

Gratitude and Generosity – Yin and Yang

Gratitude and generosity have a symbiotic relationship and are mutually reinforcing – the Yin and Yang. Gratitude for one's own blessings inspires a desire to be generous towards others.

Gratitude, being grateful, is an internal attitude of thankfulness and appreciation (Yin – like breathing in). It acts as a catalyst for and fuels generosity.

Generosity is the external expression of that thankfulness (Yang – like breathing out) through giving to and serving others. It reinforces gratitude.

These two virtues are deeply interconnected, forming a positive feedback loop in which one feeds the other.

How they work together



When we recognise and appreciate the abundance in our own lives, whether material or otherwise, we are less likely to feel a sense of scarcity and more inclined to share our blessings with others.

This is a mindset shift from 'not enough' to 'more than enough' that naturally leads to a desire to give back.

Engaging in acts of generosity, in turn, deepens our sense of gratitude. Giving is purposeful and generates feelings of happiness.

Cultivating the virtues of gratitude and generosity shapes our neural pathways, creating a powerful interdependent loop of compassion, well-being, resilience and mutual connection.

Practising gratitude - Receptive

- Acknowledging and appreciating the good, 'what is not wrong',
- Being mindful and present, paying attention to the simple pleasures and gifts life has to offer,
- Finding contentment in what you have, and not comparing yourself with others, and
- Expressing thanks to others, verbally or in writing, for their care and kindness.

If the only prayer you said was 'thank you', that would be enough
Meister Eckart

Practising generosity - Active

- Being generous with your time and attention, listening deeply, giving support and encouragement, sharing information and resources,
- Giving freely without expecting anything in return, and
- Understanding that generosity does not require grand gestures, small, meaningful acts can create far-reaching ripple effects.

For it is in giving that we receive'
Saint Francis of Assisi

The Christmas season is a time to rejoice in and share what we have. A time to remember and reach out to and give to those less fortunate. Now is a time of joy, hope, and belief. But it's also a season of understanding, reconciliation, mercy, grace, and reflection—one that reminds us of compassion, connection, and the importance of reaching out with our shared humanity.