

Flora's Story – A Grateful Recipient



Pre-reading

Questions:

- What might this reading be about?
- What is a grateful recipient?

Definitions:

- Grateful – feeling thankful for something good that has happened
- Rare – not common; not often seen
- Pulmonary – of or relating to the lungs
- Transplant – to transfer an organ or body part from one person to another by surgery

Reading

18 My illness first attacked when I was in college. I was just 18 years old. I was having
38 shortness of breath. At first I thought it was because it was winter and the cold hit my throat. The
49 episodes of shortness of breath didn't go away. They got worse.

64 I was diagnosed with a rare pulmonary disease. I was treated with medications that had
82 more **side effects** than I could count. I felt horrible. Each flare-up would leave me worse off than
89 before. Then I was placed on oxygen.

107 At first, I used oxygen part-time, about 14 to 16 hours a day. After 4 years of dragging
129 around a tank, I had a bout of pneumonia. This caused me to need oxygen 24 hours a day. I used it
144 to walk, sleep, eat and shower. I also had to use it during my work.

159 I could no longer hide my illness from strangers. My coloring was blue, although friends
179 recall that I had a more grayish tone. I could hardly walk. To go just one or two blocks meant
186 stopping many times to catch my breath.

204 My illness assailed me for almost 23 years until I became so ill that a transplant was my
223 only option. After being on the waiting list for 22 month and 8 days, I received a single lung
242 transplant on August 23, 1995. That first summer a friend threw a birthday party for me and I was
248 able to blow out the candles!

263 Now, thanks to the generosity and compassion of my organ donor family, I work full-time,
281 go to the gym three or four times a week, serve on local and national transplant committees, and
289 still have plenty of time to have fun.

306 I used to wonder how much longer I would have survived without a transplant. I no longer
318 wonder – I simply know that I've been blessed with many new years.

Understanding

1. What were the first symptoms of Flora's illness? _____

2. What was her diagnosis? _____

3. How long was she on the transplant list? _____

4. What organ did she receive? _____

5. How did the new organ impact her life? _____

6. What are **side effects**? _____

7. What was Flora's life like before she received the transplant? _____

Writing

Option A: Summarize the reading in your own words.

Option B: What are your thoughts about organ donation? Do you know someone who needs a transplant, or someone that has received one? What is his/her situation?
