



**28-Day Gratitude Challenge
for Communities & Congregations**



Week 1, Day 1: Through Their Eyes

You will need: a vessel to collect suggestions (basket, bucket, etc.), notebook paper torn or cut into individual pieces of paper, writing utensils.

Distribute the paper and writing utensils to each member of your community. For larger communities, you may wish to have the materials distributed ahead of time.

Instruct each member to secretly select another member of the community without letting that person know. Don't say the name, so it is private. With that person in mind, consider what they might truly need or feel. Expand beyond monetary objects and large purchases to explore simple, experiential gifts, such as friendship, comfort, a good meal. Consider true needs of those where appropriate – a warm coat, toys for children, help with yardwork. Consider needs one might be embarrassed to admit – help with reading, tutoring a child who struggles.

When we think beyond the material and glittery purchases to truly consider how we might benefit the life and happiness of this person we have chosen, what could we provide them THIS WEEK? Write down specific gifts that we can actually provide within the next 7 days. This might be time, information, company, or perhaps a thing of simple value that is possible for us.

When complete, fold and place the paper into the collection vessel. Pass the collection vessel up to you.

These are our promises! We are going to ask of ourselves to deliver the very items we described to the very person we selected! This gift can be anonymous, if we so desire.

It is important to understand – even if we haven't been selected by anyone in this exercise, the collective "Self" has, and will benefit every member throughout the next 4 weeks.

For the next week, our individual tasks are to complete to the best of our ability the items we wrote down for the person we secretly selected. And, if this is impossible, to adjust as necessary. All members will be sharing their experiences of what it meant to give, and what it meant to receive in the next meeting!

In the space below, describe how you interpreted and carried out the exercise. Include as many details as you are able.

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Successes

How did your community respond to this exercise? Were there any funny or endearing moments you'd like to share?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Challenges

Were there any difficulties with this exercise? We'd love to hear what you struggled with, and your thoughts on any causes, and how you adjusted (or perhaps didn't)?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

When you are complete with notes, click "Save and Continue" link below. This will generate an email link so you can return next time for Week 2, Day 8!

[Buttons: PREV, NEXT, SAVE & CONTINUE LATER]

Week 2, Day 8: Community Gratitude Wall

Congratulations on making it through the first week. Have the community share their experiences! How was it to provide the needs? What were some of the challenges or surprises? How was it to receive the generosity? There may have been moments of difficulty or surprise in this exercise, and these can be tremendous openings for valuable conversation and connection.

This week will be about giving thanks.

You will need: Space on a wall or surface to post thank you notes from the community, note paper, writing utensils, tape (preferably the kind that won't stick to walls... You may also use sticky notes, tacks, or create a large piece of cardboard that can be taped).

Considering "the community as one body," have each member of the community write a thank you note to the entire collective community. Keep these letters anonymous. We suggest not naming individual names, and not signing names, to inspire a sense of community "one-ness." What about the community are you grateful for?

This might be for the last week's exercise, but it is not limited to this if you feel gratitude for other things as well. You may not want to limit the number of thank you notes, either... Encouraging an overflow of gratitude thank you's!

Collect and post the thank you notes in a public area for all to enjoy and celebrate! Now that you have this collection of thank you notes upon the wall, you might even want to turn it into art! Frame it or take a picture of it, if inspired!

In the space below, describe how you interpreted and carried out this week's exercise. Include as many details as you are able.

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Successes

Were there any funny or endearing moments you'd like to share?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Challenges

Were there any difficulties with this first week? Any disruptions, or other interference? We'd love to hear what you struggled with, and your thoughts on any causes, and how you adjusted (or perhaps didn't)?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Nice work! Anything else you'd like to share?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

When you are complete with notes, click "Save and Continue" link below. This will generate an email link so you can return next time for Week 3, Day 15!

[Buttons: PREV, NEXT, SAVE & CONTINUE LATER]

Week 3, Day 15: The Glow of Gratitude

This week we turn our gratitude beyond our own community. Today we'll connect gratitude to faith – in whatever way we express our faith. In week one, we performed generous acts for those among us in need. In week two, we expressed thanks and acknowledgement for our community. Today, we will dedicate our collective gratitude to a larger entity. Faith is defined simply as “strong belief or trust in someone or something.” Today, we ask to consider this faith be expanded beyond the community to something greater.

For this exercise, you will need: enough candles for each member to have one, candle holders, one lighter.

You may wish to distribute the candles in advance so that each member has one, with candle holder attached.

Light your candle first with the lighter. Say to that which you faith in, “Thank You for taking care of this community. I especially thank You for ____” as you use your candle to light the person’s candle next to yours. This person will then turn to his or her neighbor, lighting their candle as he says out loud, “Thank You for taking care of this community. I especially thank You for _____”, and so on until all candles are lit.

Have a moment of collective silence as a community, with all candles lit, to give thanks to that which you have faith in, for the gift of your community. Let the room fill with gratitude.

In the space below, describe how you carried out this exercise. Include as many details as you are able.

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Successes

Share the successes of the week. Were there any funny or endearing moments you'd like to share?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Challenges

Were there any difficulties with this exercise? We'd love to hear what you struggled with, and your thoughts on any causes, and how you adjusted (or perhaps didn't)?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Anything else you'd like to share?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

When you are complete with notes, click "Save and Continue" link below. This will generate an email link so you can return next time for Week 4, Day 22!

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Week 4, Day 22: Secret Agents of Gratitude

For the last week, we will act as a community of secret agents, each given the mission to look for opportunities of secret anonymous acts of kindness. Pay the toll for the car behind you, buy coffee for someone, rake a neighbor's lawn (hard to do anonymously!), deliver someone's mail, place a flower on a co-worker's desk... And, every time we find the chance to do something nice for others anonymously, take a moment to give thanks to the community and to that which you have faith in, which holds the community in your heart.

As "Secret Agents of Gratitude" we want to see how many acts of gratitude we can perform without anyone knowing! We will have the opportunity to share our fun stories the following week!

In the space below, describe how you interpreted and carried out this week's exercise. Include as many details as you are able.

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Successes

Were there any funny or endearing moments you'd like to share?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Challenges

We'd love to hear what you struggled with, and your thoughts on any causes, and how you adjusted (or perhaps didn't)?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Anything else you'd like to share?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

When you are complete with notes, click "Save and Continue" link below. This will generate an email link so you can return next time for the last day, Day 28!

[Buttons: PREV, NEXT, SAVE & CONTINUE LATER]

Day 5: Gratitude Celebration!

Congratulations. You've made it to Day 28! Today is about celebrating the completion of the challenge (or perhaps it is only the beginning)...

Share the stories of Secret Agents of Gratitude from the past week (and for the entire challenge), and share the personal testimonies of gratitude. Perhaps you arrange for today to be a potluck feast, or a quiet gathering... whatever feels like letting the joy of what you have completed in.

Once you have shared with one another, share with us below!

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Successes

Did you perceive any difference in attitude or demeanor, or any positive way in which your community related to you or one another that struck you as related to this exercise? Were there any funny or endearing moments you'd like to share?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Challenges

Were there any difficulties with this exercise? Any disruptions, or other interference? We'd love to hear what you struggled with, and your thoughts on any causes, and how you adjusted (or perhaps didn't)?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

Any final notes you'd like to share?

[SPACE TO ENTER TEXT]

When you are complete with your answers, click "Submit" and accept your Certificate of Completion!

[Buttons: PREV, SUBMIT, SAVE & CONTINUE LATER]