True abundance does exist; it flows from sufficiency, in an experience of the beauty and wholeness of what is. - Lynne Twist

Day 1: Let's kick-off this challenge with the introduction of a very special concept: "Sufficiency". A state of being that is in touch with all the resources, both inner and outer, that we each have in any given moment. Sufficiency doesn't mean living in denial or with an absence of aspiration. It just means that you are fully aware of what *is* in your life and that you are not blinded by the things you don’t have. Today, then, take some time to reflect on your places of sufficiency. List them down in your gratitude journal, or if you're feeling artsy, create a collage of words or a drawing that captures all that you have enough of. As we learn to be attentive to all that we have, we discover true abundance. For more inspiration read this beautiful passage by Lynne Twist on The Surprising Truth of Sufficiency.

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You can't live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you. -- John Wooden

**Day 2:** We receive countless tangible and intangible gifts from the world around us. Whether it’s from parents, teachers, colleagues, or a stranger on a bus, we often find ourselves recipients of gifts that cannot be paid back to the giver – but can only be paid-forward. Today, reflect upon someone from whom you have received, but who you cannot directly repay. Deepen the texture of your appreciation by describing your relationship or encounter with this person in writing. Then do something special today to honor the gifts you received from them. Perhaps, if possible, you will give them a call or write them a letter of thanks. Or perhaps you’ll simply do something kind for someone else who cannot repay you, and silently dedicate the gesture to s/he who touched your life in that same unconditional way. For inspiration, in this soulful short video Julio Olalla shares a story about a powerful encounter from his father’s life in the 1930’s that fundamentally shifted his understanding of gratitude.

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The hardest arithmetic to master is that which enables us to count our blessings. -- Eric Hoffer

**Day 3:** We human beings are remarkable creatures of habit. We quickly grow accustomed to the things in our lives, and though that can be a helpful trait, at times it renders us numb to our daily blessings. Every so often it can be incredibly powerful to look at your life from the outside, and to examine each facet of it that you ordinarily take for granted. The food you have access to in your fridge, senses of perception that enable you to read this email, little luxuries that surround you, and ordinary capabilities you don’t ordinarily think of, but that not everyone can claim. Take a few moments to reflect on the things you take for granted today. Write them down in a journal, in a list or a poem, or perhaps share them with a friend in conversation. When you look at your life, really *look* at it, you start to realize how nothing is really ordinary at all. And nothing in it can be taken for granted ... it’s all a gift. "Shelagh Was Here" is a deeply moving article about a woman who took nothing and no one for granted in her ordinary, magical life.

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An adventure is only an inconvenience rightly considered. -- GK Chesterton

**Day 4:** Living in times where instant gratification is fast becoming the norm, we run the risk of losing out on the gems of insight and experience that lie beneath the surface of seeming inconveniences. Today, take time to reflect on (and perhaps write about) something in your life that on the surface may seem like a tiresome chore or an unwelcome event, but that has yielded unanticipated richness. Things like long lines, broken dishwashers, traffic jams and no phone service can lead you into unexpected adventures, if you only take the time to rightly consider them. For inspiration here is a lovely passage by Margaret Wheatley that invites us to play along with *The Element of Surprise* in life, that often comes disguised as inconvenience.

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Gratitude is the memory of the heart. -- Jean Baptiste Massieu

**Day 5:** Our past is like a vast, unruly garden full of tangled vines, riotous blossoms and shade-giving trees. As you look back across your own unique garden of the past, what particular recollection do you find yourself returning to again and again with a grateful heart? Today, take a moment to cull a precious memory from your past and hold it up to the light. Reflect on what makes it so special for you. Share it with a friend or family member and ask them about their own most cherished memory as well. Research has shown that returning to cherished memories actually has positive benefits on our health. And while you’re at it, take time to cultivate a previous new memory today! For inspiration, Celtic mystic John O’Donohue reflects beautifully on how “Each new day is a path of wonder, a different invitation. Days are where our lives gradually become visible.”

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Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time. -- Thomas Merton

**Day 6:** We are surrounded by so many different forms of art. Music, theater, dance, poetry, painting ... these creative expressions are a gift. Art delights, informs and inspires us in profound ways. And each person responds to different mediums and artists uniquely. Today, take a moment to reflect on and write about the significant artist/s in your life and how they have served your journey. What do you appreciate most about their work? Remember, an artist doesn't have to be a well-known professional. Your favorite artist might be a janitor, a child, or even Nature. As the saying goes, "The artist is not a special kind of person; rather each person is a special kind of artist." For inspiration, here is the story of a phenomenal artist-couple who perfected the "Art of Giving" in their marriage: [A Special Kind of Grace](#).

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As we go, so goes the world, for the world is us. The revolution that will save the world is ultimately a personal one. - Marianne Williamson

**Day 7:** The journey of life is never a straight line. Sometimes it raises us to exalted heights and at others it plummets us to depths of despair. It brings us unforeseen challenges and surprises us with magnanimous gifts. Sometimes it plods along and other times it races with the wind. And as we go through this winding, ever-changing course -- we grow through it too. Over time life molds us in much the same slow and steady way that water and wind shape the land. Today, take time to reflect on how your life experiences, influences and interactions have transformed you for the better. Celebrate your own evolution by giving thanks for the different elements that contributed to your growth and consider what you have imbibed from each. For inspiration here is an article by our partners at YES! magazine on the [10 Things Science Says Will Make A Happier You](http://www.kindspring.org).

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"We are, largely, who we remember ourselves to be." -- Holly Black

Day 8: Wisdom comes to us in so many forms. It comes to us as parents and teachers, as friends whom we can lean on, and experiences that show us our own inner light. The real challenge lies in remembering the jeweled insights that life washes onto our shores. Too often we forget to recall the deep truths that we know about ourselves and our world. Today, take a moment to surface something you’ve learned about life that you wish to always be conscious of. Perhaps it’s a poignant truth, or a practical tip, perhaps it’s a funny saying or an unforgettable revelation. For inspiration here’s a story about a beautiful reminder that came from an unexpected source: Three Words of Wisdom

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"A compliment is verbal sunshine." - Robert Orben

**Day 9:** A heartfelt compliment can truly be a burst of sunshine through the clouds. When you look back on your life, what is a compliment that you remember giving or receiving that left a memorable impression on you? When we take time to reflect on the gift of a sincere compliment it inspires us to be more vocal about the beauty we witness in the world. As you walk through your day today try not to miss any opportunities to acknowledge the good that you see. For inspiration watch this short video about [The Compliment Guys](http://www.kindspring.org) of Purdue University.

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"The only thing to do with good advice is pass it on." - Oscar Wilde

Day 10: Advice can be difficult, bittersweet and hard to swallow sometimes. But it also can point us towards a bridge when the gulf we are trying to cross seems impossible. Today, take a moment to recollect a piece of advice you received that helped you through a dark or challenging time. Perhaps it’s a wry saying from a grade school teacher or a wise proverb from your grandmother. Perhaps it’s an insight that came to you from a stranger you will never see again, or something that was whispered to you by your own heart. For inspiration here are History's Finest Letters of Motherly Advice.

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"A man's errors are his portals of discovery." - James Joyce

**Day 12:** The old cliche about our failures and mistakes being stepping stones to "success" is true more often than we realize. When you look back at the series of left turns and right turns that brought you to this moment, no doubt there are some things you wish you had done differently. But today, take a moment to look a little deeper into the so-called errors you might have made along your journey, and how they are actually connected to some of the things you value most deeply about your life today. Even our most ungraceful steps, and our most foolish moves have their place in this dance of life. For inspiration read "21 Blessings In Disguise".

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“Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy.” Thich Nhat Hanh

**Day 11:** As we walk through our daily lives, reasons to smile follow us around like a cloud of bright butterflies. Often we are too busy or preoccupied to notice them. But today, make a conscious effort to tune into the little moments of joy, beauty and goodness that surround you. Make time to smile, breathe and give gratitude for all the serendipitous gifts that have found you. Let your gaze dwell on the children playing on the swings, or the steam rising up off of your coffee, let your ears hear the laughter of co-workers and the song of the birds, let your feet feel the steady support of the earth -- may we truly live and rejoice in each moment of this day. For inspiration read this beautiful passage, *“Stay A Lover of Little Things”*. 

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"I am not a teacher, but an awakener." - Robert Frost

**Day 13:** Role models come in many shapes and guises. As we go through life there are certain beings who cross our paths either in person or through their words or work, who have a profound influence on us. We carry a part of them with us in our consciousness and their inspiration gives us wings. They help us grow towards our highest potential, they help us discover the gifts buried deep within. Today reflect on and give gratitude for a special person in your own life who awakens the best in you. For inspiration, here is a song on Gratitude created by two incredible musicians -- [Check it out](https://www.kindspring.org)

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"Nature is painting for us, day after day, pictures of infinite beauty if only we have the eyes to see them." - John Ruskin

**Day 14:** Too often we get caught up in the drama of human existence, and forget that we are part of a much bigger web. Nature is not simply a backdrop to our lives -- in reality we are but minor characters in its grand and ever unfolding play. Sometimes we catch a glimpse of its mystery and infinite beauty -- whether tilting our heads to look up at the night sky, or gazing out over the blue expanse of an ocean, or watching trees blaze forth in autumn glory. Today take a moment to remember a time when Nature stopped you in your tracks and returned you to your proper home in this magnificent universe. And as you go through your day, make space to honor Nature, whether by taking a walk in the woods, or simply leaning out your window, or looking up at the sky. For inspiration here is a glimpse of "[11 Places So Beautiful It's Hard to Believe They Exist](https://www.kindspring.org)"!

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"Compassion is the basis of morality." -- Arthur Schopenhauer

Day 15: Deep in our hearts we each carry a compass that helps guide us through our various dilemmas and decisions. That compass is not always easy to read, but it’s presence within us is a wonderful gift. As we go through the adventures of living, there are certain experiences, and individuals, who help shape that inner compass. Today, take a moment to reflect and give thanks for the guiding influences in your life that have helped give you a sense of direction, and have shaped your ideas around integrity, fairness and compassion. For inspiration here’s a lovely piece: Lessons in Living from a Cat Named Ali.

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"The manner of giving is worth more than the gift." - Pierre Corneille

Day 16: Gifts come to us in all shapes and sizes, and often times the smallest gifts can have the biggest impact. As you look back on your life and reflect on the many gifts that you have received, what stands out to you as a gift that you will always cherish? Perhaps it is something you received as a child that left a deep impact on you, perhaps it is something that was passed on to you from an elder -- or perhaps it is something that isn’t a “thing” at all! Whatever your most cherished gift is, take a moment to think about what makes it so special to you. And today, find a way to bring a little dash of serendipity and sunshine to someone else’s life. Surprise a stranger, a friend or family member with a gift -- just to let them know how special they are. For inspiration here’s the story of a father’s unforgettable graduation gift.

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"Appreciation is a wonderful thing. It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well." -- Voltaire

**Day 17:** In the course of our lives so many different people support us in different ways and contribute to our sense of joy and community. Today, think of someone whose support you have not stopped to fully acknowledge recently. Consider the ways in which this person adds color and/or comfort to your days. Perhaps it's the person behind the counter at your favorite cafe who always asks how you're doing, or perhaps it's your thoughtful mailman, or your child's first-grade teacher. Whoever comes to mind, see if you can find a way to do something special for them today. For inspiration here's the remarkable story of how [365 Thank You Notes](http://www.kindspring.org) changed one man's life.

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"Let the beauty you love be what you do. There are a thousand ways to kneel and kiss the earth." - Rumi

**Day 18**: We are each keepers of many talents and gifts, but sometimes we forget to pay attention to them. We become more focused on our places of lack. Today, take a moment to call out the skill that you most value in yourself. Remember though, that it doesn't have to be something spectacular or grand. Oftentimes it is the quiet, unassuming skills we possess that enrich our lives and those of others the most! For inspiration here's an insightful article on [the gift of listening](http://www.kindspring.org).

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"We do not remember days. We remember moments." -- Cesare Pavese

**Day 19:** Being able to completely tune into the present moment is the ongoing work of a lifetime. As we become more aware of each moment, we begin to tap into a steady stream of gifts that we are usually too preoccupied to notice. Take a moment now to pause and step back from everything you are doing, including reading this email. Tune in as deeply as you can to this moment, the sights, sounds, and various sensations you are experiencing. The environment that you are in, the people you are surrounded by, the activities you are involved with. What is it that you are grateful for in this very moment? As you go through your days, weeks, months and years take time to periodically ask yourself that question and see how the answers change -- as well as how they remain the same. For inspiration here are [5 Tips for Bringing Mindfulness Into Every Day Life](#).

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"The heart that breaks open can contain the whole universe." - Joanna Macy

**Day 20:** Impermanence is part of the human condition. We learn this truth over and over again in poignant and sometimes painful ways. As we look back on the landscape of our lives we see a journey that has no doubt had its share of loss, ranging from the mundane loss of physical things to the more abstract loss of old dreams, and the fundamentally life-altering loss of loved ones. In the experience of loss we sometimes find deep insights, and stumble upon lessons that remain with us thereafter. Today reflect on your own encounters with loss in its various forms and what you've learned from it. For inspiration here is a powerful piece by the writer Isabel Allende, on love, loss and generosity.

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Change your life today. Don’t gamble on the future, act now, without delay.” - Simone de Beauvoir

Day 21: Procrastination often creeps into our lives despite our best intentions. There are things we perpetually put off for tomorrow -- sometimes these are the things that we ultimately hold most dear. Today, on this final day of the Gratatitude Challenge, take time to rearrange your priorities. Think about the many people, places, experiences and things that you have given gratitude for over the past three weeks. Your life is brimming with gifts for you to enjoy and share with the world. If today was your last day on this earth, think about how you would want to spend it. Carve out some time this Thanksgiving Day to deeply honor the things you are most grateful for. Perhaps by an act of generosity, or by spending time in meditation or prayer, or by doing something special with loved ones.

Here is a powerful article for inspiration: The Top 5 Regrets of the Dying.

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