

Mint Moments

 Diane Gasal

I love mints on my pillow, especially the rectangular ones with the shiny green wrapper. I'm not sure why I like them. I guess they just make me feel special.

That got me wondering, "How can I create 'mint moments' for the people in my life?"

What small things can we do to help people feel special? What have others done? I collected a few examples to share here. I hope this inspires you to create your own "mint moments."

Memorable Customer Moments

Years ago I was a Great Plains account manager in Dallas. Every month I'd meet with a partner named Paul, and we'd go over his business plan and prospects. He'd always bring two lottery scratch-off tickets – one for me and one for him. We'd start the meeting, coin in hand, scratching off our instant-win tickets with visions of hope sparking in our heads. We never won. It didn't matter. It was just so darn fun to play together before we got down to business. Like the mint, it was a treat, and it made me feel special...so special that I remember him 15 years later.

My sister used to be a marketing director at a credit union. A salesperson who called on them always brought individually wrapped butterscotch candies. He'd leave one candy on every person's desk, even if they weren't there and even if they'd never

met. They always knew he'd been there, and it made them happy.

Last week I was at Bank of America, standing in line for the teller. There was a whiteboard nearby with a hand written note. It said, "Today's Riddle - What is the beginning of eternity, the end of time and space, the beginning of every end, and the end of every place?" I was so wrapped up in the riddle that I no longer paid attention to the wait time in line. (By the way, I'll answer the riddle at the end of the article in case you haven't figured it out.)

I even recently had a Mint Moment at The Partner Channel offices. In the ladies' room there are hooks on the wall, each with a cloth hand towel and a sign over it such as, "Jenny's towel." They still have paper towels for guests, but they thought it was greener for employees to use their own cloth towels. I thought that was charming and practical and was one more tiny moment representing why I like working with these people.

Good Mornings

When I started asking for stories, I was delighted to hear all the things people do to get their family's day off to a fabulous start. Here's what they said:

When we first got married, my husband put a dab of toothpaste on my brush when he did that for himself. So every morning I'd see that dab of paste and felt like he was saying, "I love you." He still does it.

Each morning my husband puts hot water in my coffee mug so when I get up my mug will be warm before I pour coffee in it. This feels like an affectionate kiss on the cheek without being physically in his presence.

My husband constantly makes me laugh. It was recently "Talk Like a Pirate Day"; (I'm not kidding; that's an official day). The morning alarm clock rang, and when I rolled over and saw him, he was wearing an eye patch and was talking like a pirate.

My sister loves to celebrate offbeat holidays. For example, on St. Patrick's Day she puts green food coloring in the milk to surprise the kids.

The Surprise Inside

Every surprise, even if it didn't cost anything, is a tiny gift. I still remember visiting my uncle who loved to eat Cracker Jack but had no use for the prizes. He'd always toss them into a drawer in the kitchen. Needless to say, that's the first drawer all of us kids would aim for when we visited.

My family rarely says, "I love you," but they are big on notes that mean it. Once when I visited my parents, my mother slipped a tiny note inside my plastic dental floss container. Now, years later, I always buy the same brand of dental floss for my travel bag so that I can transfer the note. No matter where I travel in the world, every night I see that note and think of her and smile.

In the sixth grade, we all sat in a home-

WHAT SMALL THINGS CAN WE DO TO HELP MAKE PEOPLE FEEL SPECIAL?

room and would travel to other rooms for certain classes. I left my purse hung over the back of my chair in the homeroom. Every time I returned from geography class, there would be a little love note rolled up like a scroll tucked under the flap of my purse. That went on for months. To this day, I have no idea who wrote the notes, but I remember how much I looked forward to them.

My former employer used to have “Gotcha cards” printed to encourage us to notice when people did something well. They were the size of a business card, said “Gotcha” on one side, and were blank on the other. If we noticed something good, we’d write it on the back of the card and leave it at the desk of the person who did it. People loved them. Some even tacked them onto their bulletin boards because it felt so good to be appreciated.

Create a Mint Moment

We all want to do something meaningful with our lives. Sometimes I imagine helping the world on a grand scale (think Peace Corps). Someday I may do that. Meanwhile, it thrills me to know I can make someone feel special, one Mint Moment at a time. 🌱

If you have a Mint Moment you'd like to share, I'd enjoy hearing it. Feel free to contact me at Diane@dianegasal.com.

P.S. The answer to the riddle is the letter “e”

EVERY SURPRISE,
EVEN IF IT DIDN'T COST ANYTHING, IS A TINY GIFT.



Illustration by Scott Thuen for The Partner Channel