Grateful for Gratitude

BY DIANA MUNDLAK, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT
AT SCHECK HILLEL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

With Thanksgiving approaching, we take the opportunity to reflect on all the good in our lives.

Every day, we have the chance to choose our outlook in life, to consciously acknowledge the many gifts and blessings that we have been granted. Being grateful is a practice, an awareness that should be reinforced, a sincere attitude, a core value that should be passed down and taught to our children.

We all tend to get caught up in day-to-day stresses and forget the things that are important to us. Life will always have challenges, but the approach we choose certainly makes our problems feel less daunting.

The awareness that comes from giving thanks is an upward, positive spiral. We live fuller lives when we are grateful. We attend to others more lovingly. More importantly, we care for ourselves and families with a greater sense of acceptance and appreciation.

How we choose to manifest gratitude is very personal. We can wake up every morning, pray and have mindful moments. We can journal, develop a daily practice or ritual, tell our loved ones our feelings. We can also pay it forward.

In an era where we have exposure and access to so many materialistic things, our children can learn by example. It’s our responsibility to model for our children the joys of giving back and choosing the happiness that comes from making a difference. We can do so at home, as well as by selecting a school for our children that shares and celebrates the values of giving and gratitude.

Gratitude – a selfless behavior – sparks acts of kindness and give us purpose. When we live with gratitude, we feel happier as parents and are better contributors to our families and community. Gratitude is essentially a gift that we give to ourselves and, in turn, to our children.

Dr. Tal Ben-Shahar, world-renowned author and lecturer in the areas of leadership and positive psychology, and teacher of the most popular course at Harvard University, points out that we can become happier when we cultivate and practice the habit of gratitude.

Let us acknowledge this Thanksgiving holiday’s historic teachings and be grateful for every minute of our amazing lives, our families, our friends and our freedom. And may we transmit this sense of gratitude to our children.

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