

Gratitude

1 LEAD-IN Look at the photo. What do you think the purpose of this 'tree' is? Discuss in pairs.



2 Read the short article below and compare with your ideas.

Gratitude trees are perfect for celebrations such as the American Thanksgiving, Chinese Harvest Moon Festival or Jewish Sukkot. Plant a bare tree branch with lots of small twigs in a pot. Cut out small leaves from paper. Put the tree, paper leaves and some pens near your front door. As guests arrive for your celebration, ask them to write down something they are grateful for on one of the leaves. Each leaf can then be hooked onto the tree, using string. Once your gratitude tree is full of leaves, put the tree in the centre of your dining table

3 Discuss the following questions in pairs.

- 1 Where do you think this text came from? Why?
- 2 Do you like the idea of the gratitude tree? Why/why not?
- 3 Do you have any traditional ways in your culture to show gratitude for everything you have?

4 VOCABULARY Check the meaning of the following words. Are they nouns or adjectives? Can you find the noun form of each adjective, and the adjective form of each noun? (One is not possible)

happy grateful help inspiration support advice encouragement friendship influence

5 VIDEO Watch the first section of the video (0.50) and answer the following questions.



- 1 What topic is Mark Williamson an expert in?
- 2 What task are the people going to do? Why? What benefit might it have?
- 3 What are you going to see in the next part of the video?

6 Read the following extracts from the next section of the video. Then watch the rest of the video and write the name of the person, Tony or Carol, next to each extract.

This note is to let you know how very happy and grateful I am to have you as a true friend in my life.

Thank you for all the help, advice, support, encouragement and friendship you've given to me and my family.

It is so important to be able to tell you what a great inspiration you have been.

Thank you for the many things you have helped me with.

You have been an incredible influence on me.

I'm so made-up* that I have you as my friend.

I know that any time, night or day, whatever time, you're always there for me.

[*an informal word meaning 'happy']

7 Discuss the following questions in pairs. Watch the video again if necessary.

- 1 How did the people who wrote the letters feel afterwards?
- 2 How did the people who received the letters feel?
- 3 Why do you think they felt this way?

8 Read the following short text about a piece of research into writing letters like this. Do the results surprise you? Why/why not?

A well-known experiment was carried out by Dr Martin Seligman, known as the father of positive psychology. He asked people to try 6 different tasks related to gratitude. According to his research, the task that had the greatest short term effects involved writing (and delivering) a letter of gratitude. This caused people's happiness to rise by 10%. Not only that, but it was an effect which lasted up to a month afterwards.

9 Write down the names of 3-5 people that you feel grateful towards and think about why. Tell your partner about each person, what they did and why you feel grateful.

10 Choose one of the people on your list and write them a gratitude letter. You can choose whether you actually want to deliver the letter or not.

- 1 Describe the situation(s) where they helped you.
- 2 Remind them of the qualities they have that you are grateful for.
- 3 Thank them.

Key

3

1 From an online blog.

4

Happy-happiness, grateful-gratefulness, helpful, help (or helpfulness), supportive, support, advice (no adjective, could say good at giving advice), encouraging, encouragement, friendly, friendship/friend, influential, influence.

5

1 Happiness- he is a psychologist and runs an organisation called Action for Happiness

2 Write a thank you letter to someone who matters in their life. It may improve their well being.

3 People delivering their thank you letters.

6

This note is to let you know how very happy and grateful I am to have you as a true friend in my life. Carol

Thank you for all the help, advice, support, encouragement and friendship you've given to me and my family. Carol

It is so important to be able to tell you what a great inspiration you have been. Tony

Thank you for the many things you have helped me with. Tony

You have been an incredible influence on me. Tony

I'm so made-up* that I have you as my friend. Carol

I know that any time, night or day, whatever time, you're always there for me. Carol

7

1 Carol cries, so clearly it made her feel emotional. Tony says it was emotional too, but that he's glad he did it.

2 Max says that Tony is very sincere, genuine and lovely. He says he is honoured and will keep the letter. Pat says that it was lovely.

Note

Note that when Tony arrives, he says that Max will 'probably think he's on You've Been Framed.' This is a TV programme where people are videoed doing silly things.



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