

Gratitude

In Service to Others

Study and Practice Guide



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

What is your understanding of gratitude?

What are your questions about gratitude?



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 has been your experience with gratitude in your work?**
 - How have you shown compassion to others?
 - What are the expressions of appreciation in your workplace?

- ***“Embody the love, gratitude, and compassion you want to promote.”***
Dennis Rivers
 - What do these words summon as you consider their meaning and intention?
 - 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?

- **How might expressions of gratitude and compassion enhance your relationships as you service others in our work and deeds?**
 - How do you remember those persons who benefited you?
 - In what aspects of your life has compassion created openings for you?

- **What are might interfere with your opening to compassion in service to others?**
 - What contributes to any thoughts, words or deeds that were reactions preventing you from having compassion in your works?
 - What understandings can you draw from these acknowledgements?

- **How might you find the compassion in service to others to foster your physical and mental well-being?**
 - How will you proceed to explore your experience of gratitude?
 - What are you willing to accept as a your grace for acknowledgement of gratitude?

- **What are your personal learnings in gratitude?**
 - How do you appreciate the experience of gratitude and compassion?
 - 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

“Compassionate service cultivates mutuality, reciprocity, and gratitude.” ~Angeles Arrien

- Where are you involved in compassionate service in your life?
- What are you learning?

Journaling

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

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

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

Identify the place in your life where gratitude, compassion, service, mercy or reciprocity have meaning. Do one thing each day support that purpose. Commit an act of gratitude toward someone who has been good to you.

Consider beginning with these steps from this lesson:

- Be brave
- Start small
- Use what you've got
- Do something you enjoy
- Don't overcommit

Practice Gratitude

To bring compassion into your work and your life experience may take practice. There are ways of developing your awareness of compassion and connectedness to others. Pause to reflect on these ways of developing compassion:

1. **Identify and live by your core values.** This may take reflection and focus to explore and identify the virtues that you bring to your day. Take action to apply those virtues to your thoughts, words and deeds. This will take practice and learning. You will be more authentic with yourself and others by being true to your values.
2. **Practice self-care.** Be aware of your physical and mental well-being. Develop an awareness of how you may be personally impacted by your work. Pay attention to your needs for rest, to have healthy habits and to take care of yourself emotionally.
3. **Practice mindfulness.** Develop resilience through mindful reflection. Apply the RAIN steps to bring focus to your practice.
 - Recognize what is happening,
 - Allow life to be just as it is,
 - Investigate inner experience with kindness, and
 - Non-identification (or resting in Natural awareness)
4. **Model positive values for the people at work.** Act with patience, receptivity, awareness, authenticity, forgiveness, courage, integrity, honesty, mindfulness, respect, empathy, and compassion,
5. **Be present and attend to other's emotions.** Appreciate what workmates are feeling and be a support to them. Recognize their need for support and they are not at their best. Respond to them with kindness and generosity.

From: Sarah Tollefson, Fetzer Institute

Daily Reflection

Commit to a daily meditation on gratitude.

Notice where you have extended compassion to others.

Offer appreciation for kindnesses that have come to you.

Take pause daily to reflect and affirm how gratitude, compassion and service are in 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
 - Work



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 acknowledge that there is pain and suffering in life.

My service brings good to others.

I am kind.

I belong.

I am compassionate.



List of Quotes

“If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.”

Mother Teresa

“To be of service to others, we have to truly pay attention to individuals to understand who they are and their situation as they see it”.

Anthony Chavez

“If you develop a pure and sincere motivation, if you are motivated by a wish to help on the basis of kindness, compassion, and respect, then you can carry on any kind of work, in any field, and function more effectively with less fear or worry, not being afraid of what others think or whether you ultimately will be successful in reaching your goal.”

“When people act on their experiences of gratitude...they create meaningful situations for others...This socioemotional cycle centered on gratitude could continue indefinitely. In this manner, positive emotions tend to beget subsequent positive emotions. Accordingly, the broaden-and-build-theory predicts that positive emotions not only produce individuals who function at higher levels, but also produce organizations and communities that function at higher levels.”

Barbara Fredrickson

“Compassionate service cultivates mutuality, reciprocity, and gratitude.”

Angeles Arrien

“You work that you may keep pace with the earth and the soul of the earth.

*For to be idle is to become a stranger unto the seasons,
And to step out of life’s procession, that marches in majesty and proud submission towards the infinite.*

When you work you are a flute through whose heart the whispering of the hours turns to music.

Which of you would be a reed, dumb and silent, when all else sings together in unison?

Always you have been told that work is a curse and labour a misfortune.

But I say to you that when you work you fulfill a part of earth’s furthest dream, assigned to you when that dream was born,

*And in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life,
And to love life through labour is to be intimate with life’s inmost secret...”*

Kahlil Gibran

“Embody the love, gratitude, and compassion you want to promote.”

Dennis Rivers

We should not expect good to come to us but rather to flow out from us. The challenge of love beckons us to pour out, to transform attitudes of grasping into giving.

Stephen Sims

Credits

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Thank You Patricia Drake,
[linkedin.com/in/patriciadrakepgdconsultingllc](https://www.linkedin.com/in/patriciadrakepgdconsultingllc),
drakepat55@outlook.com, (734) 386-0321.



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.