

# Gratitude

Mindfulness Practice and Gratitude

**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 mindfulness practice and gratitude?

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What are your questions about mindfulness practice and gratitude?

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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 has been your experience with gratitude in your mindfulness practice?**
  - Consider your experience with gratitude in terms of the portals of health, relationship, finance and protection.
  - Where has gratitude been present?
  - Has gratitude been un-recognized or forgotten?
  
- **“Let go in peace. Look ahead in gratitude” *Anonymous***
  - What do these words mean to you?
  - What might you release to find acceptance?
  - Through what portals might your gratitude become manifest?
    - As a blessing?
    - As learnings?
    - Your experience of mercies?
    - Protections given to you and that you provide to others?

- **What is your experience of benefit from gratitude?**
  - How do you remember those persons who benefited you?
  - In what aspects of your life were your experience found?
  
- **In what capacity are you aware of challenges to your gratitude?**
  - How might you turn those challenges into learning opportunities?
  - Are there future actions to address the challenge?
  
- **What are your personal learnings in gratitude?**
  - Appreciate the experience of gratitude
  - 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 four universal portals of gratitude.*

- Health and Well-Being
- Relationships - with self and others
- Finance - the experience of generosity and abundance
- Protection - compassionate service and caring for others

Pause to consider the meanings of these 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 and record where you find gratitude each day, whether it is in thought, words, or deeds.

## **Practice Gratitude**

Remember someone or something for which you are grateful. Commit an act to express your gratitude. For example, you may write a thank you note. If this is not a person but an experience, find a way to express gratitude. Light a candle, plant a seed, read a poem or blessing in honor of that grateful experience.

## **Speak with Others about Gratitude**

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. It may be that you provide your mate with gratitude. You may dedicate time for a cause or spend time in service. Perhaps you revisit your experience and remembrance.

## Daily Reflection

Begin a daily reflection as you develop your gratitude mindfulness practice. Whatever comes to mind, allow it to be present. Do not try to change or fix it.

1. Begin by settling into a relaxed posture and calm yourself.
2. Take a few deep, calming breaths to relax and center.
3. Let your awareness move to your immediate environment: all the things you can smell, taste, touch, see, hear... **Say to yourself: "For this, I am grateful."**
4. Bring to mind those people in your life to whom you are close: your friends, family, partner.... **Say to yourself, "For this, I am grateful."**
5. Turn your attention onto yourself: You are unique. Whatever comes to you when you think of yourself, your feelings or experiences, allow them to be present in your thought... **Say to yourself: "For this, I am grateful."**
6. Finally, rest into the realization that life is a precious gift. Think of the abundance that is present in your life - it may be prosperity, opportunity, nature, or perhaps well-being. Accept what comes to mind as life's gifts that come to you... **Say to yourself: "For this, I am grateful."**

Adapted from Stillmind. <https://stillmind.org/gratitude-meditation/>





Repeat these words each morning

*"Just for today:*

*I will let go of worry.*

*I will let go of anger.*

*I will do my work honestly.*

*I will give thanks for my many blessings.*

*I will be kind to every living thing."*

*Reiki Precepts*



## 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 grateful for... (your own thoughts)

I am grateful for being alive

I am grateful for everyone and everything I took for granted

I am grateful for all people and things I experience in life

I am grateful for love in my life

I am grateful for my body mind spirit

I am grateful for all the universe gives me

I am grateful for lessons life teaches me

I am grateful for all that I have



I am grateful for the beauty of life around me

I am grateful for the forgiveness that has been shown to me

I am grateful for each day

I am grateful for the challenges of my life



## List of Quotes

*“Mindfulness also involves acceptance, meaning that we pay attention to our thoughts and feelings without judging them—without believing, for instance, that there’s a “right” or “wrong” way to think or feel in a given moment. When we practice mindfulness, our thoughts tune into what we’re sensing in the present moment rather than rehashing the past or imagining the future.”*

*Greater Good Magazine*

*“A FEW WEEKS AGO, in the country, far from the lights of the city, I saw the entire sky “powdered with stars” (in Milton’s words)...It was this celestial splendor that suddenly made me realize how little time, how little life, I had left. My sense of the heavens’ beauty, of eternity, was inseparably mixed for me with a sense of transience—and death... I have been comforted, since I wrote in February about having metastatic cancer, by the hundreds of letters I have received, the expressions of love and appreciation, and the sense that (despite everything) I may have lived a good and useful life. I remain very glad and grateful for all this—yet none of it hits me as did that night sky full of stars.”*

*(Sacks, Oliver. Gratitude (p. 25). Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.)*

*“Let go in peace. Look ahead in gratitude”*

*Anonymous*

### **Let it Go**

*“Let go of the ways you thought life would unfold:  
the holding of plans or dreams or expectations – Let it all go.  
Save your strength to swim with the tide.*

*The choice to fight what is here before you now will  
only result in struggle, fear, and desperate attempts  
to flee from the very energy you long for. Let go.  
Let it all go and flow with the grace that washes  
through your days whether you received it gently  
or with all your quills raised to defend against invaders.  
Take this on faith; the mind may never find the  
explanations that it seeks, but you will move forward  
nonetheless. Let go, and the wave’s crest will carry  
you to unknown shores, beyond your wildest dreams  
or destinations. Let it all go and find the place of  
rest and peace, and certain transformation.”*

*Danna Faulds*

*“Just for today:*

*I will let go of worry.*

*I will let go of anger.*

*I will do my work honestly.*

*I will give thanks for my many blessings.*

*I will be kind to every living thing.”*

*Reiki Precepts*

*Mindfulness is about love and loving life. When you cultivate this  
love, it gives you clarity and compassion for life and your actions  
happen in accordance with that.*

*Jon Kabat-Zinn*



*"You should sit in meditation for twenty minutes every day—unless you're too busy. Then you should sit for an hour."*

*Old Zen Adage*

*"The cultivation of mindfulness...really allows us to become present for our own body, for the person in front of us, for the life we've been given. Out of that grows quite naturally the spirit of gratitude.*

*...Cultivating an opening to gratitude also helps us to become more mindful of the life around us and what circumstance we're in."*

*Jack Kornfield*

*"Gratitude practice is simply being thankful for the good in our lives. By focusing us on positive rather than negative thoughts, it helps us to see the cup of life as half-full rather than as half-empty. It reminds us not to be greedy and to find satisfaction in what we have, though we may strive for more. Gratitude requires no sacrifice but provides great rewards in compassion, happiness, and mindfulness."*

*Your Skillful Means*

*"If the only prayer you ever say is "Thank You" that will be enough."*

*Eckhardt Tolle*

**Self-Observation Without Judgment (Danna Faulds)**

*Release the harsh and pointed inner voice. it's just a throwback to the past, and holds no truth about this moment.*

*Let go of self-judgment, the old, learned ways of beating yourself up for each imagined inadequacy.*

*Allow the dialogue within the mind to grow friendlier, and quiet. Shift out of inner criticism and life suddenly looks very different.*

*I can say this only because I make the choice a hundred times a day to release the voice that refuses to acknowledge the real me.*

*What's needed here isn't more prodding toward perfection, but intimacy - seeing clearly, and embracing what I see.*

*Love, not judgment, sows the seeds of tranquility and change.*

*From "One Soul"*

*[http://www.mindfullivingprograms.com/resources\\_poetry.php](http://www.mindfullivingprograms.com/resources_poetry.php)*



## Credits

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Try This Gratitude Meditation You'll Feel Wonderful. Stillmind. Taken  
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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.*