



Grasping Gratitude

Mount Gangkar Puensum, Bhutan

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Introduction

Gratitude is the soil in which happiness grows.

The feeling of gratitude can make the difference between a life of fulfillment, or a life of emptiness. There is so much in this world we cannot control and that fact alone keeps us downtrodden and small. Therefore, it is empowering to concentrate on what we can control and we all have the ability to control our thoughts. Our thought forms create our actions and our actions create our life. That being the case, the first step to a grateful life is to find the tools that will guide our thinking into a positive and powerful way.

The wisdom of gratitude contains the solutions to the teachings hidden in our problems. It is the primary emotion that pulls us through all hardships and challenges. Feeling grateful is the defining statement of grace within our human experience because it holds within it the principles of fairness and faith. A grateful mind is a great mind, because in this challenging world it takes great strength.

When we transform our negative thought forms into positive ones, and see the glass as half full rather than half empty, we create a life filled with gratefulness, no matter external circumstances. This ensures a wellbeing not only for ourselves, but for those in our life.

Exercise 1

Giving Thanks

1. Think about what is good in your life, instead of what is bad. Make a list of what is good in your life. Then give thanks.

2. Think about what you do have, instead of what you do not have. Make a list of what you have in your life. Then give thanks.

3. Think about where you are blessed, instead of where you are not. Make a list of where you are blessed. Then give thanks.

4. Think about where you are lucky, instead of where you are unlucky. Make a list of where you are lucky. Then give thanks.

5. Think about what you love, instead of what you hate. Make a list of what you love. Then give thanks.

6. Think about who loves you, instead of who does not. Make a list of who loves you. Then give thanks.

7. Think about what you like in your life, instead of what you do not like in your life. Make a list of what you like in your life. Then give thanks.

8. Think about where you feel empowered, instead of where you feel helpless. Make a list of where you feel empowered. Then give thanks.

9. Think about where you feel inspired, instead of where you feel depressed.
Make a list of where you feel inspired. Then give thanks.

10. Think about what is good in the world, instead of what is bad in the world.
Make a list of what is good in the world. Then give thanks.

Exercise 2

Being Thankful

1. Knowing that failing is the first step to succeeding and being thankful for the **experience** we have.
2. Knowing to never, never, never give up and being thankful for the **determination** we have.
3. Knowing that the bamboo plant is the strongest because it knows when to stand strong and when to bend and being thankful for the **flexibility** we have.
4. Knowing that success is a matter of the mind, not the pocket book and being thankful for the **mindset** we have.
5. Knowing that we are living our full potential and being thankful for the **courage** we have.
6. Knowing that life is not worth living if we make a living not worthy and being thankful for the **integrity** we have.
7. Knowing that our purpose and prosperity marry each other well and being thankful for the **abundance** we have.
8. Knowing that success is not what we make externally, but who we are internally and being thankful for the **insight** we have.
9. Knowing that at all times, it is imperative to view the glass as half full, rather than half empty and being thankful for the **inspiration** we have.
10. Knowing that control is but an illusion and being thankful for the **higher intelligence** we have.
11. Knowing that peace comes from detachment and being thankful for the **enlightenment** we have.
12. Knowing that success is a feeling - not a fact and being thankful for the **knowingness** we have.

1. From the list of 12, state where you feel you fall short and how you will strengthen yourself.

2. From the list of 12, state where you stand tall and be grateful for your gifts.

Exercise 3

Grateful for Truth

We need to be authentic in order to create positive change. We should not pretend to be grateful, if indeed we are not. As well, we should not pretend to be happy, if indeed we are not. Truth will always lead us to a better life. However, truth is usually something most people want to avoid. It is painful, but it will lead to the promise we promised ourselves. It is uncomfortable but it will lead to more serenity. It is sometimes ugly, but it will ultimately lead to beauty. This is not an easy exercise, but it is a necessary one.

1. Denial is the death of truth and truth is the birth of transformation.

List three things you feel you are in denial about. Then list how you will handle it in order to bring truth to the situation or relationship.

2. In order to fly, we must clear the air.

List three people you have not been honest with. Then list how you are going handle it in order to bring more purity to the relationship.

[illegible]

3. Driving does not always get us to our rightful destination.

List three places where you try to control things instead of letting it unfold the way it needs to. Then list how you are going to let go of the reins in order to bring more flow and peace to your life.

[illegible]

4. Saying no is as important as saying yes.

List three times you wanted to say no but you said yes instead. Then list what or who is in your life that you need to say no to and make a plan how and when to do it.

[illegible]

Exercise 4

Happiness Leads to Gratefulness

Most people do not realize how much we are affected by what we hear and see. When doing tests on the energy of water, the water was proven to change its structure, all dependent on the environment it was in. If the atmosphere was happy, loving and gentle, the water took on a very different energy than when it was in the middle of something sad, cruel or violent. People are the same. If we remain in the environment of negativity, our bodies, mind and spirit begin to weaken, fall or change. Ultimately, our emotions will show signs of the stress and our good health becomes vulnerable. In truth, our hearts do not welcome negativity; they thrive on happiness. Therefore, we need to discipline ourselves to infuse ourselves with positivity and joy as much as possible, which empowers our feelings of gratitude.

1. Do you watch TV a lot and if so do you watch violent or negative programs? Are you willing to change that potentially harmful habit? If not, why?

2. Do you play video games and if so are they violent or negative? Are you willing to change that potentially harmful habit? If not, why?

3. Do you read the newspaper and if so, do you read the violent or negative news? Are you willing to change that potentially harmful habit? If not, why?

4. Are your relationships based on a foundation of something negative? Are you willing to change or leave that relationship? If not, why?

5. Do you read books and if so, do you read violent or negative books? Are you willing to change that potentially harmful habit? If not, why?

1. Make a list of positive programs and watch them.

2. Make a list of positive video games and play them.

3. Make a list of positive news articles and read them.

4. Make a list of positive people that you would like to get to know better or already know and thank them.

5. Make a list of positive books and study them.

Exercise 5

An Attitude of Gratitude

It is a fact that we cannot escape problems while living in this world. It certainly is not heaven or utopia. However, we can make our own little heaven and utopia. Gratitude is not rooted in the absence of problems, it is rooted in the ability to handle them. All painful emotions have within them an ingredient of strength and power. As example, most non-profit foundations are started as a result of someone getting angry enough to do something about it. Grief is the ocean that tosses us about, throwing us up on the beach...three feet taller. Sadness is birthed from our giftedness to be sensitive. And remorse is the most powerful emotion that can create positive changes within ourselves.

1. Make a list of where you feel or felt **pain** and how it has or is helping you.

2. Make a list of where you feel or felt **grief** and how it has or is helping you.

3. Make a list of where you feel or felt **remorse** and how it has or is helping you.

4. Make a list of where you feel or felt **sadness** and how it has or is helping you.

5. Make a list of where you feel or felt **anger** and how it has or is helping you.

Exercise 6

Closing Exercise

1. What do you feel you learned from this guide that you will incorporate into your life?

2. Which exercise did you like the best and why?

Gratitude Quotes

Gratitude keeps our thinking at a higher altitude.

Gratitude is the first sign of our enlightenment.

Gratitude searches for glimmers of hope – whining eradicates them.

Gratitude keeps us looking beyond the obvious.

Gratitude keeps us away from stubbornness and defiance.

Gratitude is the foundation of emotional intelligence.

Gratitude is a natural emotion of our divine spirit.

Gratitude keeps us from blaming and shaming.

Gratitude is our wings – complaining is our spurs.

Gratitude is a journey worth taking, as we focus on what's worthwhile.

Gratitude opens the door to optimism and perseverance.

Gratitude keeps our ego in check.

Gratitude instills a tranquil mind and peaceful heart.

Gratitude keeps injuries at a distance.

Gratitude is indeed the highest attitude.

Gratitude promotes health and well-being.

Gratitude smothers resentment and jealousy.

Gratitude makes life worthwhile, while challenges take over.

Gratitude creates healthier relationships.

Gratitude keeps good memories alive during separation or endings.

Gratitude when committed to is mastery.

Gratitude helps seed self-respect and inner worth.

Gratitude does not allow for injury, disrespect or drama.

Gratitude is salve for our soul.

Gratitude keeps us humble.