

THE 7 KEY ABILITIES

How to Succeed
7 Days a Week

JEFF TERESI

THE 7 KEY ABILITIES

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Published by

Grateful Pages Press

www.JeffTeresi.com

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ISBN: 978-0-578-47625-4

Cover and interior design by Domini Dragoone

Front cover photos: onairjiw, Pictac, Jules_Kitano | iStock.com

Printed in the United States of America

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

For Jess, my favorite.

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Read This First!

A Letter From the Author

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There are as many ways to define “it” as there are people. But we all want it. We all crave it. We all hope for it . . . yet for most people, it seems to remain forever elusive and just out of reach. What is “it”? Success. To succeed. To be successful!

As the title of this book suggests, everyone needs a few key abilities to obtain success—seven, to be exact. The good news is that these abilities are available to us all. These are skills everyone is capable of learning and applying, including you. In fact, one of the skills you’ll learn about in the coming pages is learning how to best apply what you have learned. Stay tuned!

But I digress . . . Hi! My name is Jeff, and I was born with three thumbs. Great icebreaker, don’t ya think? Well, it’s true, and it’s nice to meet you! I know how awkward it can be meeting someone for the very first time. Wondering if you look all right, worried your breath might smell (which is silly, because only your nose can do that!), not quite sure what to say, and not wanting to sound foolish. I totally get it—first impressions can be scary. So, let me dispel your worries so that we can fully engage during our time together. First off, you look great! Second of all, you smell wonderful! And lastly, I can’t wait to hear what you have to say.

This is going to be FUN!

Now that we’ve gotten the pleasantries out of the way, let’s get down to business. You may be wondering: *Is this book going to be worth my time?* To answer that as succinctly as possible, YES! As the author, I know I’m biased, but having been in sales for a good chunk of my life (almost two decades), I make it a point to not waste people’s time. I know how valuable your time is! Thank you for sharing some of it with me.

Which leads me to my next point. Over the years, I've read a lot of books filled with lots of fluff. This is not one of those books. None of my aspirations include writing a book that's long and drawn-out. I do, however, want to write a book that's applicable, life-changing, and—most importantly—inspiring. I see no reason why I can't do that in as few pages as possible. And if I can save some trees while I'm at it, why not, right!? (If you're reading a digital copy, ignore that last sentence. If this is *not* a digital copy, you can ignore *that* last sentence.)

On to my next point. This may come off as being a bit trite, but I don't mean to be. The point is this: it's no accident you were born. (I don't care what your parents say 😊 . . .) It's no accident you picked up this book and are reading these very words at this very moment in time. And it will be no accident that once you begin developing the abilities and implementing the principles planted within these pages, you will immediately begin making the most out of more of your moments. In short, your moments will become more meaningful!

I know you have past pains, present problems, and countless concerns about the future. Who doesn't? It's healthy to acknowledge that. In fact, it would be *unhealthy* not to. But we're not going to spend a ton of time focusing on those things. This book is about building a bigger, better life for yourself. It's about tapping into your full potential and having the time of your life in the process. It's about inspiring yourself to be an inspiration to others.

Before embarking on any journey, it always helps to have a game plan and to be prepared for things to come, even if that means being prepared to be surprised. So, what can you expect from reading this book?

You may experience radical life alternations and tectonic-sized paradigm shifts as I introduce you to concepts that will change the current trajectory of your so-called destiny. Did I go too far? Is my aim a smidgen too lofty? Oops . . . Sorry about that. I was just shooting for the right mix of enticement and intrigue to get you to read the next 200 or so pages. It's hard to contain how excited I am about the things we're going to cover—that is, *uncover* and *discover*—in the coming chapters. I'm going to challenge your thinking. I'm going to challenge you

to question what you think you know to be true. I'm going to ask questions you may have never been asked. All the while, I'm going to be as authentic as possible and ask you to do the same. There's no need to hide behind smokescreens here! Vulnerability can be a beautiful thing.

Together, we're going to cultivate and create an enhanced life for you, a life that's not only filled with but is overflowing with success. That in turn will lead to you helping others succeed.

Warning: While I normally limit my vocabulary to pre-existing words, I find it somewhat restricting. The result is that I occasionally have to take some literary liberties and make up words of my own. New words have to start somewhere, right?

Without further ado, allow me to introduce to you The 7 Key Abilities:

1. **THANKABILITY:** Tapping into the profound power of continuous gratitude
2. **THINKABILITY:** Becoming the master of your mind
3. **LINKABILITY:** Digging deeper relationships and creating long-lasting, life-giving links
4. **BLOCKABILITY:** Making room for what matters by removing what doesn't
5. **BREATHABILITY:** Unmarginalizing your life . . . with margins
6. **GROWABILITY:** Becoming skilled at acquiring new skills
7. **SHOWABILITY:** Showing up and holding yourself accountable to maximizing your potential

Rather than creating 7 separate books, I've distilled each ability into several rich, manageable, fluff-free, bite-sized portions. While each ability has the strength to stand alone and quickly propel you forward, like building blocks, when these abilities are combined and

stacked together, they allow you to reach even higher heights—the highest, in fact. When you employ all of these abilities, you will have all of the necessary tools and ingredients to succeed 7 days a week.

DISCLAIMER #1

Be forewarned: there is a high probability you will take offense to some of the things I have to say. That's great! I'm glad. Read on regardless! If you don't agree, feel free to move on to the next section, but don't allow one simple disagreement to cause you to disregard all of the other sections. Whether or not you believe in God, a higher power, or whatever you want to call it, let's agree to pass on passing judgment. We're simply not going to see eye-to-eye on everything, nor should we expect to. No healthy relationship does. I encourage you to follow the sentiment of this famous quote by Richard Branson: "Take the best, leave the rest." If by the end of this book you're not satisfied it was well worth your time, I will never ask you to read anything else I've written ever again. Sound fair?

DISCLAIMER #2

There are three more disclaimers.

DISCLAIMER #3

There is a ton of research out there related to success. While I'm grateful for such research and its many interesting findings, I'm not interested in tediously dissecting studies, arduously formulating hypotheses, or writing a mind-numbing dissertation. Not this guy. This is meant to be a fun, easy, yet still meaty read! While some ideas I'll be sharing will hopefully blow your mind and be new to you, others may just be a refreshing review. Either way, I intend to shine a brighter light on how to have a life that is itself shinningly bright.

DISCLAIMER #4

There's only one more disclaimer.

DISCLAIMER #5

I may not have an exhaustingly long list of credentials; I may not have authored several best-selling books (yet). But since when are credentials required to help others? I remember reading about Zig Ziglar, who—before inspiring millions—had a flash of brilliance and wrote his famous *See You at the Top* in just a matter of days. Overly qualified at the time he was not, and yet that book went on to change countless readers' lives. I'm not so bold as to say my book will do the same . . . I'm just bold enough to say this book can change *your* life.

Before you turn the page, if anyone ever tells you their book is a real page-turner, they are lying—your hand is the *real* page-turner. Let's hope this book inspires your hand to turn each page until you've reached the very last one. Shall we begin?

PART 1

THANKABILITY:

TAPPING INTO THE PROFOUND POWER OF CONTINUOUS GRATITUDE

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.”

—MELODY BEATTIE





WHAT IS GRATITUDE?

RAGING RIVERS OF LIFE

Once upon a time, three young men were walking through the wilderness, when all of a sudden they came upon a huge, violent raging river. They knew there was no way they could get across on their own.

The first young man got on his knees and prayed, “God, give me the strength to make it across.” POOF! Suddenly the young man had huge arms and strong legs, enabling him to swim across that river in just 2 hours.

The second young man got on his knees and prayed, “God, give me the strength and the tools to make it across.” POOF! From out of nowhere, a small boat appeared. He used it to row across the river in just 30 minutes.

The third young man got on his knees and prayed, “God, give me the strength, the tools, and the intelligence to make it across.” POOF! God turned him into a woman. [Insert sound of ladies laughing hysterically and guys groaning here.] She reaches into her backpack, pulls out a map, hikes 5 minutes upstream, and crosses over the bridge.

Unsurprisingly, women find that joke a whole lot funnier than men do.

I share this story because—aside from the humor it holds—a powerful truth is hidden within. When we come upon a violent raging river in life, what’s our natural response? Either we avoid it by turning back, or we try to cross it on our own without asking for anyone’s help, let alone God’s. None of those young men would have made it across had they not asked for God’s help. Had they tried, they likely would have

drowned, which would have been a tragedy, because God had already provided a bridge for them. They just were not aware of it at the time.

There's a good chance you are currently facing a few violent raging rivers of your own. I have some good news! Whether you're dealing with a situation with no foreseeable solution or asking a question with an ever-elusive answer, you don't have to go it alone. Whether you believe in God or not, whether you can see a bridge right now or not, a bridge has been provided for you, too. Let's see if we can find it *together*.

Key Ability #1

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The first ability you need to succeed 7 days a week is Thankability: the ability to tap into the profound power of continuous gratitude.

I wasn't always a grateful person—in fact, my first memory of feeling truly grateful wasn't until I was 15! That was when my two brothers and I could no longer live with our parents. My dad had to choose between us and his drug addictions, and he chose his drug addictions; my mom had to choose between us and her boyfriend, and she chose her boyfriend. My grandparents, however, welcomed us into their home with open arms. I remember feeling so grateful, because I knew they didn't have to let us live with them, but they did anyway. They chose us, and, for the first time, I chose gratitude.

Quick question: What is gratitude?

It's not a class in school (although I think it should be), and it's not just a matter of saying thank you. Have you ever heard someone say "Thank you!" followed by a big sarcastic grin? Sure, you have. We've all done that at one point or another. This comes from not understanding the meaning of gratitude.

We are all taught to *say* thank you, but few of us are taught to *be* thankful. As a kid, you know how it goes—you want something, and your parent says, "How do you *ask*?"

"Please."

"Very good. Here you go. Now what do you *say*?"

"Thank you."

“Very good. Now run along and make sure that gum stays in your mouth and not your hair this time. I do not want to have to shave your head again.”

Simply *saying* thank you is nothing more than a learned response we mindlessly parrot to appease our parental units and seem polite—half the time, you are probably not even thinking about what you are saying. But if you don’t *mean* what you’re saying, it means nothing and it does you no good.

Too often, gratitude is mistaken for thanksgiving, but gratitude is much more than thanksgiving. Giving thanks is an action. Gratitude is an attitude. Gratitude is a way of thinking. Gratitude is thinking thankful thoughts.

I once wrote this excerpt:

*“It may not seem as though, but you control what’s on your mind.
The kinds of thoughts you think lead to the attitude you find.”*

While giving thanks is good, we must never stop there, because our goal goes beyond giving thanks. Our goal is *being* thankful. Our goal is regularly thinking and being filled with thankful thoughts.

Of the many ways gratitude can be described and defined, I like to compare it to an onion: as you open it up and breathe it in, it can bring you to tears. And like an onion, gratitude has many layers. Peel them away, and you discover the heart of gratitude, which alone has the power to reconcile the past and the future with the present. Ready yourself—this concept is huge! At its very core, gratitude appreciates what has been given, thankfully receives what is to come, and embraces the present, recognizing and celebrating everyone’s God-given value (especially your own), which is of infinite and unsurpassable worth.

I will further unpack gratitude’s core in the coming pages, but for now, keep that in mind as I introduce you to what I refer to as transformational truths.

Transformational Truth #1: Each moment, you have an opportunity to respond in one of two ways: with gratitude or without gratitude.

This simple piece of knowledge has forever changed my life, so it bears repeating. Each moment you have an opportunity to respond *with* or *without* gratitude. It's up to you. And because it's up to you, we come to transformational truth #2.

Transformational Truth #2: Gratitude is a choice.

You may be thinking, *Well, if that's true—if gratitude really is a choice—why don't more people respond with gratitude?* That's a fantastic question. I wholeheartedly believe the answer is that people don't respond with gratitude because they don't know they can. They were never taught that they could or how and why they should. It is a skill most people have yet to learn. Let's be honest—gratitude is not often seen, and because we all learn by example, we don't have many examples to rely upon. But even so, not having those examples of gratitude does not mean it is not an option. It is always an option! A readily available, viable option. Since it's a way of thinking, gratitude is not dependent on outside conditions. *Gratitude is available to anyone at any place at any time!*

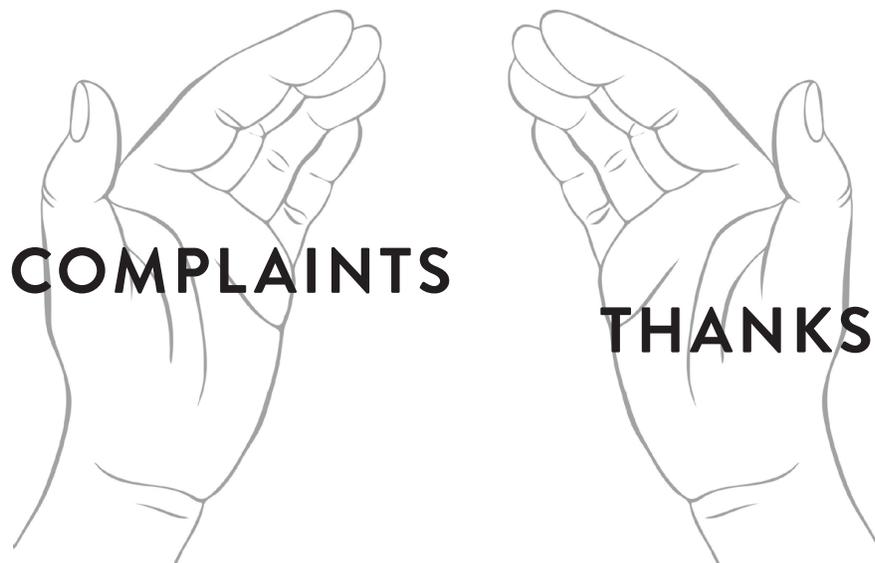
I just have to say it again: gratitude is a choice. It's not a one-time event, it's an ongoing process. It's a way of life.

A Handy Exercise

My friend Hal Elrod is the perfect example of gratitude being a choice. Years ago, after being hit head-on by a drunk driver, he was pronounced dead at the scene. Luckily, though, that was not the end of his story. With the help of paramedics, he was revived

and miraculously survived. After coming out of a six-day coma and months of rehabilitation, not sure that he would ever walk again, Hal had a decision to make. Given his situation, bitterness and self-pity looked pretty tempting. He could have easily chosen either. But he didn't—he chose gratitude. Consequently, the doctors said it was his attitude of gratitude that led to his speedy recovery. Since then, Hal has become a best-selling author, highly-sought-after speaker, and an utter inspiration.

For an entire year, I had the honor and privilege of calling Hal my accountability coach. During one of our sessions, he introduced me a mind-altering exercise—when I completed it, a paradigm shifted for me that day. Hal asked me to do what I'm now going to ask you to do. Will you please stick out your hands and look at your palms? Now imagine there's a list on each hand.



The list on the left hand is everything you could complain about. Go ahead and brainstorm some items that could go on that list. The complaints can be major or miniscule; it doesn't matter. It should look something like this:

1. It is too hot outside.
2. It is too cold outside.

3. I don't have enough money in my bank account.
4. So-and-so is impossible to get along with.
5. I can't find my lucky pair of underwear.

The list on the right hand is everything you could be thankful for. Take a moment to brainstorm some thoughts for that list.

1. I have a family who loves me.
2. I have clean water to drink.
3. I have food to eat.
4. I have shelter over my head.
5. I have more than one pair of underwear.

Were you able to visualize the two lists? Great. You can put your hands down now. If you had enough time on your hands (pun intended), you would find that each of those lists has the potential to be endless.

Here's the takeaway: Hal told me that—at any given moment—I have a choice. I can focus on things to complain about . . . or I can focus on things to be grateful for. I can look at the list on my left hand . . . or I can look at the list on my right hand. It's completely up to me. And it's completely up to you! You, too, get to choose which hand you focus on.

Which hand do you focus on the most?

Next time you feel like possibly complaining, remember this handy exercise and ask yourself, *Which hand am I focusing on?*

Gratitude is a choice, the ultimate response to life. When you begin choosing gratitude, you begin making the most out of your moments, because gratitude makes each moment more meaningful. Those are the moments you look back on and think: *Yes, life is worth living!*

To choose gratitude, it helps to know why you would want to.



WHY CHOOSE GRATITUDE?

Why choose gratitude? That is a valid question. However, a better question to start with is this: Why *not* choose gratitude?

Point-blank, why don't you choose gratitude? Because you have chosen something else. It's as simple as that. Whether done intentionally or not, if you don't choose gratitude, you've chosen something else. While "something else" can be anything that gratitude *isn't*, the three most common "something elses" are Discontent, Entitlement, and Fear.

Those three culprits make sense considering the media these days. The nightly news spoon-feeds us fear, while advertisers seem to say that we deserve the world and that nothing we have is good enough. Talk about an unhealthy helping of entitlement and discontent! And we eat it up.

With that in mind, let me ask the question again: Why choose gratitude? I'll give you four reasons: 1) to dissolve discontent, 2) to extinguish entitlement, 3) to furnish freedom from fear, and 4) to improve your overall well-being, which in turn will improve every area of your life!

Dissolving Discontent (Curbing Complaining)

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"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain."

—MAYA ANGELOU

Let's define discontent. Simply put, it's lacking contentment. What's contentment? Only the merging of two of the most beautiful things in existence: peace and joy! In other words, discontent is devoid of peace and joy. This results in complaining.

In his book *A Complaint Free World*, Will Bowen describes a complaint as “talking about things you do not want rather than what you do want. It’s a complaint if you want the person or situation changed. Directing a comment to someone who can improve your situation is not complaining. Berating others or lamenting your circumstances is.”

At the risk of sounding like a hypocrite, for just a moment, I’m going to complain about complaining. Complaining sucks. The more you complain, the less happy you become. Some may say, “Well, the reason I complain is because I’m unhappy. If I weren’t so unhappy, I wouldn’t complain as much.”

I want to challenge that line of thinking. In reality, the real reason you are unhappy might just be that you are ungrateful. Here’s what I mean: some people spend so much time complaining that they don’t have time to be grateful—instead, they wind up manifesting unhappiness and discontent. On the flip side, when you fill your life with thankful thoughts, you don’t have time to complain.

This is not to say you should never complain, but do so sparingly. *Never express dissatisfaction without offering some sort of solution.* For example, rather than just saying “This sucks!” say “I wish there were a way to [fill in the blank].”

To dissolve discontent, start to cultivate contentment. Curb complaining by growing in gratitude. Focus less on what you don’t want and more on what you do want. As you shift your mindset, peace and joy will surround you.

Extinguishing Entitlement

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You are formally invited to a life-changing event! A shift, if you will. A shift in what? Your way of thinking. Your depth of perception. Your overall attitude.

Extra! Extra! Read all about it! *It’s all extra.*

Do you wonder what it would feel like to win the lottery? It might not feel like it, but you already have! If you can afford to live on more than \$10 a day, you’re already among the top 20% of the wealthiest people alive.

Enter entitlement. When we're unable to appreciate *anything*, we take *everything* for granted. That's entitlement. But the truth is, no one is entitled to anything . . . yet entitlement is becoming an epidemic. It's spreading like wildfire. More and more people believe things should almost always go their way and that somehow a good life is *owed* to them.

This way of thinking is not only crazy, it is destined to disappoint. It sets you up to be upset. Entitled thinking needs to be extinguished! Things are not always going to go your way, nor should they. Life doesn't *owe* anyone anything. No one is guaranteed tomorrow. In fact, no one is even guaranteed the rest of today. You didn't do anything to *deserve* life, to be alive. And yet, here you are. Life has been given to you as a gift! Any experience is *extra*.

To extinguish entitlement, **begin seeing every enjoyment as an extra unexpected gift**, a welcome surprise, a breathtaking bonus. Acknowledge that you are entitled to nothing and that it's all extra. With an It's-All-Extra attitude, your seemingly ordinary life soon becomes *extra-ordinary* . . . that is, extraordinary!

I am inviting you to shift from an attitude of entitlement to an attitude of gratitude, from expecting to accepting. Instead of *expecting* things to go your way and getting upset when they don't, begin *accepting* things as they come and giving thanks as often as you can.

To extinguish entitlement, begin seeing every enjoyment as an extra unexpected gift, a welcome surprise, a breathtaking bonus.

Furnishing Freedom from Fear

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From time to time, we are all foolishly fooled into choosing fear over freedom. But imagine for a moment if fear and anxiety were no longer

an issue for you. Think of all that you could do! Fortunately, *once you understand fear, you have nothing to be afraid of.*

Let's get clear on fear. While it's instinctual, it's also learned. Regardless, most fear falls under the category of perceived threats. The pivotal word here is "perceived." Our ancestors had good reason to fight off an attacking animal, flee from a hangry hippo, or freeze when hearing the sound of a snake's rattle. Long ago, those were legitimate threats. If our "fight-or-flight" survival mechanism didn't kick in, we were at serious risk of death. But these days—unless you are living in the wild—that is just no longer the case. Most things we fear are nowhere near life-threatening. We simply *perceive* them to be.

CRASH COURSE ON FEAR

"Jeffrey, STOP!" my mom shouted as I pushed the pedal even harder. That was followed by "I can't believe you did that!"

I was 13 years old when my mom gave me permission to drive us to the local bank just up the road. After getting us there in one piece, all seemed well in the world . . . until it was time to leave. While backing out, instead of slamming on the brake, I panicked and accidentally slammed on the gas! The poor car waiting for our spot in the parking lot never had a chance. *SMASH!* My first crash.

I couldn't believe it. My mom couldn't believe it. The guy I rammed into couldn't believe it. It was unbelievable.

"What the hell was that!" the man said as he attempted to assess the damage. "This isn't even my car! It's my father-in-law's car. He's going to kill me. I was finally earning his trust!" His voice began to fade as he was overtaken with concern. I felt horrible.

Thoughts sped through my mind as my heart nearly exploded from my chest. *There goes my chance at a normal life. It's all over now. Handcuffs. Prison. That's all that's left for me. I've gotta get out of here!*

My flight response kicked in, and I ran into the nearby grocery store to hide. After what seemed like an eternity (which in reality was however long it took for them to exchange insurance information), my mom came to get me. Somehow, she had convinced the distraught

driver she had been the one driving. Things didn't turn out nearly as bad as I had thought they would.

The point is this: our minds are continuously playing out worst-case scenarios almost all day long. We've become experts at it. And even though reality rarely reflects those worst-case scenarios, our imaginations often cook up nightmarish meals that are almost impossible to digest. What's the worst part about all of this? Our insides can't tell the difference between imagination and reality, so it's as if we really *are* experiencing that nightmare over and over again. The same thing happens when we replay a bad memory: our brain tells our body it's actually happening. (As if it's not bad enough that it actually *did* happen to us once . . .) No wonder we are so anxious.

But watch what happens when we shift our focus!

THUMBS-UP FOR FOCUS

What do you know about focus? For the next minute, remove all of your distractions and just focus on this exercise on focus.

Look around the room and pick an object to focus on that is at least 10 feet away. Got it?

1. Now, with your thumb up, stick out your fist and point it directly at that object so it almost disappears behind your thumb.
2. Next, without moving your hand, focus on your thumb for a few seconds. Watch how everything behind it begins to blur.
3. Now keep your thumb there, but focus on the object for a few seconds. Watch how your thumb begins to blur.
4. Lastly, try as hard as you can to focus on your thumb and the object at the same time.

How did it go? Did you notice anything interesting? The point of this exercise is twofold.

1. You cannot focus on more than one thing at a time.
2. When you focus on one thing, everything else becomes a blur.

Guess what? Gratitude and fear are mutually exclusive. You cannot experience fear and gratitude at the same time. If you are filled with worry, full of anxiety, or focused on fear, gratitude is literally out of the picture; when you are focused on fear, you cannot focus on gratitude. But now for the good news: this works both ways. If you focus on gratitude, you cannot focus on fear! Which leads to one of gratitude's greatest benefits, namely that when you choose gratitude, you experience freedom from fear.

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Transformational Truth #3: When you choose gratitude, you experience freedom from fear!

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“When you are grateful, fear disappears and abundance appears.”

—TONY ROBBINS

Choosing gratitude furnishes freedom from fear! In addition to science, Scripture even backs this up. This is my paraphrase of Philippians 4:6-7: Do not be anxious about anything, but pray about everything—**with gratitude**—and you will experience God's unfathomable peace.

(Side note: Did you know that anxiety and excitement manifest identically? In other words, your body can't tell the difference between the two. However, if you're like me, you much prefer excitement over nervousness. With this in mind, the next time you're feeling nervous, simply replace the words “anxious” or “nervous” with “excited.” Rather than think *Boy, oh boy, am I nervous!* think *Boy, oh boy, am I excited!* The change is subtle, but the resulting difference is not.)

Allow fear to fade out of focus. As you grow in gratitude and choose it more and more, you experience fear less and less. With gratitude in your future, fear becomes a thing of the past.

Improving Overall Well-Being

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While it's true that it has the power to extinguish entitlement, dissolve discontent, and furnish freedom from fear, the mere act of choosing gratitude goes well beyond that.

Roughly 2,100 years ahead of his time, the Roman philosopher Cicero proclaimed, "Gratitude is not only the greatest of the virtues, but the parent of all others." What he meant is that by choosing gratitude, you give birth to all the other virtues in your life: as you grow in gratitude, you grow in love, patience, kindness, joy, etc. A pretty hefty claim, sure, but science is beginning to prove how true that claim is. Multiple studies have established multiple links between gratitude and well-being, confirming that gratitude plays a major role in—to name a few outcomes—overcoming trauma, improving one's self-esteem, reducing depression, and increasing happiness.

As one of the world's leading experts on the topic, Robert A. Emmons, PhD, shows how almost every aspect of a person's well-being improves with gratitude, including relationships. To support that claim, in *The Trust Edge*, David Horshager writes that "Gratitude is the most attractive trait a person can have!" When transferred from one relationship to another, the benefits of gratitude are seemingly endless. Don't believe me? Google "studies on gratitude" and see for yourself.

Warning: What you are about to read may come across as comical (as it should) but to ensure that I am not held legally liable for any accidental overconsumption of gratitude, you should know I do not practice medicine, nor am I a licensed physician.

Now, imagine stumbling upon a late-night infomercial that goes a little something like this:

"Would you like to get a better night's sleep? Would you like to make more friends? Would you like to live longer, be healthier . . . heck, be happier? Have we got the solution for you: gratitude! Simply choose it in the morning, choose it throughout the day, and choose it before

going to bed. After a few months, you'll wonder how you ever lived without it! And if you call right now, we'll even throw in a free sense of freedom from fear! Simply contact your doctor and see if gratitude is right for you. What are you waiting for? Don't delay; call today!"

The ad's disclaimer states "Side effects may include: smile-mouth, joyful tears, increased elation, peace of mind, an overwhelming sense of meaning and purpose, decreased levels of anxiety, fewer mood swings, a sudden surge in friendships, sleeping better, living longer, and a new outlook on life."

Now compare the side effects of the newest drugs pharmaceutical companies are trying to push down your throat: dry mouth, itchy eyes, sleepwalking, painful constipation, blood clots, thoughts of suicide, and—oh yeah—explosive diarrhea.

Because people in today's society are overworked, unappreciated, undernourished, and sleep-deprived, it is no wonder we are willing to risk our lives in order to feel better! Simply put, society is overmedicated.

That said, it's important to point out that some people really do need medical attention to treat serious chemical imbalances. However, for the majority of people for whom that is not the case, gratitude is the healthier choice. I would go so far as to say that with the exception of love, gratitude is the foundation of all good things. As Cicero explained, as you grow in gratitude, you grow in everything that is good. That's reason enough for me to choose gratitude. How about you?

Whatever you choose to pursue, let gratitude be your guide and the constant companion who never leaves your side. When you fill your life with gratitude, there's no room for discontent, entitlement, or fear. When you fill your life with thanksgiving, you don't have time to complain, be angry, or be afraid. When you fill your life with thanksgiving, life becomes far more fulfilling.