

THE CORNERSTONE EAGLE

MAY 2020 Edition



CORNERSTONE
INTERNATIONAL
GROUP



The Covid-19 pandemic has been challenging people on a global basis on almost all aspects of life. The term 'The New Normal' is fast becoming a familiar phrase in our everyday vocabulary.

For you, is 'Gratitude' also featuring more regularly in your everyday life? Is this devastating virus, which is stripping us of most things which we take for granted, such as the air that we breathe, social freedom which we enjoy, as well as the right to travel overseas let alone from one end of the city/town to the other – are all these restrictions which we have to live with now making us more 'grateful' for what we had before? And should we also be cultivating a new sense of gratitude for what we have now?

More Later ... on Leadership and Gratitude.

Cornerstone International Group's vision is to be the best Global Talent Consultancy Group worldwide, and our mission is to accelerate the success of our clients by providing top-quality consulting services in the field of executive search, coaching, talent & workforce management solutions that are faster, better and at a value that serves our clients locally and globally. The Cornerstone Eagle newsletter is not a sales letter to promote activities of our 60 offices globally, but a tool to inspire you to maximize your personal and professional potential to be a Better Leader and a Better Person both at home and at business.

We shall be your Faithful Companion / Coach / Mentor on your life and career journey, supporting you to discover yourself and offering good advice for 'Healthier Business and Life'.

Best Wishes,

Simon Wan

Chief Executive

Cornerstone International Group

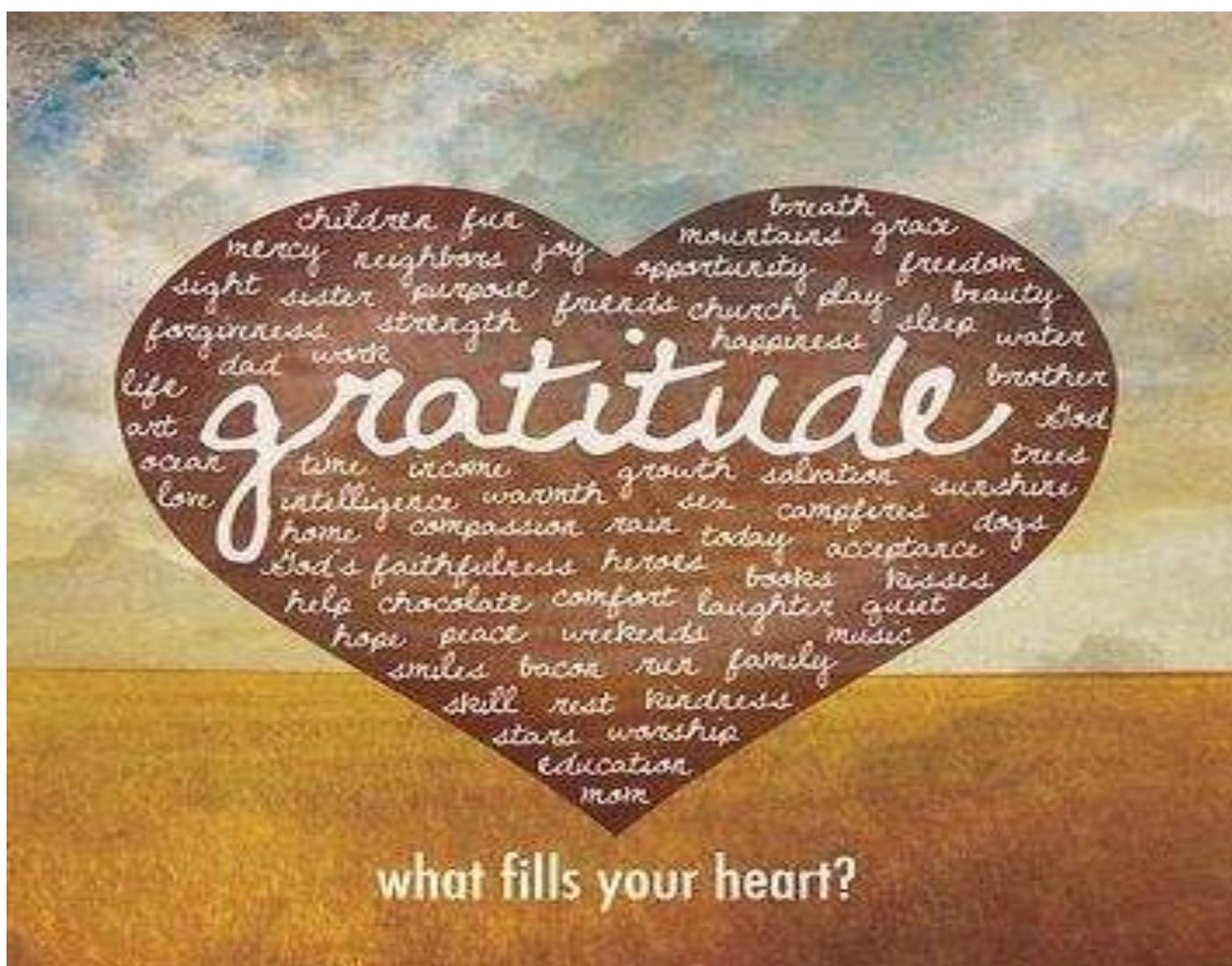
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Gratitude

More than a nice-to-have mindset

Gratitude is a way for people to appreciate what they have instead of always reaching for something new in the hope it will make them happier or thinking they can't feel satisfied until every physical and material need are met.

It's very true that gratitude is ingrained in many leadership practices today, often by using different terms. If you pull 50 books off the shelves on **leadership** and, in all of them, words such as **engagement**, **recognition**, **positivity** and **thankfulness** appear. However, these are all flavors of gratitude without being called gratitude itself.



For example, **engagement** has become the gold standard because, when an engaged employee feels appreciated, it can be measured and tied to Return on Investment (ROI). While that makes it an important and complicated word related to gratitude, it is still not gratitude since an employee can be **engaged without having gratitude**.

Celebration and recognition are similar in that they are ways a leader can express gratitude but are not gratitude itself. Not every individual gives or wants to receive gratitude the same way. For example, calling out an individual accomplishment publicly can be highly motivating for some and painful for others. This makes learning the various way of giving and receiving gratitude important in the workplace.

A strong dose of gratitude is good for the soul—and for your leadership effectiveness. Gratitude is best when it is:

1. **Specific.** There are occasions when thanking a large group is appropriate, but it is much more effective when you praise specific individuals and specific actions.
2. **Authentic.** Regardless of how it is expressed, it must be authentic. I've seen one leader who can get the message across with a fist bump. Another with a yell from the podium. The key is that the leader is expressing thanks authentically.
3. **Timely.** It is always best to give thanks in a timely way. Write the note, express what impressed you, thank them as close to the event as possible. A "thank you" received months later is nice but loses its power.



4. **Unexpected.** This one may be a surprise on the list, but think about it. If you get a thank you note from a newlywed couple for the gift you gave, it's rather expected. But if someone surprises you with a thank

you, it's a whole different thing. When you get a note from a co-worker thanking you, completely unexpected, that can have an incredible impact.

5. **Sincere.** If it feels like the leader is giving thanks out of obligation or part of a process, it loses all power.
6. **Duplicatable.** When a leader shows gratitude for specific actions, it encourages others to duplicate those actions.
7. **Personalized.** Individualized gratitude is the skill of a refined leader. That means knowing the person. Some people may truly not enjoy public praise. Others relish in it. Targeted gratitude is knowing what works best.

People feel and express gratitude in multiple ways. They can apply it to the **past** (retrieving positive memories and being thankful for elements of childhood or past blessings), the **present** (not taking good fortune for granted as it comes), and the **future** (maintaining a hopeful and optimistic attitude). Regardless of the inherent or current level of someone's gratitude, it's a quality that individuals can successfully cultivate further.

Here are some ways to cultivate gratitude on a regular basis:

- ✚ **Write a thank-you note.** You can make yourself happier and nurture your relationship with another person by writing a thank-you letter expressing your enjoyment and appreciation of that person's impact on your life. Send it, or better yet, deliver and read it in person if possible. Make a habit of sending at least one gratitude letter a month. Once in a while, write one to yourself.
- ✚ **Thank someone mentally.** No time to write? It may help just to think about someone who has done something nice for you, and mentally thank the individual.
- ✚ **Keep a gratitude journal.** Make it a habit to write down or share with a loved one thoughts about the gifts you've received each day.
- ✚ **Count your blessings.** Pick a time every week to sit down and write about your blessings — reflecting on what went right or what you are grateful for. Sometimes it helps to pick a number — such as three to five things — that you will identify each week. As you write, be specific and think about the sensations you felt when something good happened to you.
- ✚ **Pray.** People who are religious can use prayer to cultivate gratitude.
- ✚ **Meditate.** Mindfulness meditation involves focusing on the present moment without judgment. Although people often focus on a word or phrase (such as "peace"), it is also possible to focus on what you're grateful for (the warmth of the sun, a pleasant sound, etc.).

Last but not least, here is the reminder: **Leadership is not positional. The above list is not limited to “the boss.” You are the Leader, who motivates and inspires and drives things forward, regardless of where they**

sit. **Make it your practice this year, especially during this time, to express gratitude and watch your leadership potential expand.**

Food for Thought

A picture of a rose Simon cut at his balcony in Shanghai. Appreciate all pleasant things around us and be constantly thankful on what we have today!



Yes, our cup is always seen as being 'half full', and not 'half empty' and we shall be charged with positive energy which brings joy and contentment

Bible Reminders: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray continually, **give thanks in all circumstances**; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Bible Reminders: Colossians 3:16

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with **gratitude** in your hearts.

Our Editor, Kuang Fu at kuang-fu@cornerstone-group.com would love to hear from you if you have special thoughts to share.

About Cornerstone International Group

Cornerstone International Group is a Global Talent Consultancy Group founded in 1989 with some 60 offices worldwide and headquarters in Shanghai, China and Atlanta, USA. Our **mission** is to accelerate the success of our clients by providing top-quality consulting services in the field of talent recruitment and coaching solutions that are **faster, better and at a value** that serves our clients locally and globally. We provide a proven approach to Executive Search, Executive Coaching and Board Solutions in China, Asia and across Europe and Americas. A global member of the Association of Executive Search and Leadership Consultants (AESC), **Cornerstone** is recognized as having the highest level of quality in the industry. Cornerstone is also named by Forbes as one of the Best Management Consulting Firms in Executive Search in 2016, 2017 & 2018, 2019 and ranked by Hunt Scanlon as a top Global 25 groups in 2018, 2019 & 2020.