



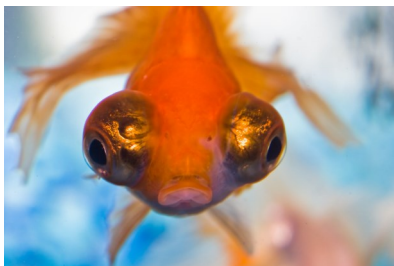
LOW HANGING FRUIT

Gratitude in Trying Times

By Allison Floyd

Has planning for Thanksgiving 2020 left you wanting to say, “Thanks for nothing”? You’re in good company! For reasons we don’t need to get into here, it’s likely that many of us will not mourn this year’s passing. That said, it’s always darkest before it’s pitch black. Or so my father used to say. All joking aside, trying times offer a unique opportunity to cultivate an attitude of gratitude in the face of adversity. All joking *not* aside, for starters, we can be grateful for whatever sense of humor we’ve managed to salvage or maintain when things seem bleak (even or especially if it’s gallows humor). We can also take a moment to reflect on what (if anything) (more humor—hopefully!) went well, and who and what we’re glad to have in our lives. And, hey! It could always be worse! Don’t take my word for it—have a look at [this Gale eBook](#), courtesy of LiLi.org. At least it’s not the Civil War (again, yet, anyway)!

Of course, despite modeling grateful behavior for students (via Zoom, no less) this “attitude of gratitude” talk can sound like just that—lip service paid to some pie-in-the-sky platitude. Not so! Gratitude, like forgiveness, and so many concepts that are the spiritual/emotional equivalent of eating your vegetables, is more for your own good than for anyone else’s. “That’s nice,” you might say, “but do you want to be a little more specific?” Sure! Find some inspiration for your gratitude practice [here](#). And, for some ideas on how to practice gratitude in the time of COVID, turn [here](#).



But let’s not get carried away. Sometimes gratitude is not forthcoming, and it’s okay to experience the full range of our emotions. For more on this, have a look at “Turn That Smile Upside Down” in this issue of the [SPLAT Curiosity Report](#). That, conversely, is another thing to be grateful for: the liberty to say, on occasion, “This sucks”.

Here’s hoping your 2020 has been filled with silver linings, and that 2021 is smoother sailing. Stay healthy, stay safe, and stay grateful (except for when you’re just not feeling it).

LINKS TO MORE LEARNING



Benefits of Gratitude During COVID-19

If the phrase “gratitude list” makes your eyes roll, read this short article from the *Psychiatric Times* on the mental health benefits of writing down the things for which you are grateful. <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/view/benefits-gratitude-during-covid-19>

“It’s okay to acknowledge that this sucks”

This story from CNN aired in March at the beginning of this saga, but as we move into winter, some of the advice is still good. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/video/the-importance-of-mental-health-right-now-its-ok-to-acknowledge-that-this-sucks/vp-BB11tYld>

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS



How about a little meditation?

Think your class could benefit from a gratitude meditation? Check out this 3– minute guided meditation for kids on gratitude on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_gpxWpGH11Q

Meditation can be a helpful rest and digest transition, or maybe an introductory activity for older students.

DIGITAL TOOLS



UXL Encyclopedia of Native American Tribes

The Thanksgiving holiday is a timely season to remember and learn more about indigenous cultures. This Gale eBook title, available on [lili.org](#), provides detailed studies of tribes from all over the U.S. and Canada, offering information on history, religion, art, daily life, and social and political issues. Find it at

<https://lili.org/dbs/uxl-encyclopedia-of-native-american-tribes/>.



