

It's easy to take for granted things in our daily lives

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Rushing to meet my vanpool a few weeks ago, I looked up and saw the most amazing sky filled with brilliant hues of deep blue, gold and red. Pillars of clouds, tinged with gold streaming out

from behind, reached up to the heavens. Scattered specks gathered together, growing and spreading into magnificent cumulus clouds, stacked up in gigantic heaps. And there were thin wisps of clouds reflecting the reds of the sun as it prepared to peep over the horizon.

Beautiful.

Even though I seem to be rushing every morning to meet the vanpool on time, I always look up.

First thing in the morning, the sky gives me a hint of what kind of day I may have – stormy, tranquil, blah, or filled with awe, to name a few.

It's something that I don't take for granted – the sky. And, the beauty, joy and wonderment that it represents in my day-to-day life.

The sky's brilliance is not necessarily something that insists on being noticed – it doesn't grab you by the collar and shake you until you feel grateful for it and the wondrous things that fill your life.

But, it's easy to do.

Take things for granted.

Like ...

... children's squeals of delight as they race around the playground.

... birds chirping.

... caterpillars turning into butterflies.

... waking up.

... having a roof over our heads.

... being able to bathe

and dress ourselves.

... having a job.

... being able to read this, and

... realizing that a lot of our freedoms are because of our shipmates in uniform.

David Hackworth, soldier and author, said, "It's human nature to start taking things for granted when danger isn't banging loudly on the door."

It's true.

Right?

How many times do we pause to recognize the beauty of something or ponder the joy someone gives you? Or, pause to reflect on the gratitude we have for the freedoms we enjoy? ... because of our shipmates in uniform.

I'm a "member of Team Navy," supporting our men and women in uniform. I like to think that what I do makes a difference in their lives, because I know what they do makes a difference in mine. Though my current shipmates are on shore duty, supporting the mission of training Naval Aviators, I know they are part of the bigger picture. The military is an integral part in defending our nation and our freedoms, and shaping the course of history.

It's easy to take for granted things ingrained in our daily lives, like their service to our country.

But, sometimes we need to stop to appreciate the beauty and wonders around us, and all that we have. We also need to stop and say, "Thank you for all you do," to our brethren in uniform.

Whether they fly, are on sea duty or man a desk, our shipmates – and their families – sacrifice so much for the freedoms we so often take for granted.

Thank you. Thank you for your service. We owe you so much.

I know that when you take things for granted, those things eventually get taken.

So, I may start my day by looking up, but I continue my day looking around and appreciating such things as ...

... the people I vanpool with.

... the bees that pollinate

the flowers and trees.

... the wind blowing.

... the computer monitor

in front of me, and

... the men and women in uniform

whose service allows me to pursue my life without fear of reprisal.