS SHOW WHO IS HAVING OUR BABY
- STUDENTS WHO REALLY GET A LECTURE AND TELL YOU ABOUT IT AFTERWARDS
- MOVIES I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THAT REALLY MAKE ME LAUGH
- TRUFFLES
- MY SISTER.
- FINDING A BAND THAT I REALLY LOVE AND FINDING OUT THAT THEY HAVE MADE FOUR ALBUMS ALREADY!
- THE FILLMORE
- THE BERKELEY LANDSCAPING FOLKS
- BEING IN CALIFORNIA AND LOVING EVERY MOMENT

belly full of vegan chicken wings  
and finding fresh figs today  
as well as cash to purchase said  
belly-filling items.

Finally ending up with a satisfying  
non-fire rope dart  
getting mella to bite my shoulder  
nicole lets me bite her shoulder.  
nicole puts up with a lot of goofy,  
in fact, she <sup>likes</sup> it.

My friends - holycrap - they make me  
laugh and push me to do more.

getting started on a huge art  
project with all her friends

having such awesome stickers

I am grateful for grace and  
for love that really can heal any  
type of brokenness.

I am grateful for people in my life  
who transcend love and grace. my mom.  
my dad and my two brothers.

I am grateful for the encouragement  
and support to dream.

To dream of things that the world  
may tell me are impossible.

I am grateful for friends to laugh  
with. to paint handprints on  
the streets with.

I am grateful for  
the life no  
matter how confusing  
it may be.

I am very grateful for many things!

I am most grateful for good relationships

This includes relationships with friends, girlfriends, parents, siblings, close pets, and any passing stranger that returns my greeting or smile.

However, that is an obvious thing to be grateful for. It's the small things that make anyone interesting:

I am grateful for gravy on mashed potatoes, and how you can make a little pond for it. I am also grateful for how it spills out so wonderfully after I assault its foundation with my spoon.

I am grateful for how corn on the cob gets stuck in your teeth like popcorn. The difficulty and hardships of eating them make them oh so much more delicious.

I am grateful for quirky people and activities that make for unforgettable memories like this one!

I am very grateful for Family First:

↳ Parents & Siblings - Mother, Father,  
Sister, Brother  
↳ Grandmother  
↳ NOT my boss.

↳ It's for food, it's for love.  
↳ grateful for exploration & optimistic attitudes.

↳ For altitude & environment  
↳ Earth & water

↳ Why? → For life, warmth  
↳ For those like me and  
opposite.

↳ Nate, Andrew, Mike, Robby,  
Nick, all the rest of course.

!

# Gratitude List

Randy Colosky

1. I'm not dead
2. Girls Girls Girls
3. I can talk to my Family
4. I have great Friends, really!
5. I'm Learning things still
6. I'm treating myself Better
7. I'm OK with not getting my way
8. Sushi
9. animals
10. My Nephew Zack

I am grateful for  
many things:

- my family
- ~~their~~ support of my career
- the fact that I can  
be an artist
- support from former instructors  
(Trudy Golley especially)
- for luck
- for security
- for health
- for healthcare &
- for my friends
- for so many things I forget  
every day
- for so many things I remember  
every day - for more than  
this list - for you Ashley.

It's funny to be confronted with the task of writing down the things you are grateful for and feeling like you need to think about it. I am a happy person and I think my life is great, and yet I can't think of what to write . . .

Hummm

well, I am thankful for having such great friends and people in my life. I am grateful to be in excellent health. I am grateful for art and artists that make me think about this life. I am grateful for my spoiled tyrant of a dog. I am grateful I am loved.



I'm thankful for the things that seem to be mundane

in some one's life. From my fresh smelling sweater hoodie (reminds me of my childhood blanket), to the patterns that rain forms on my windshields.

I'm grateful for the things that I don't have.

First being, having a child. The struggles with trying to conceive make me wonder if that is gratitude or not. But in the end there is gratitude because I still have life. Life that God gave me so that I can be life to others.

Friends

Family

Food

Clothes

Water

Electronics

Sports

Holidays

School

I am grateful for

- 1.) My husband Nick
- 2.) My family
- 3.) My life
- 4.) My brain
- 5.) My relationships
- 6.) People with open minds
- 7.) Friends
- 8.) People that care
- 9.) Art
- 10.) The environment
- 11.) Sunsets
- 12.) The Ocean
- 13.) Colors
- 14.) The universe
- 15.) People like you that <sup>make</sup> ~~are~~ think

I am grateful for  
warm friends who support  
me psychologically in  
my endeavors

my big poppy that  
blooms even without  
watering

The sounds of birds in  
the morning, esp. when  
they return in late  
January

people I can hug, & my  
dear husband who  
loves to tease & kiss

For a chance to go on the  
train tomorrow, for the  
long space between here  
& there where nothing  
is expected of me.

for being able to walk  
(almost) as far as I  
want.

A little over 10 years ago, I became aware of the fact that I was never taught to appreciate or "enjoy" my "unpleasant" emotions. Emotions like sorrow, disappointment, grief, dissolution... you get the picture.

This seemed an important realisation to me, and an unfortunate deficit - since not every moment in life can be filled with the "pleasant" emotions we've all been taught to value. Yet these emotions are quite valuable... sometimes more valuable in terms of what they teach.

The timing was good, because I was about to go through a very tumultuous time in my life. Change has brought wonderful things to my life - a great job, my soul mate, a rich life full of family and friends.

During the "worst" times, I found that I was able to truly "enjoy" my misery. I could sit and cry and relish my grief, or be angry and truly immerse myself in the richness of my anger. Give it a try sometime if you're not smarter than me and haven't yet figured this out for yourself. Related to this is appreciation for

I am grateful for

everything I encounter daily,  
everything I have encountered,  
everything I will encounter

Mostly I am grateful for  
my husband Tony.

He is my best friend,  
my teacher,  
my life time  
partner in "crime."



## I AM GREATFUL FOR ↓

- ① for Ashley, who made me a mixed ~~tape~~<sup>CD</sup> on my b day (the day after we met) with new music like The Notwist and DCFC, and also, a picture book with animals I had a crush on her that day.
- ② And also, for still being alive cuz I used to be hella homeless and strung out and no-body wanted to make me mixed tapes.
- ③ I am grateful for still being able to get excited about stuff cuz, well Its the most important thing, (And love too)
- ④ I am grateful for good food and people who make it.
- ⑤ Chris, my roommate, who is a pretty fuckin rad friend.
- ⑥ Buddy (my car) a 84 vw Rabbit, It got us here tonight

1. Allison, Palo Alto, CA
2. Alyssa, San Jose, CA
3. Amy, Portland, OR
4. Andrew, San Francisco, CA
5. Anonymous
6. Anonymous
7. Anonymous, Antwerp, Belgium
8. Anonymous
9. Anthony, San Jose, CA
10. Bill, Los Angeles, CA
11. Bonnie, Walnut Creek, CA
12. Brion, San Francisco, CA
13. Carl, San Jose, CA
14. Carolyn, San Jose, CA
15. Christopher, San Jose, CA
16. Curtis + Kathryn, San Jose, CA
17. Dan, Cupertino, CA
18. Diane, San Jose, CA
19. Fado, San Jose, CA
20. Faith, San Jose, CA
21. Family: Alan, Desmond, Elena +  
Linda, Sunnyvale, CA
22. Gary, San Jose, CA
23. Hope, San Francisco, CA
24. Jane, Berkeley, CA
25. Jenn, San Jose, CA
26. Jim, San Jose, CA
27. John, Regina, Saskatchewan
28. Josh, Chicago, IL
29. Julius, Saratoga, CA
30. Kelly, Cleveland, OH
31. Kerri-Lynn, Winnipeg, Manitoba
32. Kevin, San Francisco, CA
33. Kevin, pl, Berkeley, CA
34. Kevin, p2, Berkeley, CA
35. Lamara, pl, San Jose, CA
36. Lamara, p2, San Jose, CA
37. Laura, pl, San Jose, CA
39. Laura, p2, San Jose, CA
40. Leche, San Jose, CA
41. Linda, San Bruno, CA
42. Lori, San Francisco, CA
43. Lyn, Sunnyvale, CA
44. Marc, Los Angeles, CA
45. Marianne, San Jose, CA
46. Marilyn, San Jose, CA
47. Matt, San Francisco, CA
48. Max, San Francisco, CA
49. Mella + Nico, Oakland, CA
50. Nevelle, San Jose, CA
51. Noah, Lexington, MA
52. Peter, Palo Alto, CA
53. Randy, Oakland, CA
54. Robin, High Prairie, Alberta
55. Roxanne, San Jose, CA
56. Sarah, San Jose, CA
57. Tavius, Saratoga, CA
58. Teri, San Jose, CA
59. Trudy, Palo Alto, CA
60. Valerie, San Jose, CA
61. Yeki, San Jose, CA
62. Zephyr, San Francisco, CA

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