

I think it's important to be thankful for the things we may usually take for granted during this holiday season when many of us are experiencing distress, anxiety, anger and frustration. No matter where we stand on politics, and how much we may feel we have to complain about, there is even more to be thankful for. Each one of us has so much to be thankful for, and I feel that the little things are really the big things that matter and make our lives worth living.

I heard my mother say hello to the people in the apartment next door the other day. She smiled as she shut our door and said, "We're so lucky to have nice, quiet neighbors." That made me start thinking about something I never really thought about before. Quiet, peaceful, friendly neighbors...I will start there with what I'm personally thankful for this year. We don't know them very well but we are always nice to each other. I know there is not much peace in some parts of the world, but I have peace at home and I am so lucky and thankful to have that. It's nothing fancy or elaborate to be thankful for but thinking about it now for this essay, I realize that it's worth more than gold.

As I reflect on other areas of my life, I realize how lucky and thankful I am that I am getting a great education and have the freedom to study and learn, while facing a future that goes in the direction that I want it to go in. I'm not always thankful for those things when my alarm goes off at 5:45 a.m., but when I think about it, I see clearly that this is a big blessing and privilege. I know that a lot of us teenagers say things like, "I have to go to school" as if it's a negative thing, but the truth is that we should all be thankful that we get to go to school. Not everyone can say this, so I'm thankful for the opportunity to attend a high school that I love and learn from teachers who care about me and my future.

I'm also so thankful to live in New York City. People from all over the world dream of visiting, and many can never experience our unique and amazing city. Many who do visit consider it a once in a lifetime trip that they remember and talk about for their entire lives. I get to wake up in the city that never sleeps just like the song says, and when I walk outside my door, I immediately become part of a daily miracle where countless cultures, races and religions all lend their individuality to one huge family that can't easily be defined. Just by walking to the bus, I'm able to be a part of a multicultural harmony that people who don't get to live here do not get to experience. I am so thankful to be a New Yorker.

I hope that everyone can take a few minutes this Thanksgiving Season to realize that they definitely have a lot to be thankful for and that even if things may seem bad right now, they most likely have a lot of good things in their lives. I hope this inspires you to think of all the little things you might never think about and realize that they really are the big things that matter most in your life.

