30 Days of Gratitude Challenge Day 5 — Social Media

In being “me” and sharing and not being shy (at all), I found my tribe — people who are now more friends than squares on an Instagram feed.

November 5, 2018 By Lisa Vento Nielsen

Today, I am thankful for social media. It seems crazy, right, that I would save a day for this but for those of us in our community, our tribe, we get it.

See, when I was diagnosed, I was the only person I knew with breast cancer. I had no idea what to do about it except what I felt was right at the time — to bury it, hide it, pretend all was OK and just be ashamed without showing my emotions and it seems I might be part British instead of Italian.

I was unable to deal with being sick and I handled it as best I could until the time came when I gave in to my need to get it out and began to write and with each at first anonymous post, I felt more and more empowered until I was the person you all know and can’t believe she is posting all of this stuff omg can she stop — ME.

And in that time of being “me” and sharing and not being too shy (at all), I found my tribe — folks from Ireland, Guatemala, Florida, NYC, Baltimore, California and MORE — people who are now more friends than just squares on an Instagram feed — people who get it, who support one another and who are the voice in the dark that answers to my own and that gets it… in one way or another.

It is hard to connect as all of us are in this together but some of us get worse news than others, some of my friends died and continue to die and it can be so hard to be so aware of this possibility — we all try to keep each other sane, though, and focused on the here and now because really that is all ANY OF US know — even those of us never touched by cancer.

Today is for my friends — those who I have yet to meet in person, those who I have, those who continue to share, those who opted out of sharing to get back to “normal” and all in between — I love you all!

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.