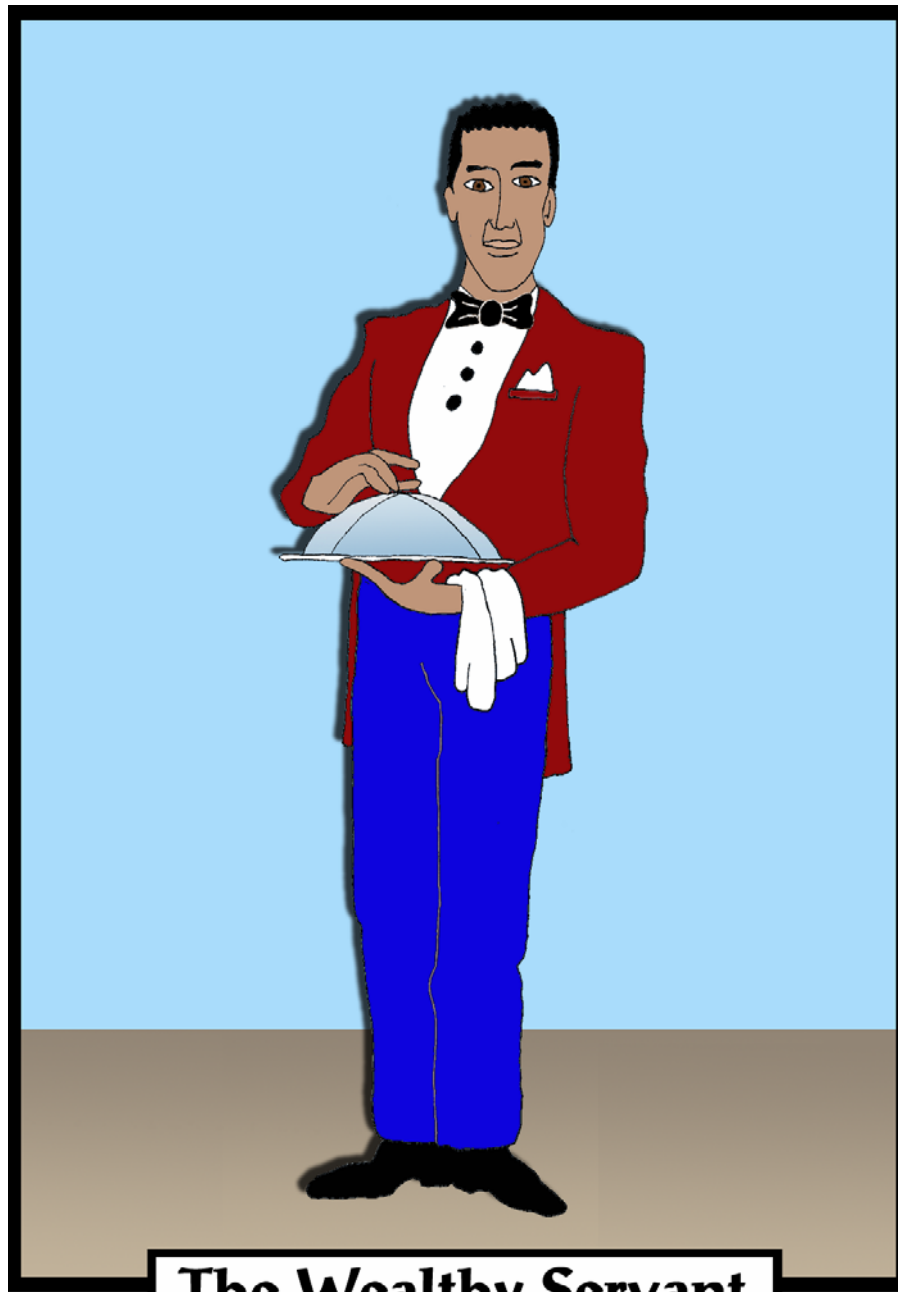


The Wealthy Servant



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By Darin Deterra, PhD

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Gratitude

There once was a servant named Neil Down who worked for a very wealthy aristocrat named Duke Lord. Now, Duke Lord was a very, very wealthy man who lived in a large castle on a huge parcel of land, more than a hundred acres. He had everything a man might want, but he was a lonely and miserable man.

People who met him often said that he was the meanest, most miserable and unhappy person they had ever met. He was so mean, that his unhappiness was contagious. He made everyone around him miserable. Some visitors reported that it took weeks or months for them to smile again after meeting him for only 15 minutes.

Now Duke Lord had many servants and he enjoyed making all of them as miserable as he was. He shouted at them, he sneered at them and he made them do meaningless tasks over and over again, long after their workday was through. Some of them left, but most of them, because they were poor, grew tired and miserable just like their tyrant boss, Duke Lord.

All of them except one. Neil Down was the happiest servant in the entire castle and it drove the old man crazy. Day in and day out, Duke Lord did everything in his power to make Neil Down miserable and every morning, Neil Down woke up, eager to serve his master with a large smile on his face. Neil Down, the humble servant, couldn't help it. He was just a happy sort of guy.

Years passed by. Servants and maids came and went, but Neil Down always stayed.

Finally one day, the old man asked his humble servant, "How do you do it?"

"Do what?" Neil Down asked.

"Stay so damned happy all of the time?" his master shouted.

Neil Down said, "I'm happy because I'm grateful."

"Grateful for what?" the Duke asked.

"Grateful to serve," Neil Down said.

"That's the stupidest thing I've ever heard," his master, Duke Lord said. "Bring me my slippers."

Over the next several days, Duke Lord watched his faithful servant. Sure enough, he noticed that Neil Down was joyful for the opportunity to serve him even though he couldn't have cared less about Neil Down himself.

This puzzled and fascinated Duke Lord. So, one day, he asked his humble servant to sit down and talk with him again.

"Why does service make you happy?" Duke Lord asked.

Neil Down humbly said, “Every morning I wake up and think about what I have to give and every morning, I’m filled with gratitude because I have so much to give. Every time I give, I’m filled with so much gratitude that by the end of the day I’m joyful that I have given so much and yet, I have so much left to give.”

Duke Lord sneered. “I don’t do that. Every morning, I think about what I want to get. I think about what I want other people to give to me. I think about what I don’t have and then I spend the rest of my day trying to get it from other people. I’m not grateful for anything I have because I’m too busy thinking about what I want next.”

Neil Down listened attentively, but he didn’t say anything. There was a moment of silence and then Duke Lord said, “Bring me my slippers.”

During the next week, Duke Lord Billionaire, the wealthiest man in the entire state, could not stop thinking about what his humble servant had told him. Later that week, he asked his servant to sit down and talk with him again.

Duke Lord looked at his servant and said, “I’m much wealthier than you are, but you seem to have an inner wealth that I am lacking. You are happier than I am. What good is all this material wealth if I am unhappy?”

Neil Down was silent. He allowed the old man to answer his own question.

“I’m unhappy because I do not know how to give. I do not know the joy of service, so I don’t know how to love. My cup is always half empty because I’m always trying to get from others what I cannot give to myself.”

Neil Down was silent. He knew that the wisest thing that he could do was not to say anything. So he listened attentively.

Then the old man said something that surprised even Neil Down. “May I get you your slippers?”

Neil Down paused, “Pardon me, sir?”

Duke Lord repeated himself. “May I get you your slippers, I said.”

“If it pleases you sir,” his humble servant replied. Duke Lord got up from the table and then returned with a brand new pair of slippers. Duke Lord looked at his servant and asked, “Is there anything else I can do for you?” Neil Down was unaccustomed to this kind of treatment. He said, “No thank you, sir. Is there anything I can do for you?”

Duke Lord thought for a moment and then he said, “Yes, let me serve you.”

“If you wish,” his humble servant replied.

Duke Lord realized that his servant was giving to him by allowing him to give. At the same time, he could see that his servant didn’t really need anything from him because he was already happy. It was at this point that Duke Lord became very sad.

He knelt down and looked up to his humble servant. “I need you to let me give something to you that you need.”

Neil Down realized for the first time in his life that, although he was joyful in giving, he had never had the opportunity to experience the joy of receiving. “Perhaps you can help me learn how to receive,” he said to his master.

It was at that point that Duke Lord surprised his servant even more. “I want to switch places,” he said.

“Pardon me?” his servant asked.

Duke Lord repeated himself. “I know it sounds mad, but I want to switch places until I know the full joy and happiness that you have known all your life.”

What could Neil Down say? He was the servant. He had to obey his master’s orders and become his master’s master. He had to allow his master to become his servant. He had to serve by receiving instead of serving by giving. His master on the other hand, had to learn to receive through giving rather than receive by taking.

“When shall we start?” the humble servant asked.

“Right away,” his master said with a gleam in his eye. “I shall sleep in the servant’s quarters tonight and you can sleep in the master’s bedroom.” Neil Down could see that this was a bit of a mad adventure for the old man, but that it was making him happy, happier than years of being waited on, hand and foot, had made him.

The two switched places. Gradually, Duke Lord began to see that his former servant was rich with wisdom and knowledge. So Duke Lord began asking his new master questions.

“When you worked for me all those years, what were you so grateful for? I treated you like a slave. I was wretched and cruel towards you. I tried my best to torment you and break you down every single day.”

Neil Down thought for a moment. “I was grateful to have a job where there were so many opportunities to grow.”

“Opportunities to grow?” the old man asked. “I made you clean toilets, scrub the floors, then wait on me, hand and foot. I gave you no opportunity for advancement!”

Neil Down smiled warmly. “Every day, you gave me the opportunity to give more than I thought I could give, to forgive in ways I didn’t think possible and to find humility I didn’t know that I had. I’m very grateful for that.”

“I paid you poorly. You didn’t have any security or financial stability.”

”I learned from this that security and stability are qualities that can only come from within. Not having money helped me to become less dependent on money, as a source of happiness or security. Every day, you helped me to see that no amount of money can make a person content, if they aren’t happy from within.”

The old man learned from his new master and continued to do so for the remaining years of his life. When they tried returning to the old way of doing things, the old man became miserable very quickly. So they switched places again.

A joy and serenity took over the castle. Everybody was serving somebody. The wealthy servant served his master by receiving and his master found a true wealth that can only come from within. The old man who once woke up every morning feeling empty, thinking about what he needed others to give him now woke up with a sense of gratitude and inner wealth for all of the things he had to offer his wealthy servant.

4DQ® SKILL 18: GRATITUDE

Gratitude is the foundation - and starting point - for optimism. How can you be optimistic about attracting what you don't have, if you lack gratitude for what you do have? We will have difficulty manifesting success because we are focused on what we don't have.

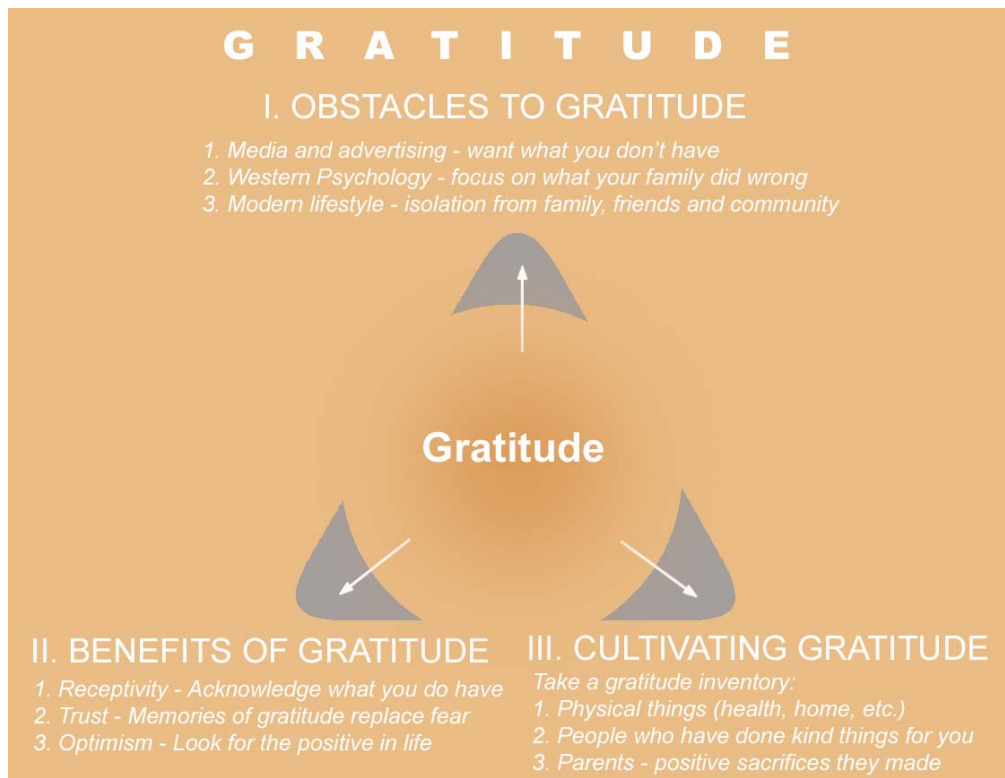
No matter where your life is, there's plenty to be grateful for. If you temporarily lose your sense of optimism, gratitude realigns your attitude and restores your sense of optimism.

Obstacles: There are many obstacles to developing gratitude. Modern advertising cultivates a sense of dissatisfaction with life, as a premise for selling products. Much of this advertising is subliminal. Western psychology tends to focus on dissatisfaction with family, rather than gratitude for what we did receive from our parents. As a result, many of us are focused on what we don't have and don't want.

This is the paradigm you're breaking free of now. If you view life from a perspective of lacking, you will live, think and operate from that perspective. It's difficult to manifest what you want if you're focused on what you *don't* have and *don't* want.

There's no question that many parents traumatize, neglect and hurt their children. We are more likely to heal these traumas, however, if we can also recognize and feel gratitude for the love and support we did receive. Gratitude heals.

The benefits of gratitude are plentiful - our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health is enhanced by cultivating gratitude.



The Power of Gratitude

Think of yourself as driving a car with your inner child. When your thinking is conscious and directed, you are in the driver's seat. Your inner child is in the passenger's seat where it belongs, buckled in. You are steering your thoughts in a positive direction.

When you let a negative thought pattern take over, what has happened? You have switched places. The child is now in the driver's seat and you are in the passenger's seat. The inner child throws a temper tantrum with its impulsive thought patterns and the car swerves off the road. Someone can get hurt and that someone is you. The passenger's seat is the most unsafe seat in the car. That's why it's called the "Death Seat".

No problem. All you have to do is take charge of your own thoughts again, and you're back in the driver's seat. Gratitude is an easy but powerful way of taking charge of your own thoughts and turning them into something positive.

Gratitude is an ancient philosophy that develops mental flexibility and adaptability. Gratitude helps you find peace and strength within, regardless of the circumstances that surround you. Gratitude centers you and balances you. It takes you out of fear-based reactivity. Gratitude calms the inner child and puts you back in the driver's seat.

Inner Wealth

An affirmation is a prayer, asking for something that you don't have. Gratitude is a statement of confirmation, for what you already have. The truth is, everything that you want is yours for the receiving. Every possibility in the Universe is, well, a possibility. Gratitude is confirmation of this.

Gratitude is mental wealth. This is the moral of "The Wealthy Servant". Duke Lord was mentally impoverished. He had more than he could possibly want, yet he was miserable. His servant, Neil Down, had internal wealth. His happiness wasn't governed by external circumstances.

"Every morning I wake up and think about what I have to give and every morning, I'm filled with gratitude because I have so much to give." – The Wealthy Servant

How you begin your day is very important. The first thoughts that you have and the first words that you say are an initiation ceremony, in which you are setting your course for the rest of the day.

Many of us are unconscious about this initiation ceremony, and the thought waves we are creating at the beginning of each day. We wake up, get a cup of coffee and then we begin reading the newspaper or listening to the radio.

We fill our minds with someone else's thoughts. We fill our minds with the tragic news of yesterday, as reported today. Then, we build our day upon those first thoughts. Already, we are letting someone else insert their thoughts and observations into our brain. These thoughts and observations create actualities.

Sometimes, we begin our day thinking about the very things that are bothering us most: our sore back, our debts or the list of things that we "have" to do today.

Today, I'm going to ask you to change this pattern. I'm going to ask you to take charge of your life, by starting your day with gratitude.

There are three basic levels of financial need: survival, comfort and luxury. During lean economic times, many people have to give up comforts and luxuries that they once took for granted. Gratitude is an important survival skill. Gratitude helps us let go of our fixed notions about what we need and embrace what we have now.

Gratitude increases flexibility and adaptability. Gratitude helps you adjust your attitude and your perspective during challenging times. Through gratitude, we can rediscover joy in what we *do* have. This leads to positive relationships and enhanced opportunities.

Gratitude is the foundation for optimism. Gratitude is the foundation for attracting and manifesting what you want in life. Other life skills build upon this basic skill. In coming chapters, you will see why gratitude is the beginning of Inner GOLD.

Three Levels of Gratitude

There are three levels of gratitude. The Wealthy Servant practiced gratitude at all three levels. Most of us think of gratitude at the first level only. When we think of gratitude, we tend to think of material, three-dimensional things.

Level One: Material Gifts

- Your home
- Your material possessions
- Food at your table
- A car that runs
- Your physical health
- Material pleasures
- Work

Level One is important, because there are many people who don't have a home, a job or food to eat. But gratitude is a four-dimensional quality and these are mostly three-dimensional things. They are all external.

Level Two: Non-Material Gifts

Level Two includes four-dimensional qualities, experiences and states of being. These are not gifts that can be seen with the physical senses. But they shape and color your life in profound ways.

- The gift of being alive
- Your skills, talents and abilities
- Internal qualities, like courage, joy and wisdom
- Your connection to Source
- Love
- Friends, family and relationships
- The things you love doing

Level Three: Challenges, Obstacles and Fears

Level Three is the level where the deepest transformation takes place. Here, you are expressing gratitude for the things you *don't* consciously want. But there is wisdom in this.

Quantum physics tells us that we attract everything into our life that we want or don't want. This includes poverty, disease and challenging relationships. We either grow from these challenges or we resist them. Gratitude is a brilliant way of training your mind to receive the gifts that are hidden beneath your greatest life challenges.

- Your problems, difficulties and stresses
- Your mistakes
- Physical hardships or conditions
- People who treat you unkindly or unfairly
- Money or financial difficulties
- Things you want but don't have
- Unmet goals and unfulfilled dreams

For each item at Level Three, name the hidden treasure that you are gaining or wish to gain from that experience. These hidden gifts are what you are *really* expressing gratitude for. The Wealthy Servant did this when he spoke about the hidden benefits of his own poverty:

"I learned from this that security and stability are qualities that can only come from within. Not having money helped me to become less dependent on money, as a source of happiness or security. Every day, you helped me to see that no amount of money can make a person content, if they aren't happy from within."

It's important to remember that you are not expressing gratitude for the problem itself, but for what you are learning or gaining, by facing and transforming the problem. For instance, you are not expressing gratitude for having a sore back, but you may be grateful that your sore back is teaching you to listen more carefully to your physical and emotional needs.

Gratitude Ceremony

The first step in your Gratitude Ceremony is writing down (or saying out loud) a gratitude list, every morning after you wake up. Include items from all three levels. Buy a journal and start tomorrow morning. Every day, you will add more items to your list. Be spontaneous. Write down those things that truly inspire and motivate you. You can repeat items that you have mentioned on previous days.

When you are done writing down your gratitude list, read each item out loud. At the end of the week, read everything you wrote down for that week. If you don't have time to write down a gratitude list in the morning, say out loud what you are grateful for. Get in the habit of programming your thoughts, first thing in the morning.

The Level Three items are important. Here, you are recalibrating your mind and writing down a positive statement of intention, first thing in the morning. If there's anything that you wake up in the morning feeling negative about, view this as an opportunity to strengthen your gratitude skills and build a positive field around that perceived problem. Here are some examples:

- I'm grateful for this (tension, insomnia, headache) because my body is teaching me to be more conscious of my higher needs, as communicated to me by my body. This is an opportunity for me to learn about myself and transform something inside of me. It's an opportunity for me to listen more deeply to my body today, to slow down, to eat well, to cleanse my body, to care for myself and love myself. I vow to do all of these things today and I know that in ten minutes, I will feel 100% better.
- I'm grateful for my boss's (husband's, wife's, co-worker's) anger, because this is an opportunity for me to build a positive attitude that's so strong, it overcomes any obstacles that I might encounter today. My positive attitude is *contagious*. This is also an opportunity for me to forgive. This is also an opportunity to set boundaries, develop communication skills, manage my relationships and find my true power. This is an opportunity to heal old childhood wounds, that are being brought up.
- I'm grateful for the Economic Collapse because it gives me an opportunity to collapse my old belief systems and narrow assumptions about life. It's an opportunity for me to grow and prosper in ways that I never thought possible. It's an opportunity for me to find my own greatness. New opportunities are opening up to me, because I'm awake, alert and ready.

Express gratitude with as much genuine appreciation and conviction as you can, at the beginning of each day. Think of your negative thoughts as those of a small child. You can parent that child, not by scolding it or making it feel ashamed, but by training it to develop more constructive habits.