

30 days of Gratitude

An opportunity to infinitely improve your life



SECOND EDITION 2018

*Robin Kirby, Ph.D.
Carolyn G. Buttram, M.A.
Vanessa Lowry*

Welcome

Welcome to "30 Days of Gratitude." We are excited to offer you a heartfelt gratitude exercise every day for the next 30 days. These exercises have been designed to open your heart to the miracle of gratitude and the amazing changes that can happen when we become more grateful. There is a new exercise every day. Some are for you alone, while others include friends or family members. Most exercises are designed to take about 5 minutes, but on some days it will take a little longer. We ask that you set aside 5 to 10 minutes of quiet time every morning when you can focus entirely on that day's exercise. Some of the exercises will call you to spend a few moments quietly reflecting at the end of the day. This is a time to help you focus on the miracle of your life and encourage yourself to be thankful for the day. Thank you for joining us on this journey.

Please share your experiences by E-mail at
DaysofGratitude@gmail.com

Or make comments on our blog at
www.DaysOfGratitude.wordpress.com

We look forward to hearing from you.

Robin, Carolyn and Vanessa



*As you express gratitude,
it spirals back to you...
expanded into multiple forms*

Day 1

Eyes Wide Open

This day is dedicated to awakening. Awakening to your life. Settle into your special 5 minutes and take a couple of deep breaths. As you settle, open your eyes and look around. What do you see? Do not label or think about what you see, but feel the miracle of the sights in front of you. As you look around, imagine you are a newborn child, with no names for the things you see, so you simply look with awe at everything.

Reflect on what you saw during your exercise and silently offer gratitude for its existence.

*Gratitude is the fairest blossom
which springs from the soul.*

- Henry Ward Beecher

Day 2

Running Water

People in many countries don't have access to clean running water. Today, every time you turn on a faucet, send a word of thanks into the universe. Think about the miracle of clean water when you're making coffee, brushing your teeth, taking a shower, washing clothes, cooking dinner or having a thirst quenching drink of water.

(Thanks to Michele Wilke)

Think about the first time you remember water. Was it a warm bath with a sibling? Or a lawn sprinkler you ran through as a child? Write a short reflection of that time and then list the ways that water makes your life more full today.

Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.

- Melodie Beattie

Day 3

Make a Change

At the end of each day, take all of the loose change from your pocket or wallet and put it in a jar. At the end of the month donate the change wherever you see fit. Better yet, make it a family project, or a new project with your friends; to discuss the value of money and the ways we can help others. Perhaps take a couple of dinner conversations to talk about where you would like to donate your change to “make a change”. When you show gratitude for the abundance you have by sharing it, those around you become more able to see the value of a giving attitude.

How much change did you have at the end of the day, and what discussions did this exercise prompt in your family and friend circles?

*It isn't what you have in your pocket
that makes you thankful,
but what you have in your heart.*

- Anonymous

Day 4

Sparky

Who is the person that immediately comes to mind when you think about being helped through a depression or a rough spot? Find two candles. One to light as you meditate on the sparks you have received that made a difference to you and the second as a gift for someone who you know is having a difficult time. Make it your mission today to get your second candle to that person. That one you know needs a little lift. You know the one. And whether you mail it, send it by special delivery or hand carry it, add a note of encouragement and gratitude for that person.

Who is your personal "Sparky"?

*At times our own light goes out and is rekindled
by a spark from another person. Each of us has
cause to think with deep gratitude of those who
have lighted the flame within us.*

Albert Schweitzer

Day 5

Voice Mail

Add a question to your voice mail asking the caller to leave one thing they appreciate about their life today. It is a fun way to engage every caller. Not only will it make your day to learn what pushes their grateful button, it also gives your caller a fresh breath of gratitude as they have the opportunity to tell you! *(Thanks Mike Robbins, author of Focus on the Good Stuff)*

What will your new voice mail message say?

An attitude of gratitude brings great things.

- Yogi Bhaian

My Amazing Body

Close your eyes and “scan” your body. List every part of your body that functions well and is free from discomfort. We know that what we focus on increases. This is as true for our health as it is for other areas of our life. Especially when we feel less than healthy, we can relieve stress and rekindle a more balanced thought pattern regarding our over all health by focusing on what feels good. So today...

What do you appreciate about your body?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Gratitude is so close to the bone of life, pure and true, that it instantly stops the rational mind, and all its planning and plotting. That kind of “let go” is fiercely threatening. I mean, where might such gratitude end?

- Regina Sara Ryan

Day 7

Give Away Day

The wheel of good fortune and peace turns on our ability to love others and ourselves. Today is an exercise in gratitude that will help you recognize the power of a simple “thank you”. We love others as we use this meditation time to choose 3 things we will give away. Center yourself in gratitude for all you possess and choose 3 things that are meaningful to you. The first step is choosing. The second step is breathing and releasing your choice into the universe. You may choose to give each thing to someone you know, or give it to a stranger. Allow your spirit to guide you in this throughout the day.

List the things you chose to give away and how you felt about this exercise.

We should give as we would receive, cheerfully, quickly, and without hesitation; for there is no grace in a benefit that sticks to the fingers.

Seneca

A Simple Thank You

It is easy to thank someone who has been of service to you or someone who has given you a gift. Today, we go deeper with our gratitude. Look for ways to appreciate everyone with whom you are in contact. Find an appropriate way to say thank you or express gratitude to every person with whom you speak or interact today.

List some of the people and ways you said “thank you” today:

[illegible]

*There are only two ways to live your life.
One is as though nothing is a miracle.
The other is as though everything is a miracle.*

- Albert Einstein

Day 9

The Power of Humor

Humor alleviates misery. It is impossible to be amused and depressed at the same time. Our gratitude exercise today focuses on humor. Take 5 minutes to find a humorous joke online and print it out to share. Or find a comedy skit to enjoy and pass along. Today, take a moment to enjoy some humor, then give thanks for the humor in your life and share a piece of it with someone else.

Try these web links for starters:

www.jokesclean.com

www.youtube.com

(all of your old favorites are here, just search for them)

What made you laugh today?

Let us rise up and be thankful, for if we didn't learn a lot today, at least we learned a little, and if we didn't learn a little, at least we didn't get sick, and if we got sick, at least we didn't die; so, let us all be thankful.

- Buddha

Love, Me

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

- Thomas Jefferson

Love, Me II

Who do you love?

[illegible]

- Kahlil Gibran

Mutual Friend

For example: “I love *the way you look me in the eyes and listen when we are together*. Love Susan”

What friend do you want to give a boost? And who do you know in common?

[illegible]

- Marcel Proust

Escapes

Today I am so grateful when I think about:

[illegible]

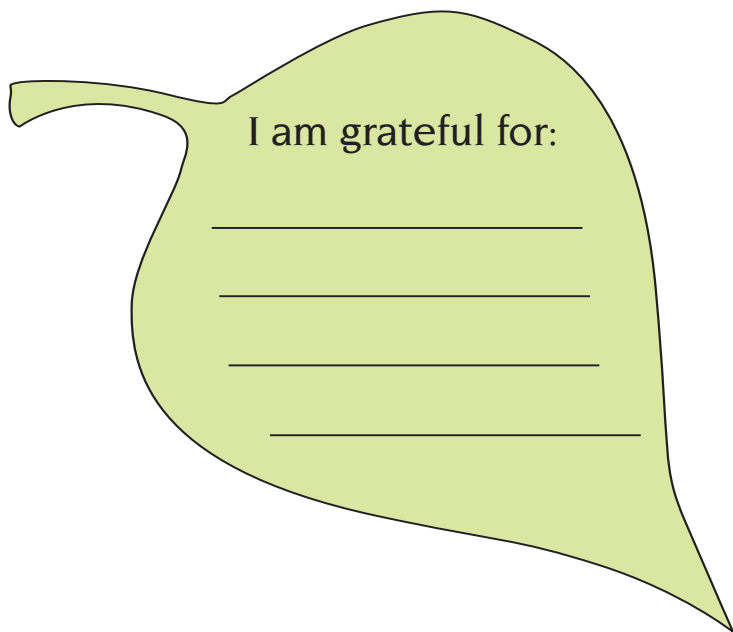
-Unknown

Day 14

Gratitude Tree

Trees use their leaves to gather life force energy from the sun. We humans can become more in tune with our life force energy when we express gratitude. Hand out copies of the paper leaves in this book, and ask people to write one thing for which they are grateful on each leaf. Find a small fallen tree branch. Collect the leaves and attach them to the branch to create a gratitude tree. Display it prominently in your home or work place. Or better yet, ask to display it in your favorite coffee/tea shop!

See the appendix for a printable leaf on page 35.



*To speak gratitude is courteous and pleasant,
to enact gratitude is generous and noble,
but to live gratitude is to touch Heaven.*

– Johannes A. Gaertner

Day 15

Check Yourself

Money represents how we have spent hours, days, and years of our lives. How often do you write a check or sign a credit card slip unconsciously or worse yet, grudgingly? Today, write “with gratitude” on every check that you write and on every credit card slip that you sign.

Reflect on the times you wrote “with gratitude” today. Who helped you? Who served you? How did it effect the other to see you add this to your check or credit card slip?

*Thankfulness is the beginning of gratitude.
Gratitude is the completion of thankfulness.
Thankfulness may consist merely of words.
Gratitude is shown in acts.*

- Henri Frederic Amiel

A Great Day!

What went right for you today?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper appears to be a standard notebook page or a sheet of stationery.

– Jalaluddin Rumi

Thank a Teacher

What teacher will you thank? A printable Thank You card is on page 42.

[illegible]

- William Arthur Ward

Social Networks

Write your message here:

[illegible]

- Alex Haley

Day 19

Perspective

It is easy to roll around in our wish for those things we do not have. But it is much more productive and life enhancing to give thanks for those things we do have. Today's exercise is a counting game. Wherever you are right now: in your bedroom, in your living room, or in your kitchen, take your seat and breathe deeply. Center in this moment, and bring your mind to gratefulness. When you are centered, open your eyes and count the objects within sight. No need to go to another room, although you may. For 5 minutes, simply count. Don't take time to access the objects you are counting, just quickly see if you can count all the objects in the room. It might be helpful to set a timer.

As you express gratitude for the objects you counted, list the total here.

I counted _____ objects.

I am grateful for what I possess.

Were you surprised at the number of possessions you could count in 5 minutes? What thoughts did you have as you completed this exercise. Do you think you might share it with your family?

*He is a wise man who does not grieve
for the things which he has not,
but rejoices for those which he has.*

- Epictetus

Day 20

Gratitude

Today is for gratitude. All day. Your meditation today centers around teaching yourself to be grateful for everything. Today, celebrate everything that happens. For the shower that has no hot water. For the complaining child. For the errant spouse. For the rush hour traffic jam. We don't know the end result of anything. When we believe something is good, sometimes it turns out negatively. When we believe something is bad, it often brings us many blessings. Breathe deeply, settle into your 5 minutes and give thanks for everything. If you wish to expand your practice you may print the following card and carry it with you today. Perhaps place it where you can see it all day. Resolve to give thanks for absolutely everything, and see what happens!

This card is duplicated on appendix page 36. Print it, fold the page in half and use it as a tent card for your desk.

Today I am grateful for everything that happens, everything that comes to me, everything that is taken from me, everything I see, and everything that I think. I resolve to give heartfelt thanks for EVERYTHING today.

*A thankful person is thankful
under all circumstances.*

*A complaining soul complains
even if he lives in paradise.*

- Baha'u'llah

Day 21

Sharing

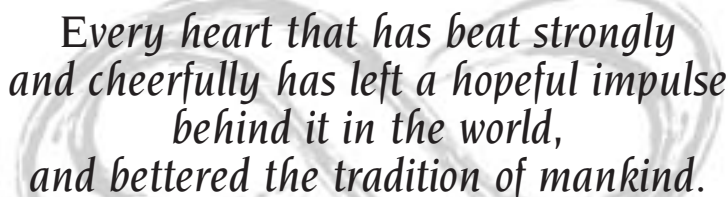
Today is a day to share your gratitude. Giving is the surest way to receive, so today you are all about giving without limits in order to see the joy you can create in someone else. What you give away always comes back to you. Print the following gratitude card (or make up one of your own) and hand one to at least 5 people today.

It is amazing to let your spirit guide you in this exercise. Don't forget to give one to yourself!

Print multiple copies of this card from appendix page 37.



*My heart fills
with JOY
when I think about you.
Thank you!*



*Every heart that has beat strongly
and cheerfully has left a hopeful impulse
behind it in the world,
and bettered the tradition of mankind.*

- Robert Louis Stevenson

Day 22

Keeping Us Safe

Spend a few minutes being grateful for the people who are on call to keep you and your neighborhood safe. Buy or make a thank you card, then ask your neighbors, office mates or family to join you in signing it. Mail the card to your local fire or police chief to let these behind-the-scene heroes know they are appreciated. Or you might make it an even bigger “thank you” and personally deliver your card with a plate of cookies or a bag of bagels.

*You can easily find the address of your local Fire and Police station on **www.maps.google.com**. What is the address of the one nearest you?*

If the only prayer you said in your whole life was, “thank you”, that would suffice.

- Meister Eckhart

Count the Ways

Make your list of 23:

[illegible]

- Cicero

Day 24

Focus

Focus on someone for whom up until now; you have not been that grateful. For your 5 minutes today, breathe deeply, close your eyes, center yourself and send gratitude to one person who you have resented in the past. This is not an exercise in rehashing the past or justifying your actions or even thinking about the past. Rather it is a cheerful, heartfelt sending of joy to that one who you know needs it from you. If you feel so moved, you can print the message below and keep it with you today, or send it to the person in your gratefulness meditation.

This card is on appendix page 38.

*I love you,
I appreciate you,
and I am grateful
for your presence
in my life.*

*The best way to cheer yourself up is
to cheer someone else up.*

- Mark Twain

Day 25

A Truly Satisfying Meal

Write down every step you can imagine that it takes for the food that you eat today to arrive in your home to nourish you. Count the number of individuals (from farm, to store, to table) who are employed and/or touch your life to make this occur. Pause for a moment before you dine and give thanks.

This is a great meditation to share with children and family members as we reconnect to the miracle of abundant food.

What steps or people were necessary in getting food on your table?

*When you arise in the morning, give thanks for
the morning light, for your life and strength.
Give thanks for your food, and the joy of living.
If you see no reason for giving thanks,
the fault lies with yourself.*

- Tecumseh, Shawnee Chief

Day 26

Gratitude Chain

Today, begin a gratitude chain. This is a variation of the chains you made in school. Take strips of colored construction paper and write one thing you are grateful for on each chain link. As you complete the individual links, put them together with staples or glue to form interlocking circles. You might hang your growing chain from a prominent place and add to it every day. Keeping the strips handy will facilitate your chain making. This also makes a fun family project that helps children and other adults focus on the blessings of life.

A printable chain template is on appendix page 39.

Who and what springs to mind when you think of making your gratitude chain? In preparation for this exercise, you might begin your own gratitude list here.

I am thankful for...

*The secret of happiness lies in taking
a genuine interest in all the details of daily life,
and in elevating them to art.*

John Ruskin

A Dollar a Day

What did you do with a dollar today?

[illegible]

- Dhyani Ywahoo

Day 28

Pause

Gratitude requires us to slow down, to pause, and to reflect. In the silence, even if it only lasts a moment, we can recognize the miracle of our life. We connect with our essence when we pause. So today take a moment to pause in gratitude. As you dedicate 5 minutes to this exercise, allow yourself to be completely present, completely here now. Begin by breathing deeply and settling into your chair. Close your eyes and feel the miracle of life.

As you silently reflect, choose one of the following phrases and for 5 minutes (and throughout the day) breathe deeply, close your eyes and repeat your phrase.

“Thank you” “I am so blessed”

“My life is a miracle”

“Gracias”

“I am so grateful for my family” “Asante”

“There is so much to be grateful for, Thank You”

“Grazie” “Merci”

*Be glad of life because it gives you the chance
to love and to work and to play
and to look at the stars.*

- Henry Van Dyke

Day 29

Random Acts of Kindness

Kindness is all around us and often goes unnoticed. Carry a simple card with you at all times that just says “*Thank You*” on it. When you witness an act of kindness or when someone is kind to you, give the card to him/ her.

What act of kindness did you notice today? Print this card from page 40.

*Thank You
for your kindness*

*The only people with whom you should try to
get even are those who have helped you.*

- May Maloo

Day 30

Reflection

This is the last day of your 30 day gratitude experience. It is our hope that you have had many astonishing moments as you have devoted 5 minutes a day, or more, to your gratitude practice. We invite you to take today's meditation time to reflect on the past days' exercises and outcomes. Which exercise impacted you the most? What exercise did you enjoy the most? Which one made you uncomfortable? Which one made the biggest impact on the lives of those around you? Which exercise will you keep and share again and again? How has this month of gratitude changed how you live, or how you interact with others? We are grateful for your participation with us, and we know that the positive vibrations released as we focused on thankfulness have encouraged change and a deepening of love around the world. You are the essence of love and we are grateful for you.

Please share your experience with us at **DaysofGratitude@gmail.com**.
Or make comments on our blog at **www.Days of Gratitude.wordpress.com**.

We are so grateful for you! Namaste

*One of the greatest moments in anybody's
developing experience is when he no longer tries
to hide from himself but determines to get
acquainted with himself as he really is.*

- Norman Vincent Peale



Appendix

*Print these cards to use
on a specific day's exercise
or anytime throughout the month*

Gratitude Tree, Day 14



The image features a stylized tree graphic composed of two leaves. The upper leaf is light green and contains the text "I am grateful for:" followed by four horizontal lines for writing. The lower leaf is yellow and contains four horizontal lines for writing, with the text "I am grateful for:" at the bottom, oriented upside down relative to the leaf's shape.

I am grateful for:

I am grateful for:

Gratitude, Day 20

Today I am grateful for everything that happens, everything that comes to me, everything that is taken from me, everything I see, and everything that I think. I resolve to give heartfelt thanks for EVERYTHING today.

Today I am grateful for everything that happens, everything that comes to me, everything that is taken from me, everything I see, and everything that I think. I resolve to give heartfelt thanks for EVERYTHING today.

*My heart fills
with JOY
when I think about you.
Thank you!*

*My heart fills
with JOY
when I think about you.
Thank you!*

*My heart fills
with JOY
when I think about you.
Thank you!*

*I love you,
I appreciate you,
and I am grateful
for your presence
in my life.*

*I love you,
I appreciate you,
and I am grateful
for your presence
in my life.*

Gratitude Chain, Day 26

I am thankful for...

I am thankful for...


I am thankful for...

I am thankful for...

A vertical bar with four colored sections: orange, light green, yellow, and light blue. Each section contains the text 'I am thankful for...' followed by a horizontal line for writing.

Thank You
for your kindness

Thank You
for your kindness



*The following three pages
can be printed and folded
for note cards.*

photography by Carolyn Buttram
www.carolynbuttram.com

card design by Vanessa Lowry

Days of Gratitude
photo by Carolyn Buttram
www.carolynbuttram.com
card design by Vanessa Lowry



The only people with whom
you should try to get even are
those who have helped you.

MAY MALLOO

Did you know?

According to aerodynamic studies,
a bumblebee's weight is too heavy
for its tiny wings.

It is a miracle every time a bumblebee flies.

Days of Gratitude

photo by Carolyn Buttram
www.carolynbuttram.com

card design by Vanessa Lowry

A close-up photograph of a bumblebee on a pink flower with a red center. The bee is positioned on the right side of the flower, facing left. The flower has several long, pink petals and a dense, red, fuzzy center. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

*There are two ways
to live your life.*

*One is as though
nothing is a miracle.
The other is as though
everything is a miracle.*

ALBERT EINSTEIN



Friendship is precious,

not only in the shade,
but in the sunshine of life;
and thanks to a benevolent
arrangement of things,
the greater part of life
is sunshine.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Days of Gratitude

photo by Carolyn Buttram
www.carolynbuttram.com

card design by Vanessa Lowry

Since our 2009 launch...

Vanessa here.

I had the idea for this book the first week of October 2009. It had been a difficult financial year for me and I wanted to shift thoughts of lack toward a focus of the ways my life was abundant. So, I had the idea of creating an ebook that would include a simple gratitude prompt each day for 30 days. In addition to helping me, I thought it might help others.

I talked with Robin. At that point, we had been meeting at 7am once a week . . . to talk, laugh, cry, and pray with and for one another. I asked if she would help me write the exercises for a gratitude book. After saying yes, she suggested we invite our soul sister Carolyn to join us.

To say we were supercharged was an understatement. We decided if we were going to do this, we were going to DO THIS. We set a goal to have the ebook complete and launched by the end of October — only three weeks away — and give it away for free. We wanted to invite others to join us in focusing on gratitude throughout the month of Thanksgiving.

We all wrote. Carolyn edited. I designed the book and came up with an idea for the cover. Carolyn took the cover photo, as well as other photos for the book. We set up an email address, a website, and a Facebook page. Our book officially launched on Oct 29, 2009.

Since then, thousands around the world have downloaded *30 Days of Gratitude*.

Carolyn passed away in the spring of 2015. I thankfully got to visit with her a few weeks before she died. Then in January 2016, Robin died in a car accident — four days after our last once-a-week coffee meeting.

I'm immensely grateful to have called these wise women my friends and collaborators. Their loving impact lives on in many ways, including the exercises included in this book.

Thank you for your interest in *30 Days of Gratitude*. The free ebook is for your personal use.

If you would like to purchase printed spiral-bound copies of *30 Days of Gratitude*, go to www.connect4leverage.com/bookstore. For bulk pricing and other requests, email me at vlowry@gmail.com.

About Vanessa

Vanessa Lowry

Marketing consultant. Graphic designer. Writer. Professional doodler. Spiritual journeyer.

Vanessa collaborates with mindful entrepreneurs and marketing departments of small to medium size businesses to differentiate their brand through distinctive graphics, compelling copy, and unique strategies for promoting their products and services.



In addition to *30 Days of Gratitude*, Vanessa's collaborative book projects include: *Improv to Improve Your Business*; *Publishing as a Marketing Strategy*; *The 28-Day Thought Diet*; *The Adventure of an Ingenious Life*; *The Magical Influence of Listening*; *You Published!*; *Write a Book - Change the World*; and *Happiness Recipe*.

Vanessa wrote and illustrated the *Doodle Basics Booklet*, as well as *Love Coloring*, a coloring book designed to help adults artfully relax. In 2016, she collaborated with nine other artists to publish *Coloring in Style*.

As the host of the *Art as Worship* podcast, Vanessa interviewed more than seventy artists in the exploration of inspiration and creativity as an expression of spirituality. The archived podcasts are available on-demand at EmpowerRadio.com and ArtasWorship.net.

Visit **VanessaLowry.com** to learn more about her work, her doodle art, and her many side projects.

Life must be lived as play.

- Plato

About Robin

Robin Kirby, PhD

Therapist. Healer. Spiritual Counselor.
Dr. Robin Kirby passed away in Jan 2016.



A heart-centered therapist, Robin combined traditional cognitive techniques with hypnotherapy, regressive therapy, conscious connected breathing, meditation, and guided imagery to find the source of troubling emotions and patterns to facilitate healing at the deepest level. The nurturing environment she provided allowed clients to open their hearts and learn to live from a place of authenticity.

Her passion was working at the soul level, helping clients connect with their inner spark and the essence and source of their life-force energy. Her goal was to see each and every person she touched live vibrantly and joyously, touching others to bring more compassion and healing into the world.

Robin held a masters degree in education and a PhD in clinical psychology. She was a certified clinical hypnotherapist, certified release therapist, certified life coach, and educator. She was also a Reiki practitioner and was continually incorporating new energetic and spiritual healing modalities into her work. Her private practice was dedicated to the healing of mind, body, and spirit. Her loving impact continues to influence those who knew her.

*Spiritual love is a position of standing
with one hand extended into the universe and
one hand extended into the world, letting
ourselves be a conduit for passing energy.*

- Christina Baldwin

About Carolyn

Carolyn Buttram, MA

*Photographer. Writer. Inspirational Humorist.
Lecturer. Carolyn Buttram passed away in the
spring of 2015.*



Carolyn combined an exceptional knowledge base with innovative, spirit filled, and entertaining presentation skills to encourage spiritual celebration and growth. She inspired and informed her audiences about living their best and most joyful life while changing the world in the process. She consistently challenged old belief patterns and encouraged her audiences to greater involvement in their own lives.

Carolyn was a talented landscape and portrait photographer. Her photos are found throughout *30 Days of Gratitude*.

She performed at: The Punchline Comedy Club, The Funny Farm, The Comedy Zone, and Gilda's Club; was a Sunday feature personality in *The Atlanta Journal Constitution* and presented for: The American Cancer Society, CNN, The American Heart Association, The Georgia Autism Society, The Atlanta Theosophical Society, Unity Churches across the south, and The Susan G Komen Breast Cancer Organization. She also had a one-woman show at The Callanwolde Center at Emory University.

Carolyn's book, *Conversations on the Human Experience: The Elders Speak*, was published in December 2014 and is available on Amazon.

Breath. Give thanks. Repeat.

- Carolyn Buttram

Keep it going...

Thank you for choosing to consciously
engage in a practice of gratitude.
You, your intent, and the energy you exude,
makes a difference in the world.

You may find that you want to do the exercises
again with a friend as your partner.

Please share your experiences:
DaysofGratitude@gmail.com
vlowry@gmail.com

*Head over to Facebook and like our page
for a daily boost of inspiration:*
Facebook.com/DaysofGratitudeBook

*As we express our gratitude, we must
never forget that the highest appreciation
is not to utter words, but to live by them.*

- John F. Kennedy