



# GRATITUDE

VIA Survey calls this strength Gratitude

**Parent virtue: Transcendence.** These strengths allow people to rise above their troubles and find meaning in the larger universe. Strengths of transcendence are appreciation of beauty and excellence, connection/purpose, gratitude, hope/optimism, and humor.



## WHAT DOES GRATITUDE MEAN?

**You are aware of and thankful for good things that happen.**

Gratitude is the quality of feeling and expressing thankfulness and appreciation. It is an affirmation that there is goodness in other people and the world, and that we have received that goodness. People with the strength of gratitude have a readiness to show appreciation for kindness and also to return kindness. A leading expert, Robert Emmons, calls gratitude a “relationship-strengthening emotion because it requires us to see how we’ve been supported and affirmed by other people.”

Gratitude is sometimes resisted, especially in more self-sufficient and independent cultures, due to not wanting to experience a sense of indebtedness. However, gratitude is less about feeling indebted and more about being aware of the consideration, kindness, and generosity of others. It’s also important to note that gratitude is not about ignoring the negative aspects of life; it’s simply being aware of and thankful for what is good.

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Out of all 24 character strengths, gratitude is the single best predictor of individual well-being. It is correlated with increased energy, empathy, happiness and optimism. And, the great thing about gratitude is that it can be intentionally cultivated. Numerous studies have concluded that gratitude is like a muscle. The more you practice it, the stronger it gets – and the more you’re able to reap its benefits.

On a group level, gratitude is associated with reciprocity and social stability. Grateful people are more likely than their counterparts to feel a commitment to others – and believe in an interconnectedness of the world and its people. When a person does a favor for you, you tend to feel thankful and be motivated return the favor. Groups that operate with gratitude, then, are usually more cohesive.

**Individuals with this strength might be described as:**

- Thankful
- Appreciative
- Gratified
- Pleased
- Satisfied
- Grateful

**Individuals with this strength are likely to think, feel, or behave in the following ways:**

- It is important to be thankful for each day that we have.
- It is important to say “thank you” as often as possible.
- I am grateful for the people in my life and all the help they’ve given me.
- I wouldn’t be where I am without my family, friends, and teachers.
- Even difficult experiences provide a reason to be grateful. They allow us to learn and grow.
- Being grateful gives me strength and energy.

## QUOTES ON GRATITUDE

*“Let gratitude be the pillow upon which you kneel to say your nightly prayer.”*  
**-MAYA ANGELOU**

*“The roots of all goodness lie in the soil of appreciation for goodness.”*  
**-DALAI LAMA**

*“For me, every hour is grace. And I feel gratitude in my heart each time I can meet someone and look at his or her smile.”*  
**-ELIE WIESEL**

*“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**