

## Thanks, Before & After

I never intended to tell you anything about this, but since I became an adult I discovered that the meaning of Thanksgiving sure isn't what it used to be.

When I was younger, I remember receiving the inevitable homework assignment to write an essay on "Something I Am Thankful For." Then, I'd spend a lot of time sitting in my room trying to figure out just what in the world that could possibly be, and I'd end up writing down everything I could think of from God to environmental consciousness.

But after having children, my priorities have clearly changed.

Before children: I was thankful to have been born in the United States of America — the most powerful, free, democracy in the world.

After children: I am thankful for Velcro<sup>1)</sup> tennis shoes. As well as saving valuable time, now I can hear the sound of my son taking off his shoes which gives me three extra seconds to activate the safety locks on the backseat windows right before he hurls<sup>2)</sup> them out of the car and onto the freeway.

Before children: I was thankful for fresh, organic vegetables.

After children: I am thankful for microwavable macaroni<sup>3)</sup> and cheese — without which my children would be surviving on about three bites of cereal and their own spit.

Before children: I was thankful for the opportunity to obtain a college education and have a higher quality of life than my ancestors.

After children: I am thankful to finish a complete thought without being interrupted.

Before children: I was thankful for holistic<sup>4)</sup> medicine and natural herbs.

After children: I am thankful for any pediatric<sup>5)</sup> cough syrup<sup>6)</sup> guaranteed to "cause drowsiness<sup>7)</sup>" in young children.

Before children: I was thankful for the opportunity to vacation in exotic foreign countries so I could experience a different way of life in a new culture.

After children: I am thankful to have time to make it all the way down the driveway to get the mail.

Before children: I was thankful for a warm, cozy home to share with my loved ones.

After children: I am thankful for the lock on the bathroom door.

Before children: I was thankful for material objects like custom<sup>8)</sup> furniture, a nice car, and trendy clothes.

After children: I am thankful when the baby spits up and messes my good shoes.

Before children: I was thankful for my wonderful family.

After children: I am thankful for my wonderful family.

## 之前之后的感激

我从没有想过要告诉你这些，但是自从我成年后，我发现“感恩”的意思的确跟以前不同了。

小时候，我记得做过一个必做的家庭作业，即写一篇《我所感激的事情》。我记得我花费了大量时间坐在自己的房间里苦思冥想世上有什么可让我心存感激，结果我把我能想到

的都写了下来，从上帝到环保意识。

但是自从有了孩子后，孰轻孰重已有了明显的变化。

有孩子前：我感激我出生在美利坚合众国——世界上最强大、自由、民主的国家。

有孩子后：我感激有维可牢尼龙搭扣的网球鞋。它们不光节省宝贵的时间，还能让我在听到儿子脱鞋的声音后有3秒钟时间启动后座车窗安全锁，以防他把鞋子甩出车窗扔到高速路上。

有孩子前：我感激有新鲜的、用有机肥料培植的蔬菜。

有孩子后：我感激有用微波炉加热后即可食用的通心面和奶酪——没有它们，我的孩子们恐怕只能靠三口麦片粥和他们自己的唾液勉强维持生命了。

有孩子前：我感激有机会受到高等教育，能比我的祖先们享受更高质量的生活。

有孩子后：我感激能潜心思考而不被孩子打断。

有孩子前：我感激有整体医学和天然药草。

有孩子后：我感激有保证能让幼儿“发困”的小儿咳嗽糖浆。

有孩子前：我感激有机会去富有异国情调的外国度假，那样我可以在一种新的文化氛围里体验不同的生活方式。

有孩子后：我感激能有时间径直走到车道处去拿邮件。

有孩子前：我感激有一个和我家人分享的温暖舒适的家。

有孩子后：我感激卫生间的门上装了锁。

有孩子前：我感激有物质享受，如定做的家具、高档的汽车、时髦的衣服。

有孩子后：我感激孩子乱吐口水，把我的好鞋子弄得一团糟。

有孩子前：我感激有个美妙的家。

有孩子后：我感激有个美妙的家。

### NOTE 注释：

1. Velcro [velkrəu] n. 维可牢尼龙搭扣（商标名称）
2. hurl [hɜ:l] vt. 用力投掷
3. macaroni [ˌmækə'rəuni] n. [食]通心面
4. holistic [həʊ'lɪstɪk] adj. [医] 整体主义的
5. pediatric [ˌpi:di'ætrɪk] adj. 小儿科的
6. syrup ['sɪrəp] n. 糖浆，果汁
7. drowsiness ['drauzɪnɪs] n. 睡意
8. custom ['kʌstəm] adj. 定制的