

## WEEK 23 GRATITUDE

*“I’m thinking – I owe you one”* – Han Solo (deleted scene,  
“Return of the Jedi”)

Imagine coming home to find your home has been looted and burned to the ground. You see the devastation and wander in mute shock through the ruins. Disbelief, anger, and grief kick in. Then you remember that everyone close to you is OK, that you are alive, and you still have two hands and a will to rebuild. Property was lost but the things that truly matter remain.

In every grave situation we find ourselves there is cause for sorrow but there is also cause for gratitude. It is often not until we are faced with calamity and loss that we realize this fact. When you pause and count your blessings despite your losses you experience nothing less than a divine sense of gratitude.

Star Wars is full of acts of gratitude. The heroes in the story suffer defeat and loss yet are always able to count their blessings in the presence of their friends.

In “The Return of the Jedi” Luke travels to Tatooine where he rescues Han Solo and Princess Leia and finally defeats Jabba the Hutt. Later Han expresses his gratitude to Luke via a comlink as they are departing the planet for separate destinations. In a deleted scene Han expressed his thanks in person. It is a touching and heartfelt moment between the two great friends. Han needed to express gratitude for their friendship to Luke.

A daily practice should include a period of self-reflection and gratitude. That is why the first exercise of the day is to pause for a minute and write down what it is you are grateful for this day. It could be that you are enjoying success or have landed a new opportunity that you worked hard to get. You may have finished a project or completed a test. Having a job, earning an income,

having food on the table, a roof over your head, being healthy and alive in the moment are all things we often take for granted.

We can take steps to re-frame our problems. Every negative has a positive if we look hard enough. Life does not have to be about reactivity. Meditating on the negative aspects of life can help in understanding them in context. Is it such a big deal? Would we be much better off if the problem did not exist? Does the problem present opportunities?

Acceptance is a way to resolve our issues. We have a choice, we can either do something about them or not. Sometimes it is better to act, sometimes it is better to wait and at times, no action is the answer. Denying that the problem exists is no solution as eventually it will force us to face it, possibly under worse conditions.

Once we have accepted our problems, we need to commit to doing something about them now, later, or never. Decide and stick to it. Adjust and calibrate if needed but resolve to see things out. Act to resolve the issue. Act mindfully understanding that our actions may have unwanted consequences.

List five things to be grateful for. Make it a habit every day to remind yourself that there are always five things you can name which you can be grateful for. List them in your journal or meditate on them.

The ancient Stoics would rise early in the morning and greet the rising sun. It was an act of self-discipline to get out of a warm bed when others were still asleep. The majesty of the sunrise and the fresh air more than compensated for it. As the sun rose in all its splendor the Stoics would contemplate their own mortality and insignificance in the universe and experience nothing less than gratitude for being alive and being able to witness the birth of a new day. Today is a gift. Use it.

**DAY 155**

*“I wasn't strong enough to save you, Mom. I wasn't strong enough. But I promise I won't fail again. I miss you...so much.”-*  
Anakin Skywalker

Today I am Grateful for:


Morning Contemplation


Evening Reflection


## DAY 156

*“I know wherever you are, it's become a better place.  
You were the most loving partner a man could ever have.  
Goodbye my darling wife, and thank you.” – Cleig Lars*

Today I am Grateful for:


Morning Contemplation


Evening Reflection


**DAY 157**

*“Well, if there's a bright center to the universe, you're on the planet that it's farthest from.” – Luke Skywalker*

**Today I am Grateful for:**


**Morning Contemplation**


**Evening Reflection**


## DAY 158

*“I'm ready for the trials. I know I am! He knows it too .... But he won't let me move on.” – Anakin*

Today I am Grateful for:


Morning Contemplation


Evening Reflection


**DAY 159**

*“You were my brother Anakin. I loved you!”* – Obi-Wan Kenobi

**Today I am Grateful for:**


**Morning Contemplation**


**Evening Reflection**


**DAY 160**

*“Never give up hope, no matter how dark things seem.”*  
- The Clone Wars

Today I am Grateful for:


Morning Contemplation


Evening Reflection




**DAY 161**

*“I’m thinking – I owe you one.”* – Han Solo (deleted scene)

**Today I am Grateful for:**


**Morning Contemplation**


**Evening Reflection**


## WEEK REVIEW

Reflect on your daily practices and personal goals for the week.  
How did you do? Where can you refocus your attention?

Meditation:


Physical Exercise:


Diplomacy:


Awareness:


Self-Discipline:
