

# Gratitude

Cultivating Society and Protecting the Earth

**Study and Practice Guide**



As I enter today's lessons, I have these thoughts, questions and feelings.

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What is your understanding of gratitude that cultivates society and protects the earth?

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What are your questions about gratitude and protecting the earth?

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## Reflections

Reflection is one form of contemplative practice. Through reflection, the questions provoke inquiry, thoughtful reflection, and conscious awareness of what is being learned or revealed to us in our inner work. You are also provided with a set of questions.

Take this opportunity to identify the questions that draw your attention. Select two or three questions that are meaningful to you and explore them deeply.

- **What experience in nature has triggered your extension of gratitude?**
  
- ***“Love the world as your self;  
then you can care for all things.”  
Tao TeChing***

- How has your experience of nature increased your sense of love for others?
- What meaning do you draw from these words?
  - As a blessing?
  - As learnings?
  - Your experience of mercies?
  - Protections given to you and that you provide to others?

- **Does your experience of nature connect you to your past, present and future?**
  - What do you remember when you are with nature?
  - What do you pay attention to when you are in nature?
  
- **Are you aware of challenges to your experience of interconnectedness in your daily life?**
  - How will you demonstrate more collaboration and reciprocity in your life?
  - Where will you seek connection with nature? With others?
  
- **How might you find peace and atonement for humanity's damages to the Earth?**
  - How will you proceed to explore your gratitude to the earth?
  - What are you willing to accept as a your grace for acknowledgement of gratitude?
  
- **What are your personal learnings in gratitude in nature?**
  - How do you appreciate the experience of gratitude for nature?
  - Consider the openings to you through gratitude.



## Practices in Gratitude

The journey of personal discovery can take many pathways. There are multiple ways of processing our understandings. The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society has identified the multiple routes of contemplative practice. These may include:

- Stillness - of meditation and silence
- Generative activities - of visualization, beholding and loving kindness meditation
- Creative activities - journaling, singing, improvisation and the arts
- Activism - acts of social justice and pilgrimage
- Relational - through deep listening, storytelling and dialogue
- Movement - yoga, meditative dance or walking
- Ritual/Cyclical - Retreats, ceremonies, establishing personal/sacred space

We are each different in our emotional intelligences and how we come to understanding.

An array of practices is offered to support you in your development of a grateful life.

## **Note Your Learning**

*Angeles Arrien has identified lessons in survival that come to us through our appreciation of nature. These are:*

- *Keen Awareness*
- *Flexibility*
- *Resourcefulness*
- *Patience*

Pause to consider the meanings of these lessons in survival in relationship to the portals to gratitude.

Acknowledge where they have and have not been present in your experience.

## **Journaling**

Research has shown that gratitude is enhanced by daily journaling on gratitude.

Start a journal on your connectedness to nature and record where you find gratitude each day, whether it is in thought, words, or deeds. Continue this practice daily.

## **Practice Gratitude**

Take a daily action that supports tending to nature and natural environments. In small or large ways, take actions that support increased ecological sustainability. Plant a tree. Recycle. Walk or ride a bicycle. Conserve energy. Join a community project to care for the community or earth.

### **Speak with Others about Gratitude**

Talk to significant others about gratitude in your relationship.

Share your learnings about gratitude with others.

You may do this through participation in the discussion forum or gather your friends or associates to talk about gratitude.

### **Take a Daily Action in Gratitude**

Go outside.

Start the day with a prayer in gratitude for the gifts of life and the earth.

### **Daily Reflection**

Commit to a daily mandala on gratitude. In the tradition of the Byakko Shinko Kai, mandalas of bright words are words of gratitude, beauty, compassion, joy, and love. They carry a wonderful energy and power. When we create a mandala using bright, positive words, we are imbuing ourselves with the qualities that we want most. We are calling those qualities forth from our universal source. We are instilling them in our consciousness, in our bodies, and in the world around us.

If you want to fill your heart with love, you will write a mandala that says "Infinite love".

If you want to fill your heart with gratitude, you will write a mandala that says, "Thank you".

A mandala that is grateful to nature will say,

*"Thank you, dear earth, Thank you dear water, Thank you dear animals, and Thank you, dear sun."*



For more information on how to write a mandala to nature, you may refer to this document:

<http://byakko.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Mandalas-of-Bright-Words-Gratitude-to-Nature-English.pdf>

Take pause daily to reflect and affirm how gratitude and love have entered your life. The audio affirmations may support you with your practice of daily reflection.

- Explore the portals for gratitude
  - Blessings
  - Learnings
  - Mercies
  - Protections
- Identify the benefits of gratitude
  - Health and Well-Being
  - Relationships
  - Finance



## Affirmations of Gratitude

Affirmations offer inspiration and support in building the capacity to identify and remember gratitude each day. The audio download provides affirmations that you may choose to adopt and practice. From research, we know that something must be repeated 7 times to be remembered. Each affirmation within the audio download is repeated 7 times so that you may remember the words. The affirmations are also provided here, in print so that you may place them in front of you, at your choosing.

I am thankful for this new day filled with blessings of the earth, the sky, and the waters.

I am one with nature.

I am open to receive and give love for my humanity.

I am a caregiver to the earth that provides gifts to me.

I am grateful for the gifts of nature.

I am one with humanity.



## List of Quotes

*“One touch of nature makes the whole world kin”*

*William Shakespeare*

*“Nature’s beauty is a gift that cultivates appreciation and gratitude.”*

*Louie Schwartzberg*

*“In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks.”*

*Robert Muir*

*“Look deep into nature and then you will understand everything better.”*

*Albert Einstein*

*“Love the world as your self;;  
then you can care for all things.”*

*Tao TeChing*

*“Some people are always finding fault with Nature for putting thorns on roses; I always thank her for having put roses on thorns.”*

*Alphonse Karr*

*“The heart of interdependence requires collaboration and reciprocity.”*

*Angeles Arrien*



*"My words are tied in one with the great mountains,  
with the great rocks, with the great trees, in one with my body and  
heart.*

*All of you see me, one with this world."*

*Yokuts Prayer*

*"Let us give thanks for the world around us.  
Thanks for all the creatures, stones and plants  
Let us learn their lessons and seek their truths,  
So that their path might be ours,  
And we might live in harmony, a better life.  
May the Earth continue to live,  
May the heavens above continue to live,  
May the rains continue to dampen the land,  
May the wet forests continue to grow,  
Then the flowers shall bloom  
And we people shall live again."*

*Hawaiian indigenous prayer*

*"And into the forest I go, to lose my mind and find my soul."*

*John Muir*

*"The essence of justice is mercy."*

*Edwin Hubbel Chapin*

*"The earth does not belong to us: We belong to the Earth."*

*Marlee Matlin*

*"Gratitude bestows reverence...*

*changing forever how we experience life and the world"*

*~John Milton*



### **Additional Credits**

Arrien, Angeles. Living in Gratitude: Mastering the Art of Giving Thanks Every Day, A Month-by-Month Guide. Boulder, Colorado: Sounds True. 2013.

Climate Change and Health: Facts. World Health Organization. Taken June 3, 2018 from <http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health>.

Daley, Kathleen. 4 Daily Practices to Express Love and Gratitude for the Earth. Pachamama Alliance. Taken June 3, 2018 from <https://blog.pachamama.org/4-daily-practices-to-express-love-and-gratitude-for-the-earth>.

Saionji, Masami. The Earth Healer's Handbook. Taken June 3, 2018 from <http://www.earthhealershandbook.net/>.

Thank You Patricia Drake,  
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## About Sean Fargo



### **Mindfulness Coaching and Consulting**

Founder, MindfulnessExercises.com

Former Buddhist monk of two years

Certified Instructor for Search Inside Yourself

Leadership Institute (*mindfulness program at Google*)

Certified Integral Coach (*from New Ventures West*)

*"I blend a combination of depth and practicality to my mindfulness and meditation teachings."*

### **Mindfulness Coaching**

*In person and via Skype, I coach individuals and teams on a variety of mindfulness skills, holding them accountable for growth.*

### **Classes and Workshops**

*Lasting between thirty minutes and two days, my classes and workshops introduce key mindfulness practices into organizations for sustainable success.*

### **Program Development**

*My science-based mindfulness programs infuse a sense of energy and focus into organization's cultures.*