

In the last two blogs I described how our daughter Molly slept on the mattress from hell while we were on vacation, without squawking about it at all.

I then threw out a challenge for all of us to go a week without complaining or whining.

Here's what I discovered. I don't whine a lot but I can still stew, fret or worry. This didn't come as a surprise but it did help clarify the distinction between whining and worry.

Whining = to snivel or complain in a self-pitying way.

Worry = to torment oneself or suffer from disturbing thoughts.

Whining needs an audience, but disturbing thoughts are available 24/7.

Here's another difference. You have no power to get someone to stop worrying. But you do have some power over how much they whine to you.

Here's an example. I was indulging in some whining about getting older and finally Molly had had enough. After a few attempts to tell me to put a cork in it, she finally pulled out the heavy artillery. "If you keep complaining about getting older, I won't talk to you for a month. I don't want to be reminded that you are going to die."

So I shut up. I stopped whining about aging and as an unexpected bonus I remarkably slowed down the worrying. Now will my worry be banished? Nope. But it is nice to have a break.

If no one is around to tell you to stop whining, try being more grateful for what you have. Here are a few quotes if your gratitude needs a little jump start.

*"We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures."* Thornton Wilder

*"When eating bamboo sprouts, remember the man who planted them."* Chinese Proverb

*"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it."* William Arthur Ward

*"If a fellow isn't thankful for what he's got, he isn't likely to be thankful for what he's going to get."* Frank A. Clark

*"Most human beings have an almost infinite capacity for taking things for granted."* Aldous Huxley

This week's challenge is to be grateful for something about your partner. And be sure to express it to him or her.

Be a little more grateful this week, express it a little more than usual, and let me hear about the results by commenting below.

Till next time,

Pete