

## I Am Proud of Being A Woman

*Debra Ward*

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I am proud and honoured to be a woman.

I accept and respect the privilege and responsibility that being female is at this point in humankind.

I am proud of being a mentor and trusted confidante in my relationships.

I am proud that no matter the situation I have never compromised my integrity.

I am proud that despite my Mom dying when I was only twenty-one we were friends. I learned how to be a maverick from my Mom.

I am proud that I have a great relationship with my Dad and that he taught me girls could do anything!

I am proud that I am like my paternal grandmother, a fighter who never gave up despite a handicap and very tough times she always did everything with cheerfulness and grace. She was a great role model.

I am proud that I am also very much like my maternal grandmother, a woman who although having handfuls of children always had room in her home, at her table and most strikingly in her heart for everyone. I try to emulate her example.

I am proud that despite the usual sibling bickering, rivalry and teasing I have a sister who is also a friend and is someone I would choose as a friend even if she were not my sister.

I am proud that I married the love of my life and that over twenty-two years later I love him more each day!

I am proud that I have a loving relationship with “Mom” (the in-law part being superfluous), that she loves me and I her.

I am proud that I have family and friends who have known me since I was a baby or through the years and that so many are still shining beacons in my life.

I am proud that at forty I returned to post-secondary full-time to pursue my dreams and that when I returned to school I never shirked my volunteer or life passions and indeed took on more.

I am proud that despite the seemingly endless obstacles and my disability I graduated! (I am also secretly proud that I received high marks including A+'s during my studies because I am competitive!)

I am proud that I have always voted in every election as one vote makes a difference.

I am proud that I am an engaged and active citizen because that is the only way to affect change.

I am proud that despite the tons of lemons that life has handed me that I have always continued to keep making lemonade (or lemon tarts, lemon meringue, lemon chicken...). Bitter or better is a choice and I have always chosen better.

I am extremely proud of the strength it has taken to be a survivor. It matters not what I am a survivor of.

“While I don’t expect a parade, and it is hardly an accomplishment I can put on my résumé, it is an honour, and it is one accomplishment I am most proud of.”

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