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# **GRATITUDE**





## STEP 3

# GRATITUDE

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If you have been working at the tasks for the last two chapters, you will have shifted some difficult stuff. If you have disposed of your letters and all the bad emotions and feelings, it will be gone. Or at least it will be well on its way to being out of your life.

Some of it will have gone away easily, but often there will be a bit that is sticking. You might need to work at it. Don't give up. Work on it and if you need to, get some counselling/psychotherapy. Just make sure that you clean out that cupboard in your head and if you need to, do a hundred rituals until you are free of the past.

It is important to realise, at this point, that if it were easy to let it all go you would have done it years ago. Harv Eker in 'The Millionaire Mind' said:

*'This stuff does not move at the speed of light, it moves at the speed of crap, and crap can move real slowly.'*

The trick is just keeping it moving, and in the end it will all be gone. As Winston Churchill put it:

*‘Never, never, never, never, never, never, never give up.’*

Often, some intense meditation will help you to focus and stay on task, to move this stuff along. Immerse yourself in the writings and recordings of the teachers of the law of attraction and all things positive.

## **TO LIVE MINDFULLY IN THE PRESENT, YOU NEED TO BE FOCUSED ON GRATITUDE**

You are fast moving to the point of being in your present. The present, the now, is a magical place. For most people, at any one time, there are no problems in the present. Look around you right now. Are there any problems? There may be problems in your life, there may be things that you need to deal with or make decisions about, but at this minute, at this exact moment, is there any threat or stress?

When you arrive home from work feeling stressed, and you head for the ice box to crack open some wine or beer, you are not actually stressed at that moment. What you are doing is carrying the stresses of the day with you. You are holding on to them as though they had become who you are. In the reality of now all there is, is you, your house, maybe your family, and time to stop and let go of the day. The ‘now’ is usually the safest place for any of us to be at any one time.

Unless the mad axe-man is coming through the window right now, the only problems, issues or worries that you are experiencing in the present are those that you (by choice) are bringing into your present through using your will and imagination. You are choosing to do it.

## **THOUGHTS ALWAYS BECOME THINGS**

Just as with relationships, you are connected to events, experiences,

memories, people and situations by emotional elastic.

The emotional elastic is the energy that you invest in the relationship. The greater the emotional investment that you make, the stronger is the importance that you give to the connection, the stronger the pull will be on your present being and your experience.

This emotional connection is an aspect of the law of attraction in action. The thickness, strength and colour of the elastic connection reflects the amount of attention and importance that you give to that event.

## **WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT, YOU BRING ABOUT**

Just like the law of gravity, that has the same effect on you no matter if you are a good person or a bad person, the law of attraction does not discriminate between positive elastic and negative elastic. Once you energise the connection, the elastic will pull whatever it is powerfully into your present and your conscious awareness. You know that, in all things, what you pay attention to expands and gets bigger.

## **WHAT YOU FEED GROWS AND WHAT YOU STARVE DIES**

If you've read this statement before and thought, 'this Sean keeps repeating himself', then, yes, you're right! It's deliberate. Your brain needs to hear things over and over again before it accepts them.

What you pay attention to will always grow. What you choose not to pay attention to will diminish.

Doing the work of the last two Steps, it is likely that you have stirred

up some negative associations that either you thought were done and dusted, or things that you had completely forgotten about. It is the nature of cleaning out the cupboard in your mind that you will discover things hidden in the corners that you had forgotten or avoided. For any form of therapy or self-development to be successful and lasting, there needs to be housework, cupboard cleaning, and a letting go, a cutting, of the negative elastic that has tied you to your past events.

It is an ongoing theme in this book for you to acknowledge some unconditional positive regard for yourself. This task is easier for those that have previously done some work on rebuilding their paradigm. If your paradigm is heavily negative, or if you have people, or situations in the present that are continually giving you negative feedback, it can be hard to look in the mirror at all, let alone give yourself positive reinforcement. It is important that you repeat the mantra:

## **THOUGHTS BECOME THINGS**

Do it all the time in your mind and become ‘mindful’ of the outer and inner voices that seek to energise your elastic, both positively and negatively.

## **PLAYING MAKE-BELIEVE**

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When you cannot find a positive voice inside yourself or you simply do not believe what your positive voice is attempting to say, it is time to play make-believe. To say ‘I love and approve of myself’, one of Louise Hay’s favourite sayings in her work ‘Heal Your Life’, will, at first, be met by your negative mind with derision.

Think about it. If you give the negative mind houseroom, those thoughts will simply grow and any chance of the positive voice having an impact will diminish. Playing make-believe is so important at this point. Though this is not a game, it is deadly serious. All accomplishments in life begin with someone playing make-believe. All human achievements, Edmond Hilary climbing Mount Everest, the Wright brothers inventing the airplane, Henry Ford developing the motor car, Edison inventing the light bulb, NASA putting a man on the moon, all began with a fantasy and the make-believe was turned into reality.

The same is true for you, whatever you want to achieve, if you do not believe that you can, then play make-believe with the images in your imagination, see yourself doing or being whatever you desire. All successful people hold their dreams and fantasies until they become their reality.

## **DEVELOPING YOUR POSITIVE INNER VOICE**

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We have looked back at the negative stuff. What about the good stuff? What are the good things, people and events that have shaped you just as much as the negative ones?

My father, who was not a nice man to me, gave me a lot of negative input. He was also a musician and an artist. He taught me to play music, to draw and paint. Vicariously, I listened and I learned and I have played music all my life. I have earned good money from playing and had many experiences that would have been denied me had I not had that early input from my father.

As he was an artist, I learned a lot from watching him using pencils and paintbrushes to create beautiful things. But, most of all, his treatment of me, in calling me an idiot, led me to one great determination. Through the work I have done on myself, I now believe that I can do

anything and achieve anything that I desire.

My mother offered little or no emotional support when it came to my father. But she made sure that I could iron, knit, sew and be independent. Her cooking was so bad that I had to learn to cook or starve. So, although I left home at fifteen and felt hard done to and abused, there are things that I need to be grateful for.

## MAKING GOLD OUT OF LEAD

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When you tread in the cowpat, do you wail at your woes or do you thank God for this unique opportunity for you to learn and grow? There is always a positive in the negative, we can always make gold out of lead. It is all to do with how we see it. Sometimes, we need to be reminded of our good fortune and our blessings. We need to be grateful for our friends or those that serve us well, perhaps even through their own negativity, to keep us awake, which in the end is to our good fortune. We can turn lead into gold.

*“At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.”*

*Albert Schweitzer*

Being grateful and positive keeps us in touch with the higher energy of goodness and plenty. When we are negative about life, we descend into the darker spaces of lack and scarcity. The more we do so, the more we experience these things in our life.

*“Gratefulness is the key to a happy life that we hold in our hands, because if we are not grateful, then no matter how much we have, we will not be happy – because we will always want to have something else or something more.”*

*Brother David Steindl-Rast*

Once my teacher told me to treat every person, lover, beggar, thief or saint with love and respect, for each has something to teach me if I am awake to the moment, living in the present and being grateful for each and every event that I encounter.

## **TO THE AWAKE MIND, EVERY PERSON, EVENT AND EXPERIENCE IS A GURU**

*“To educate yourself for the feeling of gratitude means to take nothing for granted, but to always seek out and value the kindness that will stand behind the action. Nothing that is done for you is a matter of course. Everything originates in a will for the good which is directed at you. Train yourself never to put off the word or action for the expression of gratitude.”*

*Albert Schweitzer*

When you are thankful and grateful, you need to be aware of who or what you are being grateful to. I maintain that you are a spiritual being that is an equal part of all of creation. The source of creation has many names: source energy, the higher self, the universe, God; I usually refer to God as Glenda, as in ‘Glenda God’ (Stephen Fry, ‘The Hippopotamus’). I find that amusing. However, I do feel more comfortable with the creative energy being female as in Mother Earth and Mother Nature, rather than a Father God, but perhaps that is my own paradigm. My father failed to convince me of the supremacy of masculinity.

## **WHEN YOU MEDITATE, CONTEMPLATE OR PRAY, WHO OR WHAT ARE YOU ADDRESSING?**

Someone once said, if it is a choice to believe or not in God, then you are better off believing. Then, if you get to heaven and God says hello, you can just smile back, knowing that you took the right decision.



But if God doesn't exist, it will not matter then, will it?

For me, life is spiritual but not religious. In my experience, religion is made up of partisan groups motivated by self-interest. Spirituality is an all-encompassing, all-inclusive and non-discriminatory power of love. So I say 'thank you' to Glenda on a regular basis many times in any one day.

*"Saying 'thank you' is more than good manners. It is good spirituality."  
Alfred Painter*

So what can you be thankful for?

*"Let us rise up and be thankful,  
for if we didn't learn a lot today,  
at least we learned a little,  
and if we didn't learn a little,  
at least we didn't get sick,  
and if we got sick,  
at least we didn't die;  
so let us all be thankful."  
Buddha*

As Stephen Fry put it: "In a dung heap even a plastic bead will shine like a sapphire"<sup>2</sup> (The Hippopotamus, 2004). It is all to do with how we see it, what we choose to see, and the visions that we hold in our mind.

*"Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues,  
but the parent of all the others."  
Cicero*

<sup>2</sup> *The Hippopotamus by Stephen Fry. Published in 2011 by Arrow*

There was a patient with an inoperable brain tumour. As it grew it compromised his nervous system, sequentially paralysing his body. At the point when he had lost the use of both legs and one arm, he expressed his total gratitude to his nurse at how lucky he was, still being able to drink a cup of tea with his one good limb.

*“The hardest arithmetic to master is that  
which enables us to count our blessings.”*

*Eric Hoffer*

When we live in a world of things and possessions, the need to own and have can become all-consuming. The feelings of relative deprivation, because we do not have a big enough house, car or television screen, can overwhelm us. The sense of an imperfect body that drives us to nip, tuck, botox and reshape, can make us blind to the natural beauty of life in the simplest of things. Mindfulness comes from being aware, in every minute of every day, of our good fortune. Being aware of what it is and expressing our gratitude for it.

*“You say grace before meals. All right, but I say grace before the concert  
and the opera, and grace before the play and pantomime, and grace  
before I open a book, and grace before sketching, painting, swimming,  
fencing, boxing, walking, playing, dancing and grace before I dip the  
pen in the ink.”*

*G. K. Chesterton*

When gratitude becomes a way of life, there is no negativity. Problems become challenges, obstacles an intriguing puzzle. There is only up and forward. Never down, lost and stuck.

*“There is nothing better than the encouragement of a good friend.”*

*Jean Jacques Rousseau*

I had a friend who had come over from Brazil. He had been a powerful

figure in the SAS and gone on to become an oilman. We went to a local restaurant and he stunned me at how rude he was to the serving staff. In his Brazilian life, he had servants and it was obvious that he gave them very little value and he was doing the same with the staff serving at the table.

For me, it is good to show gratitude to everyone all the time. I mean, how lucky were we to be able to eat in that restaurant overlooking the sea, and how amazing that these good people were prepared to give of their time and energy to attend to our needs to ensure that we had such a wonderful experience. My friend, in his relative richness, had lost touch with people and life and had lost his gratitude for all that life had given him. He really lived in a world of emotional poverty.

Try this one:

*“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.”*

*John F. Kennedy*

As a young man, I worked a while in a film studio. I found the producer particularly funny. He would be all enthusiasm and effusion over the phone to an actor or director. Then when he replaced the receiver, he would mutter, “Bastard” or “Bog off”. His mouth said one thing while his heart and his mind said another. He did the same with women in relationships. It is one thing to say it but another to really feel it.

*“Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.”*

*Marcel Proust*

It is so important to be thankful and grateful for all the good that life has given you and all the good that there is yet to come. Around you

there will always be death, loss and disaster. Within the experience of life, there will always be things to overcome and always things to be grateful for.

*“If the only prayer you said in your whole life was,  
Thank you, that would suffice.”*

*Meister Eckhart*

Tell people when you are grateful. When you thank or bless other people, you create a wonderfully positive vibration or feeling that feeds you, as well as the person that you praise. Through the law of attraction, you attract those good feelings back to you – because thoughts always become things.

*“There is as much greatness of mind in acknowledging  
a good turn, as in doing it.”*

*Seneca*

The other side of the same coin is acknowledging that we all love to be appreciated as well. There is, in this idea, the reality that we could all be living in heaven on Earth right now. When we all look after each other, everyone’s needs are met. When we each expect others to look after us, then no-one’s needs are met.

*“The deepest craving of human nature is the need to be appreciated.”*

*William James*

So, the question now is, who do you appreciate? When you look back over your life, try and identify who is it that has helped you, picked you up when you fell, or held you when you were lonely.

If there are no directly positive figures that come to your mind, what did you learn from your negative experiences that have helped you in life?

In the darkest and meanest of times, there is learning if we have the eyes to see, even if what we learn is no more than how to forgive those that have trespassed against us.

Positive awareness opens the door into an abundant life through gratitude. As what you think about you bring about, the mere feeling of gratitude brings more good things into your life; like attracts like.

A collection of various black geometric shapes, including circles, hexagons, and pentagons, scattered across the lower half of the page. Some shapes are larger and more prominent, while others are smaller and more subtle. The shapes are arranged in a way that suggests movement or a dynamic composition.

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# CHAPTER <sup>3</sup> TASKS

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## *Thoughts*

### **WHO DO YOU APPRECIATE?**

WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM YOUR NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES THAT HAVE HELPED YOU IN LIFE?

ACKNOWLEDGE THOSE THAT YOU ARE GRATEFUL TO  
**LIST THOSE PEOPLE THAT YOU NEED TO THANK**

This time you might actually feel able to make a call, text, email or perhaps even send a letter. You just might be met with a positive response that will make both you and the object of your gratitude just a little bit happier. Remember that you can still write letters of gratitude to those that are dead, or may have moved to unknown locations. Once this task is complete, you really will be moving into your present.

**LOVE AND GRATITUDE ARE ALWAYS THE KEYS TO HAPPINESS AND ABUNDANCE**

Writing your letters of gratitude and learning to be grateful will lead to true self-love and a love for life. Learning to appreciate who you are and what you have requires gratitude.

Step through the doorway into your present, into your now. The past is over, the future has yet to be. The only time that ever exists is now.

**BE HAPPY NOW!**



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for more downloads, resources and links*



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*Whilst we're on the subject of gratitude, now seems like as good a time as any to say 'thank you' to all that helped with the creation of this book.*

*Thanks to AGNES NOBLE for proofing (who'd have thought we could miss quite so many commas?!), to ROBERT BENICE, GILL LAMB and MARK CAIRNS for reading through an early draft and setting us on our way.*

*Thanks to NICK GERRARD for producing some amazing artwork.*

*Thanks to SHARON & DAVID O'BRIEN for their inspirational practical activities throughout the '10 Steps' to Change your Life Forever' courses.*

*We'd also like to thank the following kind people who took part in an online survey before we completed this book. We'll always be grateful for your thoughts, ideas and time:*

— • —

*Colette Jackson, Steve Shotton, Alison Blackler,  
Monica Murphy, John Welbourn, Gary Jones,  
KLB, Liz Simms, Pat Tyler, Jenni Noble,  
Philip Neale, Imogen Wilson, Paul Boland,  
Sheila, Jo Clancy, Georg Kochi, Hattie Lamb,  
Christine, Sean Nash, Sarah Louise Wood,  
Mark, Tom Clark, Alexandra Latimer,  
Peter Davis, Diane Allen, Jackie Woods,  
Deb Ravenscroft, Vera Williams, Dave Rutledge,  
Rosie Briffa, Victoria Boyle, Olwen Thomas,  
Ida Moos, Michaela Knight Rimmer, Denise Dobbins,  
John Pardoe, Vicki McDonald-Noble, Jodie B,  
Jamie Thiesen-Nash*

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**THANKS!**