

Along the Way, Nov. 29, 2019 *My favorite holiday*

Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday. Somewhere along the way, my family had started a tradition of writing down what we were thankful for and placing them into a decorated oatmeal container. In addition to the wonderful family meal, I loved this activity of expressing my thankfulness and hearing the gratitude of my family.

In recent years the American story of Thanksgiving has had necessary holes poked into it and so many Americans have been learning more. We are beginning to listen to the stories from the other sides of history and at our own speeds acknowledge the myth that we were taught. This myth upheld a certain version of history that presented a one-sided story that ignored the histories, losses and realities of many other Americans. I have at times struggled to make meaning out of this newfound perspective and have wondered how to integrate my expanded understanding into my own celebration. I don't believe I am alone in this endeavor.

Along the way I have decided to put my energy into feeling and acknowledging my gratitude. I am grateful that I now know more than I once did and can acknowledge the profound grief and loss that many Americans feel at Thanksgiving. I am grateful for the many people who have told the painful and necessary story so that we may hear it. I am grateful that we have ears to hear and eyes to see.

This Day of Thanks is still my favorite holiday and I feel deep gratitude. I am thankful for all of you as individuals and as a community. I am grateful for the lives you live and the work you do. I hope you each can find ways to communicate your gratitude to others—inside an old oatmeal container or otherwise!

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