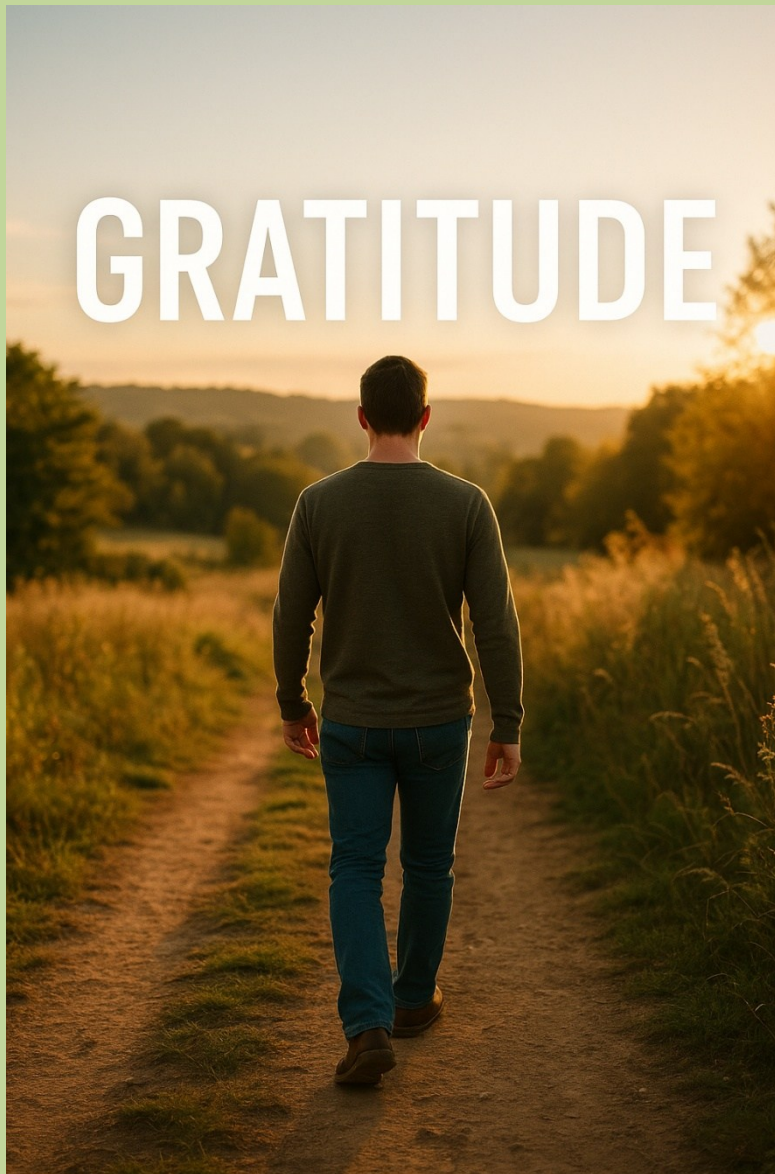


The Shape of Gratitude



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The Roots and Story of Gratitude

Gratitude is not merely a feeling. It is one of the oldest moral and spiritual postures found across human history. The very word carries a story that travels through languages, cultures, and centuries.

The English word gratitude comes from the Latin *gratia*, meaning grace freely given, a blessing that cannot be earned, a gift offered without expectation of repayment. *Gratia* gave rise to words like grace, graciousness, and gratitude, and it shaped Roman ideas of honor and virtue. In ancient Rome,



to express gratitude was not simply polite. It was a recognition that life itself was made of gifts we could never fully repay.

The Greek world used the word *charis*, a term meaning grace, beauty, kindness, and divine favor. *Charis* is the root of *charisma* and *Eucharist*, which means thanksgiving. The Greeks imagined the three *Charites*, or *Graces*, dancing in a circle, symbolizing the

continual movement of giving and receiving. For them, gratitude was not static. It was a rhythm, a dance of blessing and response.

The Hebrews spoke of gratitude through the word *todah*, a thanksgiving that is expressed outwardly, voiced openly, and offered to God as acknowledgment of His goodness. *Todah* was never silent or internal. It was a confession of praise that recognized God's hand in life's gifts.

Across these cultures, the meaning converges. Gratitude is always linked to grace. It always points beyond ourselves. It recognizes that something good has come to us that we did not create and could never earn. Gratitude is the soul's acknowledgment that life, at its deepest level, is a gift.

This is where our story begins. Before we talk about programs, models, leadership, or growth, we must begin with gratitude. Because everything that follows was given to us long before we built it. Gratitude is the foundation of all that we have become.

Our Beginning

When I look back to our earliest days and then look at where we stand now, I am struck by how clearly God's hand has guided this entire journey. After the fire and the loss and the tragedy, Brendan was the first to carry this idea in his heart. He wanted to create a treatment center that would allow him to give something back, to heal his own wounds through helping others heal theirs. From that desire he partnered with Tim, and the two of them founded Holdfast. Later, Tim had the wisdom and the courage and the vision to establish AnchorPoint.

As our mission expanded, Tim recognized something



essential. We needed leadership that could bridge the operational heartbeat with the clinical soul of what we were building. He saw the need for someone who could hold the weight of both sides of the house, and the Lord made that provision at the exact moment it was needed. That person was Seth, who stepped in with the operational clarity, steadiness, and leadership presence required to align the administrative backbone with the clinical vision of our work. Seth became that bridge, and he continues to carry that responsibility with strength and humility.

Growth Through Providence

We have had growing pains. We have had ups and downs, disagreements, frustrations, and seasons of stretching and refining. That is the cost of building something that matters. But through all of it, one truth has remained unwavering. God's providence has guided every step

And then He did what only He can do. He gave us a model. NeuroFaith® was not born out of ambition but out of obedience. A clinical framework that is scientifically sound, theologically grounded, polyvagal informed, trauma aware, and neurocardiologically coherent. A model that speaks to the whole human being: mind, brain, body, and spirit.



And in that formative process, God brought us Pastor Earl. His wisdom, his depth, his theological grounding, and his unwavering emphasis on the soul and spirit helped refine NeuroFaith® into what it is today. Pastor Earl remains a powerful voice in my heart and in the heart of this place, reminding us continually that healing is never just clinical. It is spiritual, relational, personal, and sacred.

NeuroFaith® is now carried, embodied, refined, and lived out daily by an extraordinary staff. Not to bring glory to any one person, but to acknowledge that God gave us a vision and then surrounded us with the people needed to carry it. Because of that, we have become, I believe, one of the most unique and deeply effective treatment centers for trauma and addiction

anywhere.

We should be proud. We should be humbled. And above all, we should be grateful for what God has placed in our hands.

Wearing Our Responsibility Well

My father used to say, "Wear your responsibility well." When I look around this room, I see men and women who do exactly that. To every one of you, staff, leadership, operations, clinical team, and support team, thank you. I am deeply grateful.

And we also recognize that none of us carry this responsibility alone. We are held up every day by the quiet strength of those who love us. Our spouses, our children, our families have sacrificially supported us and stood beside us through long hours, heavy days, and seasons when the work demanded more of us than we wished to give. They have graciously accepted the moments when they received a tired version of us, or a smaller portion of our time and energy, because they believed in the mission God placed in our hands. Their love, their patience, and their steady encouragement have been essential. Without them, we could not do this work. And so our gratitude extends to them in full measure.

If we speak scientifically for a moment, gratitude is not merely a feeling. It is a neurobiological event. A grateful heart engages the vagus nerve, stabilizes the cardiovascular system, increases heart and brain coherence, activates the medial prefrontal cortex, strengthens relational circuits, and shifts the nervous system from survival into connection. HeartMath describes this as the physiology of appreciation. NeuroFaith® understands it as the intersection of faith and neurology, where the state of the heart becomes the language of the brain.

Gratitude as Strength

Gratitude strengthens us. Gratitude grounds us. Gratitude becomes our anchor. And as we walk in gratitude, filled with grace, we begin to understand that gratitude is not something we manufacture. It is something given. It is a movement of God's own heart within ours.

Gratitude is not only for what has been. It is gratitude for what will be. Because God has placed meaning in us. He has placed purpose in us. He has entrusted us with work that matters, a mission that heals, and a calling that restores. These are blessed gifts. Priceless gifts. Gifts so many people never find, but by God's mercy, we have been given them.

"He who calls you is faithful, and He will surely do it. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." 1 Thessalonians 5:24

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Ephesians 2:10

These verses remind us that the future is not something we invent. It is something God has already prepared. Gratitude opens our eyes to that future. Gratitude steadies us as we walk toward it.

So, my colleagues, may our hearts remain soft, grounded, anchored, and full of grace. May we wear our responsibility well. May we carry this vision forward with courage, humility, and an enduring gratitude for the God who called us, for the work He gave us, and for the meaning and purpose He placed in our hands."