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## From dark days to new horizons: Chicken Soup celebrates our blessings

*It's been a rough year, but Chicken Soup for the Soul helps us cherish the little things*

**COS COB, Conn.** - Just two weeks after his wife walked out on him with their son in tow, Bob Arba lost his home, car, and most of his livelihood. Never being one to pursue close relationships, an old acquaintance named Sam reentered his life - and in short order, became the best friend Arba ever had. Conversely, Britteny Elrick found companionship from Doritos and chocolate after she was unceremoniously laid off, from a job that named her Employee of the Month five times. But amidst all the chips and chocolate, Britteny realized she hated that job, and used her new free time to do something she loved: writing. In the process, she launched a successful freelance writing career.

In *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Count Your Blessings* (Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing, LLC, December 2009, 978-1-935096-42-9, \$14.95), story contributors share stories of gratitude amidst life's rough patches. These inspirational tales remind us that each day delivers its own blessing, but sometimes, as Maria Victoria Espinosa-Peterson writes, we just have to look a little harder to find it.

"Some people live long lives, some don't," says Espinosa-Peterson, who watched in horror as her baby struggled to overcome botulism, a rare paralytic disease. "Instead of asking why, we are grateful for what we have. We also notice the good things that come to us during, and even because of, the worst of situations," she says. After her baby Eve moved her fingers and toes, opening her eyes and hanging onto life, Espinosa-Peterson knew she would give thanks for her tiny survivor every single day of her life.

In today's challenging times, *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Count Your Blessings* helps open our eyes to the everyday miracles that surround us. This holiday season may be a downscaled one for many, but the stories in this collection reveal the secret joys to be had in a simpler way of life.

"We have been living on less for more than three years now," says Janeen A. Lewis in her story "Staircase of Faith," about her family's decision to transition to a single income after welcoming a baby. "Before we took that leap of faith, I didn't know the blessings that would pour down on us, and what I have witnessed has been amazing," she says, noting that her family is two years away from owning a home, and being completely debt-free - all because of a simpler, less expensive lifestyle. "The quality of my life has not changed; the wealth in my spirit has become an overflowing river," says Lewis.

*Chicken Soup for the Soul: Count Your Blessings* (Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen and Amy Newmark) releases in December 2009. Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing, LLC, publishes all the latest titles in the famous Chicken Soup for the Soul book series which are distributed through Simon and Schuster, Inc. Since 1993, books in the Chicken Soup for the Soul series have sold more than 112 million copies, with titles translated into more than 40 languages. Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing also licenses the right to use its famous trademark to high quality licensees through IMG, the world's premier licensing agent. The company is currently implementing a plan to expand into all media, is working with TV networks on several TV shows and is developing a major Internet presence dedicated to life improvement, emotional support and inspiration. In 2007, *USA Today* named *Chicken Soup for the Soul* one of the five most memorable and impactful books in the last quarter century. For more information visit: [www.chickensoup.com](http://www.chickensoup.com).

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