

Gratitude is one of the most valued emotions there is. It seems simple. An easy question, what am I grateful for? Yet it is so much more than a simple answer. It's life, it's the moments of happiness, it's the push to keep going when things seem unredeemable. Today, tomorrow, and everyday after that, I am grateful for my family, my friends, my education, my future, and my life as a whole. I could keep going. Pages and pages of what I feel lucky to have in the small period of time that is my life.

But right at this moment, two things stick out above all else. First, one year ago this week, my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. Second, this November 20th marks two years since my sister had major open heart surgery. Both of these events make me grateful for our families' strength, hope and resilience. Both of these events make me grateful for incredible doctors and surgeons, medical technology and treatment options that were not available even a decade ago. These events make me grateful for research and information that made decision making feel like more than just a roll of the dice.

November isn't just a month on the calendar anymore. Thanksgiving isn't just a big meal that my extended family celebrates together at my house. No, this month and holiday have new meaning in our family as we appreciate how precious life is and that together we can get through the worst of times stronger than ever. November now means faith. Faith in love and faith in the unknown.