

Special Report!

# Fill Another's Cup to Fill your Own, with More Romance, More Connection, More Joy



the  
Compliment Quotient

*“One of the sanest, surest, and most generous joys of life comes from being happy over the good fortune of others.”*

Robert A. Heinlein

In our busy-woman lives it's easy to fall into autopilot with our children, our spouse, our friends, our coworkers. In this rush we often focus on what's not working, what's missing, what others forgot to do when you asked them more than once--okay, a half-dozen times—to fold the clothes in the laundry basket, send the edits you need for the report or pick up the bread on the way home. I know my harried days are littered with those neglected “I forgot” tasks that trip me up on the way to calmer waters.

## **We're Sweating the Small Things**

While we may believe that small annoyances are just that—small—recent studies suggest that the sum of the lesser hassles we face may actually equal more stress than a major incident that you would expect to wreck your health. It's not only the serious setbacks that endanger your wellbeing, such as a job loss or move out of state. Simply holding it all together in what is basically your good life but dotted with daily irritations, can end up robbing you of both optimal spirits and physical health.

The juice spill on the carpet that seems to mock you every time you cross over it. The phone calls you meant to make but keep

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putting off. The slow-draining shower that turns into a shallow bath before you're done. These seemingly little these frustrations build up from one day to the next until we're sloshing more and more out of our cups. Recent research indicates that over the long term these little things sap our joy and end up exacting a higher toll on our attitude, demeanor and health more than major stressors.

## **One Little Practice Makes A Big Difference**

The good news is that there is an easy to understand and adopt means of to flip the switch on these daily drains and fill your cup with some dollops of delight instead: a simple practice of giving more compliments to those around you. This practice is founded in the relationship-based approach to life that draws on the love already planted in your heart.

The compliment practice may already be obvious to you in its fortifying effects on *others*, but my experience has shown how these same compliments to others can exert an uncannily uplifting, cup-filling effect on you, the giver.

When our cup is empty, it's very difficult to give. Some say impossible eventually. Sure we get what we need to done, because we have to. But not joyfully. Or perhaps, even, slowly over time, less and less joyfully. And there is always going to be another small irritation in place of the last one you finally upped and overcame.

For those of us struggling to get out of putting-everyone-else-first mode, a practice of giving more regular compliments to others is a perfect addition to The Inspirational Coffee Club's *Ground Rules for Life*, especially No. 8: "Take time to fill another's cup."

### **Fill another's cup with a compliment, fill your cup, too**

For those who've successfully adopted the adage to take care of yourself already—like putting your oxygen mask on first—you, too, can readily share your heart and your passion, by giving generously of your time, attention, and interest through more focused, more juicy, and more unexpected compliments, in all your relationships: romantic, family, friends, those we encounter in our days, and most importantly, with ourselves.

### **By complimenting someone else- giving to others- we get something back- a return, vibrational boost of energy.**

The easiest way to fill your own cup when you are feeling low and overflowing it during good times is through a practice, a frame of mind habit, of giving more and better compliments to the important people in your life and to those you pass by in your day-to-day doings.

The bottom line is that we are each responsible for the state of our own spirits and what you give away is what you will reap back.



As often repeated, no one can make you happy or unhappy—it’s “an inside job.”

### **Power Up Your Endorphins With Compliments**

Compliments to others are a highly effective addition to your self-care practices. Sharing a compliment with an acquaintance, friend or loved one brings on a joyful jolt of energy, proven by scientific study. The psychoneuroimmunology field has confirmed the endorphin-release that comes about from the physical change in turning up the edges of our mouth and crinkling our cheeks and eyes—or in simple terms, a smile.



“There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.”  
Edith Wharton

Your compliment is often given with a smile, receives a return smile and then you smile back again. So give a compliment and you both get a non-pharmaceutical boost of spirits! Begin to add or expand recognition and praise as a go-to, reliable way to shed the malaise of a full-size negative situation-- or even a bad hair day.

Since women are such profoundly social creatures, the interaction itself that a compliment stirs up is good for us, too, dubbed “social rest,” according to Dr. Matthew Edlund. This “interactive relaxation” is deemed as important as sleep in keeping us healthy and even happier, so consider these compliment interactions as filing a prescription increased longevity and satisfaction.

Alter a dull routine of a day by looking around for something to compliment in someone else. The compliment has the ability to profoundly change your energy level and your demeanor, even

around a cranky co-worker or grumpy kid: because you are giving without expecting anything back--a very high-vibrational action of generosity that generates enormous feelings of pleasure and goodwill.

### **Three Personal Pluses to Compliments**

Take advantage of three key qualities of using compliments to lift your own spirits.

## **1. Immediacy**

One of the best parts of compliments is that their effect is not just today, but this moment, right now. Including books such as Eckhart Tolle's *The Power of Now*, many experts speak to the spiritual and philosophical power of being in the moment. In letting go both of the past as already written, and the future as yet an empty page, it is the present in which the promise of joyfulness is fulfilled. You elevate your experience of life, whether standing at the sink doing dishes or on a cliff watching a sunset, by being in present now.

The win-win effect of a compliment is immediate. The "Thank you!" or smile you receive back from the compliment you gave, for instance, about someone's great smelling perfume or the delicious salad they prepared, instantly uplifts both of you.

Don't give up the bigger contributions that make a difference, of course, like donating time or money to a meaningful cause. But a quick, heartfelt compliment happens in the now and imparts its impact immediately.

Giving a compliment is inherently practical and who doesn't like practical more than we multi-tasking types? Spread some cheer without running around buying more stuff.

## 2. Practicality

Like that Boy Scout motto to always be prepared, deciding to compliment more keeps you prepared with a simple gift at any time. For example, the person who always brings a housegift when coming to your house for a dinner or simple visit can actually bring up some negative feelings, especially when you forget to bring one back.

What may have started from a good intention can end up as more time and more consuming than you want or need to participate in. Next time, share several specific, heartfelt compliments and enjoy your interaction in a less "consumable" way. That is not only practical, it doesn't break the bank, plus it raises the vibration around everyone who is involved.

## 3. Intimacy

Interestingly, giving a compliment creates the benefit of a highly personal experience. In the compliment exchange, the giver opens a window into their head and their heart, exposing a bit of themselves to the person who receives it. The moment when the compliment is received is an intimate connection.

Sometimes the person giving the compliment can stumble into the more personal. For example, you might compliment on a piece of jewelry, which was a gift from a special person or from a memorable

event. Wading into this territory can create a seemingly awkward moment, but is an instant that bridges souls. In a world where many of us live on our own or away from extended family or loved ones, or for other circumstances live in anonymity or loneliness, these simple generous statements forge stronger building blocks of friendship, community and love.



With your spouse or romantic partner, compliments help you build intimate emotional connection that's lost, missing, hidden away, forgotten. Focus on what's right, *not* what's not working or what didn't get done or what you have to do later, to bring you smack into the now. Find something to compliment your guy on! Rekindling the flame of the love deep in your heart opens you up to all forms of loving actions, joyfully.

Remember, when you're experiencing impatience, overwhelm, frustration with your mate, none of these states actually have anything to do with him. You allow yourself to think he is causing this experience yet you are creating this experience for yourself, giving your power over your feelings away. Therefore managing these thoughts—and releasing his responsibility for your experience of upset—is in your court, too.

**A compliment breeds more positive emotions, thoughts, and experiences. *Rinse and repeat.***

***Five tips to fill your cup** by making a difference around you with more and better compliments:*

**1**

***Your relationships flourish when you do.*** Stop criticizing yourself. When you criticize yourself, your changes are negative. When you approve of yourself, your changes are positive. Lavish praise on yourself rather than constantly finding your faults, as this will perpetuate what you don't want. Support yourself, especially if others around you are not giving you this. Learn to accept any of your negatives, that they filled a need at the time, but that you simply don't need them any more.

**2**

***Lead by example.*** If you're really focused on your children, as a lot of busy women are, remember that the best way to influence them is by example. Studies reveal over and over again that children of all ages are osmosis sponges, taking in what they experience us grown ups doing so much stronger than what we're quacking over and over again at them. Make sure your scale tips to the positive reinforcement more than the negative nagging and disparagement.

**3**

***Stop complaining so much!*** You know when you are. Or maybe, you only criticize certain people or at certain times and think that's okay. Refocus your lens and strive to find the positive—something going right—to praise instead.

It seems easier to obsess about things you consider out of your control, like your co-worker, your child or your spouse, yet often times its an excuse to not look inward and see what is wrong with your life that you can control,

can think differently about. Compliment yourself, too, so you feel worthy of a better work environment, more helpful spouse or less argumentative child, and you are on the road to attracting it to you.

## 4

**Take a little risk.** Look for opportunities to compliment more outside your regular relationships. While many people have become hyper aware of “others” these days, in almost an adult stranger-danger way, start in safer situations where you don’t know as many others (a large party, a business function), to strike up a compliment conversation for *your* benefit, without a hidden intention or commitment to a relationship.

## 5

**Give to get.** If you’re bored, or frustrated, or feeling down, take the focus off yourself and find someone, even passing you on the sidewalk or the grocery store aisle and compliment your way into a better mood. After all, it’s the givers that get, not the getters that get. We all love it when someone walks into the room, not with a “Look at me!” attitude, but a “Look at you!” attitude. You will reap what you sown, even in reaping a positively vibrational energy boost from complimenting someone else.

To fill your tank, increase the number of compliments you’re giving. The boost to your spirits you reap will relate to how many, how specific and how genuine they are.

## How A Compliment Helps Your Heart

When you compliment others in celebration of something accomplished, in congratulations, in awareness of something joyful, interesting or deserving in them, you are actually helping your own heart. Reports of recent research show that expressing your joyful enthusiasm can help keep your heart disease-free.

For instance, a 10-year study linked people who scored high on joy and enthusiasm with a lower incidence of heart disease compared to those who experienced those positive emotions less often. Also, since constant high levels of stress-induced cortisol are linked to higher incidence of high blood pressure and diabetes, look at sharing congratulations and giving compliments as part of a relaxing, stress-busting routine. So take a break to celebrate someone else's accomplishment and help your heart, too.



Author Monica Strobel is *the Compliment Coach*, drawing on a life of passionate, creative service in communications now dedicated to helping busy women get more joy into and out of their lives, benefitting their families, their relationships and themselves.



Read more about this one simple habit in *The Compliment Quotient*:

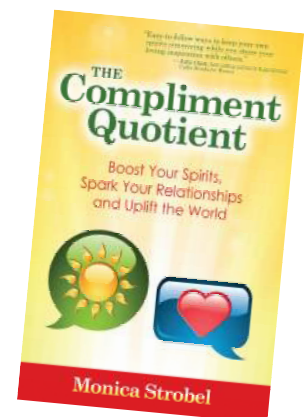
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