



## Gratitude for those who nurture

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**G3** Jay Remer

This Sunday is the glorious day of the year when we celebrate motherhood. When we look around we see the glories of Mother Nature. Nests of songbirds, owls and ospreys are abundant with new life, deer give birth to this spring's fawns, fox dens bustle with new kits and the hibernating time for bears comes to a gradual end.

As I pondered this column, my own mind drifted to the many people in my life who have been mothers to me in one way or another. I am truly grateful for the women in my life who have taken the time to nurture and teach me about life.

Like everyone, my needs and focuses change as years go by. Without the continual mothering I receive from the world and the people around me, I would cease to grow or develop as a contributing member of society, which is constantly being challenged by a host of forces. Just because I age, it does not mean I no longer need nurturing. Like a sturdy old oak tree, I still need food and water, a bit of pruning, a breath of fresh air and sometimes a little propping up. And I have many mothers for whom I am thankful.

My own mother gave me shelter from many storms, taught me to cook and feed myself and instilled in me the importance of a good sense of humour. She also gave me a sense of style.

My stepmother has shown me how amazing approval is, that practical things are that way for a good reason, and that, whenever possible, put more ingredients into whatever you're making.

One grandmother showed me how everything that we say, do and experience enriches our lives.

Another showed me that any storm can be weathered and taking oneself too seriously is a waste of time.

A mother-in-law thankfully provided a certain balance and objectivity seemingly reserved for her special domain.

And then there were the mothers who showed me love and understanding, those who taught me how important hugs are and that to play well with others in a playground is an important asset. These were the caregivers, teachers, aunts, friends, sisters, mentors, coaches, therapists - really cool ladies, many of whom still mother me today.

I admit to scoring low marks when it comes to sending cards, flowers and gifts, but I usually do come through with a warm phone call. I like to acknowledge special people in my life on Mother's Day.

Some years the list appears to be shrinking. Other years the list is bursting at the seams. There are some women I wish I had said thank you to more often, but it's too late now.

Others I find so inspiring sometimes that I show my gratitude on a regular basis. Most of all, I keep these wonderful people by my side in my thoughts everyday. They keep me company and answer private questions that I can only share with them in the silence of a thought.

I keep these important people in my mind and in my life by thanking them - and I do so often. Doing this reminds me of the key roles they play. I remember to appreciate how much support, advice, wisdom and love they give me. It also demonstrates the tremendous respect I have for them. I need them in my life. My guess is that many of you share similar thoughts.

This weekend contains one of those wonderful calendar dates that remind us of how lucky we are to have these incredible people in our lives. They can come in many disguises; but we know who they are and, in many cases, they do, too.

Take the time to call your mother if you are lucky enough to still have her. Or, like me, call another mother or two or more. It will warm their hearts and restore their faith in knowing that the love they show us every day does not go unnoticed.

Jay Remer is certified by the Protocol School of Washington as a consultant for corporate etiquette and international protocol. He lives in St. Andrews. Email your etiquette questions to [jay@etiquetteguy.com](mailto:jay@etiquetteguy.com) and visit his website at [www.etiquetteguy.com](http://www.etiquetteguy.com).