

# Cherish the ordinary

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Years ago, I came across a quote (which feels a bit like a prayer) that really touched me. I've had it hanging on a board in my office ever since.

Normal day, let me be aware of the treasure that you are. Let me learn from you, love you, bless you before we depart. Let me not pass you by in quest of some rare and perfect tomorrow. Let me hold you while I may, for it may not be always so. One day I shall dig my nails into the earth...or raise my hands to the sky and want, more than all the world, your return. Mary Jean Irion

Isn't that beautiful? Indeed, each day we are fortunate enough to be on Earth is a treasure and each day brings lessons. Yet I am a person who sometimes passes by the normal days, the mundane moments of life, in quest for some "rare and perfect tomorrow," which of course never comes. I'm working on being more present in the moment, rather than focusing on the next action, the next day, the next year. And I want to be grateful for the fact that on normal days, perhaps nothing exciting or extraordinary is happening, but that also means nothing terrible or tragic is happening, which in itself can be celebrated.

Here are some ways I try to cherish the ordinary:

- When I'm tempted to complain about doing the dishes, I give thanks I have a dishwasher. And dishes. And food to put on those dishes. And a husband who makes most of our meals. I try to take the same approach when I'm dreading doing my laundry. A washer and dryer in my own house, and enough clothes that if I skipped laundry for two weeks I'd still have plenty to wear!
- When I'm jealous of other people's homes (which always seem to be bigger and nicer than mine), I try to focus on all the aspects I love about our house, in its imperfect perfection. It's a place where I feel safe and loved, spending time with my three favorite people in the world.
- When I'm frustrated by my 45-minute commute, I think about how lucky I am to have a reliable vehicle, a job (better still, a job I love), a shorter and less stressful commute than I had at my last job, podcasts I love to listen to, time to be by myself, and coffee to enjoy on the drive.
- When I'm annoyed that my children are being needy, I remind myself of the sage advice from all my friends with older children who tell me to cherish these days, because someday my son and daughter won't need me nearly as much, the house will be quiet, and I will long for the noise and the feeling of being needed.
- When all else fails, I turn to the internet. This video helps me keep things in perspective.

I am truly blessed. Chances are, you are too. To increase your happiness, remember to cherish the ordinary.