

Monday Motivation #10: A Heartfelt Thank You

Have you ever experienced a sudden burst of inspiration or realization? It happened to me during my drive to the WDA wrestling tournament in Minot last weekend. As I reflected on the invaluable experiences wrestling has given me, a profound warmth enveloped me, distinct from the gentle glow of the rising sun. It was a feeling of depth, heartwarming, and sincerity, prompting an immediate urge to reach out to those who have inspired me on my wrestling journey.

First, I offered an out loud prayer of gratitude to my late father, knowing he would hear me. I was moved and tears came. Then, I reached out to Terry Steiner, a trusted friend whose friendship I hold dear. Despite the early hour, I knew he would appreciate the call. Our conversation centered around the theme of gratitude, and as it concluded, I expressed my heartfelt thanks to him. (I'll delve into this story further later in this piece.)

Gratitude, as I've come to understand, involves more than mere acknowledgment—it's about truly appreciating the kindness, support, and sacrifices of others. It requires recognizing their contributions to our lives and expressing genuine thanks for them. Gratitude transcends mere courtesy; it reflects a profound understanding of the value others bring to our lives and a willingness to honor that value.

So why did I choose Terry Steiner as my first recipient of gratitude? Simply put, he was the person I most wanted to thank. Our history—days spent pushing each other in practice, attending youth wrestling tournaments together, sharing hotel rooms at national tournaments, and the rides in his purple pickup truck—underscored the depth of our bond. I'm especially grateful for his trust in confiding his dreams of becoming an NCAA Division I National Champion during our high school days. But above all, I wanted to express my gratitude for a seemingly small gesture: a handwritten card he gave me the night before my senior year state finals match.

As Terry handed me the card, urging me to read it before the match, its contents filled me with an indescribable sense of strength and confidence. He made me feel like "Superman." It was a message of unwavering encouragement, reminding me of his faith in me and encouraging me to believe in myself. That note has stayed with me ever since, a constant source of inspiration and motivation. I realized in that moment that I had never properly thanked him for it, and a pain of guilt washed over me. But that feeling was fleeting, quickly replaced by a profound sense of urgency—I needed to express my gratitude to him without delay. Perhaps it was a sign from a higher power, urging me to seize the moment and acknowledge the impact Terry has had on my life. It's astonishing how such a seemingly small oversight could weigh so heavily on my conscience, but in that moment, it felt imperative to rectify it.

In that conversation with Terry, he told me about him listening to Nick Saban and I will paraphrase it a bit for everyone.

Nick Saban's quote, "When you pray, do you pray to be blessed or do you pray to be a blessing?" encapsulates the essence of gratitude beautifully. It challenges us to shift our perspective from a self-centered mindset focused solely on receiving blessings to one that seeks to be a source of blessings for others. In other words, it encourages us to consider how we can contribute positively to the lives of those around us rather than solely seeking personal gain.

Monday Motivation #10: A Heartfelt Thank You

To pray to be a blessing is to embody gratitude in its purest form. It involves recognizing the blessings we have received in our lives and using them as a catalyst to positively impact others. When we adopt this mindset, our actions become a reflection of our gratitude, and we actively seek opportunities to uplift, support, and inspire those around us.

Ultimately, showing gratitude in the manner described by Nick Saban's quote is not only about expressing thanks for what we have but also about recognizing our capacity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others. It's about embracing a spirit of generosity, kindness, and service that enriches not only our own lives but also the lives of those we touch.

So, I encourage some of you team leaders write a short note to someone one who has helped you along the way, you never know how you can affect someone else's life journey.

Here would be a short outline I come up with. Just write something that is meaningful to you and the person you are writing to. Show Gratitude.

Dear [Teammate's Name or Coaches Name],

I hope this letter finds you well and in high spirits. As I sit down to express my gratitude, I find myself overwhelmed with appreciation for everything you've brought to our wrestling team. Your unwavering support, infectious cheers, and relentless dedication have truly made a profound impact on all of us.

From the intense practices in the wrestling room to the long road trips to competitions, your presence has been a source of inspiration for us all. Your commitment to excellence and willingness to push yourself to the limit have set a shining example for everyone on the team.

Beyond your impressive skills on the mat, it's your kindness, generosity, and camaraderie that truly make you stand out as a teammate. The hugs, smiles, and encouraging words you've shared with each of us have created a supportive and uplifting atmosphere that makes every practice and competition feel like a victory.

I want to express my deepest gratitude for all the sweat, tears, and sacrifices you've made for the success of our program. Your contributions have not gone unnoticed, and they have undoubtedly played a significant role in our achievements as a team.

Thank you, [Teammate's Name], for being such an incredible teammate and friend. Your dedication, passion, and positive energy have made this journey unforgettable, and I feel truly fortunate to have had the opportunity to wrestle alongside you.

Here's to many more victories, both on and off the mat.

With sincere thanks and admiration,

[Your Name]