

## Gratitude for great people

*“In your greatness,  
I see my own  
and am grateful!”*

**It's time to leave work**, you're running late and you can't make it to aftercare or school to pick up your kids before the time limit. You call another parent whose little boy is friends with your two. She agrees to take your children home.

You're working on a project that is just above your pay grade, and you don't know which way to go. You ask a coworker for help. That person could throw you under the bus if he wanted to. Instead, he decides to help you figure it out. How deep was your sigh of relief?

Acts of kindness like these happen every day. They can be big or small. Even the small kindnesses can make a big difference. They make you feel that someone has your back or is on your side, or has

witnessed something about you. They add one more drop of happiness to the world for you to see and use. They make a difference in your day, your week—or even your whole life. The time has come to acknowledge them with one simple, compelling tool that you have at your fingertips: gratitude.

Gratitude is immediate—you know it and feel it right away in your heart. Gratitude is always a priority. Every corner of your life overflows with things to be grateful for. The only obstacle standing in your way is your own eyes. Too often, you forget to open them to the myriad of blessings blossoming around you even in the midst of drudgery, pain, anger. The blessings are always there. It is your task to notice them—and take action.

Look at what gratitude is not. It seems that all concepts and things on this Earth have two sides...or they can be defined by what they are and what they are not. For this, be grateful for the negative, for it helps people see gratitude in the full, whole meaning of the term.

Gratitude is happening right here, right now. It is the gateway to unimaginable riches of both mind and spirit.

More and more people in this day and age find

themselves on a quest for deeper meaning. Members of the younger generation sometimes choose jobs with salaries that are half of what they could make when the lesser-paying job allows them to grow an interest or follow a passion. Or, instead of settling into comfortable-but-boring office positions, they strap on backpacks and join the Peace Corps or some similar cause for improving the world. Why? Because they view such opportunity as a way of living up to their true value as global citizens. These are just a few of the reasons why I believe our society stands on the verge of a Gratitude Revolution: A fundamental shift in the way people look at the world, and what they find to be important.

People are starting to live their truth...and their truth is found when they ask, "What is it that I really need?" Yes, food, shelter, safety. But what everyone needs is a feeling of freedom to create memories built on acts where giving and receiving are celebrated and appreciated in a new way.

You are the match that has power to ignite a flame of gratitude that will become a good kind of bonfire. Your act of going within to ask yourself what you really want and need will spark this flame. You

must go within, past any hurt feelings or memories of injustice and find the piece of yourself that wants to bring truth, goodness and beauty into the world and from that place, start giving it without any expectation or condition.

Being grateful for your own existence comes before you can express heartfelt thanks to others.

Once you recognize that your own needs have been met, acts of service for others come naturally to you. To experience the greatness of others, start by showing it to them yourself. Be grateful for those who make an impact on your life, however big or small that difference may be. Then, express your gratitude! Half the time, they will be surprised, and they will be grateful for your appreciation in return. It all comes back around. The best part is that it keeps on growing.

When people do good things for others, it makes them feel great about themselves. Saying thank you is more than a follow-up to kind acts. It is an act of greatness all in itself. You thank someone for the impact they made—for the great person they are to you, and for how filled with their greatness you feel. You are grateful and **greatful**. And you are changing the world for the better, one “thank you” at a time.

Saying “thank you” doesn’t cost a dime. It costs a moment of your time. But cost is something that needs some light shown on it. It is just part of the action in exchange. Cost need not imply depletion—especially when being grateful *increases* the quality of your time, and the moments of others. Gratitude lights up something inside you. Expressing thanks fills you with good things like love, joy and passion. It gives you and others what’s great in gratitude.

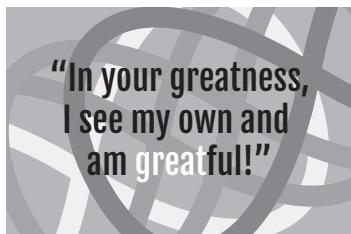
Do you think gratitude should be kept in a lockbox and handed out sparingly? Think about this—there are people you are obviously grateful to and for—a parent, spouse, partner, friend, neighbor, client. Then there are those who you might take for granted—doorman, postal employee, store clerk, soldier, nurse, civil servant, volunteer.

The world needs more gratitude and the things that come along with it: happiness, inner peace and goodwill. But the world is full of criticism, complaints and inefficiencies. Perhaps some complaining is necessary, but what would happen if everyone decided to focus more on the positive and to dole out more gratitude? Would those opposite forces be minimized? Even the smallest acts of gratitude can be great ones

that set off new and good energy. Thank your teenager for washing the dishes after lunch. Thank your dentist for taking you half an hour early. Thank the bus driver for picking up your children from school.

It's time to start thanking your everyday great people for their everyday great acts.

It's time to start practicing gratitude, the greatness in gratefulness.



Postcard No.1

### **Send a *Forever Thank You* postcard to:**

- Anyone who ever helped you
- Someone at your same address
- A friend you've missed seeing
- Someone you admire from afar
- Yourself (and make a note to look at it again in a year!)

**I am grateful to** \_\_\_\_\_

**because** \_\_\_\_\_

**I am grateful to** \_\_\_\_\_

**because** \_\_\_\_\_

**I am grateful to** \_\_\_\_\_

**because** \_\_\_\_\_