



20/21 REFLECTIONS

Chapter 17 - Nurturing Gratitude

What is one thing, right now, that is going really well?

The most important time to ask ourselves this question is when we're feeling stressed, overwhelmed, or helpless. This is what Laura van Dernoot Lipsky teaches us. It's a way to nurture gratitude and resilience.

In moments of struggle, we're actually best positioned to appreciate the good stuff. Against the backdrop of tribulations, blessings shine brightest.

This lesson couldn't be more timely. Nationally, we're in a period of struggle. The pandemic. The mental health crises. The disconnection from school and work. And yet, many people are taking time next week to pause—to reflect on the things they have to be grateful for.

It's important to take a break sometimes, to soak in these opportunities to recharge, decompress, and focus on what's going well. It is also important to acknowledge how much we have accomplished and how well we have held the torch of hope for our loved ones, students, and school communities during these very difficult days.

Did you know that Thanksgiving became an official holiday in 1863, during the heart of the Civil War? In announcing the new holiday, [President Lincoln](#) acknowledged the incredible hardship of the moment. And yet, from that place of hardship, he was able to see so clearly the things in the country that were going really well.

I encourage you all to embrace this perspective next week. Times are tough, for sure. But, from this place of hardship, we are uniquely positioned to appreciate the good stuff.

So soak it in. Laugh with loved ones. Hold every second sacred. Be grateful for all that you have, and for each other—just as I am immensely grateful to you for the light you collectively shine in our communities. Truly, we have much to celebrate.



Wishing you and yours a relaxing, joyous week of gratitude.

Sincerely,

Pia