

The Gratitude Project: Gratitude in the Face of Adversity

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We decided to change the order of the articles we had set up as this topic seemed rather timely.

“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

Why are negative experiences so memorable? Simply put, negative experiences help us to learn faster, which can be traced back to our ancestor’s survival instincts. However, focusing on the negative causes us to lose sight of the good.

In the wake of COVID-19, it can be especially difficult to find the light at the end of the tunnel, even with the recent easing of the stay-at-home orders. People are experiencing hardship on multiple levels; they are losing their life savings, livelihoods, and even loved ones. Even in the midst of this suffering, it is still possible to find reason to rejoice – you just might have to search a little for it.

Here are a few good things to result from the pandemic:

1. **Community Spirit:** More than ever before, people are joining together in a display of solidarity against the virus and in support of medical professionals worldwide.
2. **Declining Pollution:** Air quality in both India and China have significantly improved. In Venice, Italy the canals are running clear.
3. **Elder Support:** Supermarkets are banding together to allow designated shopping times for one of the most vulnerable demographics: the elderly.
4. **Interpersonal Connection:** People are finding creative ways to interact with one another, from hangouts via video chat, to communal balcony singing, to dates hosted from a distance.

As we make it through the coming weeks, take time to reflect on your experiences, good and bad. Process your negative experiences constructively, take time to understand them while focusing on the positives.

Homework: Challenge yourself to take a minute a focus on positive experiences following a negative one.