

## Gratitude

*“It is not happiness that makes us grateful. It's gratefulness that makes us happy.” –Brother David Steindl-Rast*

We love Robert Emmons' wonderful article, "[How Gratitude Can Help You through Hard Times](#)." His ideas dovetail so perfectly with the goals of the Resilience Project that we can't help bringing it to you once again. Dr. Emmons describes scientific findings indicating that **grateful people are more resilient to stress, whether from life's minor hassles or from traumatic life events**. We may even come to a better appreciation of the present *because* of those hard times. **Grateful coping entails looking for the positive consequences of negative events**: recognizing how a stressful event has shaped who we are today or how it has prompted us to reevaluate what is really important to us. It is unrealistic to deny life's disappointments, frustrations and losses, and positive thinking doesn't change the fact of our suffering. To help reframe past unpleasant experiences through a lens of gratitude, ask yourself the following questions:

- What lessons did the experience teach me?
- Can I find ways to be thankful for what happened to me even though I wasn't at the time?
- What ability did the experience draw out of me that surprised me?
- How am I now more the person I want to be because of it?

Processing life experiences through a grateful lens doesn't deny the suffering, but it involves realizing the power you have to transform an obstacle into an opportunity. *That's resilience.*

- We also want to share with you Jeremy Adam Smith's article, "Six Habits of Highly Grateful People," which offers practical steps for cultivating gratitude. Our favorites, in a nutshell:
- If you're taking someone or something good for granted... imagine what life would be like without them.
- Gratitude is the opposite of entitlement. Smith quotes Dr. Emmons: "Seeing with grateful eyes requires that we see the web of interconnection between being givers and being receivers. The humble person says that life is a gift to be grateful for, not a right to be claimed."
- Grateful people are thankful for other people and are specific in their thanks (they mention the pancakes)
- The richest thank you's acknowledge intentions and costs, and they describe the value of benefits received (read the article for his vivid examples)

So many ways to be grateful... thank goodness it's a long weekend! Here are all the links:

\*[Robert Emmons](#)

\*[Jeremy Adam Smith](#)

\*[Dr. Brene Brown, researcher and author, University of Houston \(less than four minutes\)](#)

\*[Brother David Steindl-Rast, wise Benedictine monk and inter-faith scholar \(15 minutes\)](#)

[\\*Finally, please treat yourself to this beautiful video meditation on gratitude \(video montage by Louie Schwartzberg, narrated by David Steindl-Rast\)](#)

Happy Thanksgiving from the Staples Resilience Project. We are humbled and grateful to work with such a wonderful community of students, parents, and teachers.

*The Staples Resilience Project is an ongoing endeavor by the Staples Guidance Department aimed to promote the well-being of our students and foster a positive, inclusive school community.*

[shs.westportps.org/departments/guidance/staples-resilience-project](https://shs.westportps.org/departments/guidance/staples-resilience-project)