

Happiness at the Hot Spot Cafe

The Hot Spot Café in Cottage Grove is doing a “Thankfulness Experiment” from now until November 30. As an expression of our thankfulness to customers, the Hot Spot is giving away a FREE a free cup of coffee, tea or soda drink to customers.

Hot Spot Café owner Len Blackstone came up with idea after seeing multiple ads for “Black Friday Sales” but no reminders for Thanksgiving the day before. “I love sales and great deals. But I thought maybe we can encourage others to be thankful by expressing our own gratefulness.”

Research abounds with data showing that gratefulness makes us feel better. Psychological research studies show that expressions of thankfulness release in our brains the chemical dopamine, which makes us feel good. Gratitude helps us improve our health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships.

At the Hot Spot Café, customers are given two *Post-It Notes* to write two things they’re thankful for. They take one note with them and post the other one anywhere in the Café.

“As a nation and a community, we’ve been through very difficult times,” Blackstone says. “The pandemic, divisive elections. Business failures. Homelessness. On and on. It can be overwhelming.

“I know hard times. I’ve been bankrupt. I’ve lost a business, our home, our car. Loss of parents; a child. I know what it means to be at the bottom, to feel hopeless, and ask, ‘Will this pain ever end?’

“Yet I also learned to turn my scars into stars. To understand my greatest lessons in life were not from my successes but from my failures.”

Blackstone has no idea if this Thankfulness Experiment will be successful. But he does fantasize about the possibility of walking into the Hot Spot Café and seeing Post-It Notes on the walls and windows. “It would just be so wonderful for our customers to be surrounded by expressions of thankfulness,” he says.

“No matter how hard it is, I know gratefulness can lead to peace and happiness. It just works,” says Blackstone.

If you want to be happy, learn to be thankful – even in the hard times. Head to the Hot Spot Café and get a FREE cup of coffee, tea or a soda just for writing an anonymous note of thankfulness – one for yourself and one to leave at the Café.

The Hot Spot is located at 819 E Main St, at the entrance to the Cottage Grove Historic District. Hours are Sunday-Thursday 7:30 am to 2:00 pm and Friday-Saturday 7:30 am to 7:00 pm. You can also order online at www.HotSpotCafeCG.com or call 541.566.7442.