



**“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” – John F. Kennedy**

**“When people are made to feel secure and important and appreciated, it will no longer be necessary for them to whittle down others in order to seem bigger by comparison – Virginia Arcastle**

**“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.” – William A. Ward**

**“Let the man, who would be grateful, think of repaying a kindness, even while receiving it.” – Seneca**

**“The private and personal blessings we enjoy, the blessings of immunity, safeguard, liberty, and integrity, deserve the thanksgiving of a whole life.” – Jeremy Taylor**



## Expressing Gratitude

*“Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all others.” - Cicero*

November arrives and the holiday season inches closer, many begin to consider all the blessings in their lives. From family and friends, to homes, jobs, and martial arts, we have so much for which to be grateful. Expressing gratitude is a way of acknowledging the important impact others have had on our lives. When we fail to acknowledge the contribution of others to our success and achievements, we can become arrogant and selfish.

But exactly how do we express our gratitude to others? Is saying thank you enough? Or, is there more to expressing true appreciation than mere words? John F. Kennedy once stated, “As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” When we live by those words of gratitude, we take those actions that truly show our gratefulness for the contributions of others to our lives.

For a good example, look no further than your martial arts training: Your instructor spends several hours each week providing lessons in your martial art. In addition, he or she continues to spend a great deal of time and effort continuing his or her own training, in order to offer the best instruction possible. However, if you fail to practice at home, if you give less than your best in class, or if you fail to attend class regularly, are you showing true appreciation for the efforts of your instructor?

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A History of Thanksgiving

# A History of Thanksgiving

“ I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens.”

With these words, President Abraham Lincoln ushered in the official celebration of Thanksgiving in the United States. By declaring it a national holiday, President Lincoln was recognizing the importance of expressing gratitude to others in our society.

But Thanksgiving’s history in the United States began nearly two and a half centuries earlier when the Pilgrims of Plymouth gathered with their Native American neighbors, the Wampanoag tribe, to celebrate surviving the harsh winter. Throughout the next two centuries, the tradition of giving thanks would be continued by Americans in various ways and at various times.

However, thanks to the consistent efforts of activist Sarah Josepha Hale, President Lincoln was convinced that it was time to make Thanksgiving Day a national holiday. So, in the midst of America’s most devastating conflict, the Civil War, President Lincoln invited all Americans, at home and abroad, to observe the last Thursday of November as the day to give thanks for the many blessings in our lives.

During the Great Depression, President Franklin Roosevelt attempted to modify the Thanksgiving holiday by moving its observation to the second-to-last Thursday in November. However, the public did not receive the change well, and President Roosevelt changed the celebration to the fourth Thursday in November. That has remained the official date for the holiday since.

Although the celebration of Thanksgiving has strong religious roots, the holiday has been greatly secularized over the years. Today, the day is known as much for the famous Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade and professional football games that occur on the day, as it is for its religious underpinnings. And the day after Thanksgiving, often referred to as Black Friday, has become the official start to the Christmas shopping season.

Still, with the many events that now surround this holiday, it remains a time for families and friends to gather and express their gratitude for the blessings in their life. However you celebrate Thanksgiving this year, we wish you a happy and joyous day. We also want to say thank you for allowing us to serve you in your martial arts training.



## Expressing Gratitude

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As Thanksgiving draws near, consider the actions you can take that will reinforce the words of gratitude you offer for the many blessings in your life. Think of specific things you can do for those in your life that will not only serve as a one-time thank you, but also as a recurring act of gratitude. Use the example above as a way to generate ideas for these actions.

We all enjoy feeling appreciated. When others express their gratitude to us, we gain a sense of accomplishment, our self-confidence increases, and we are encouraged to continue making positive contributions in the lives of others. As Virginia Arcastle once stated, "When people are made to feel secure and important and appreciated, it will no longer be necessary for them to whittle down others in order to seem bigger by comparison."

So, when we express gratitude, we are not only making other people feel better about themselves, we are giving them the motivation to do good things for others. Our expression of gratitude is directly related to positive outcomes. Think about that the next time you are saying thank you to someone.

Happy Thanksgiving!!!

We will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday on Thursday, November 26th and reopen Monday November 30th.