



### How Lucky are We?

A few years ago, I was working with an elite level Collegiate Lacrosse team, in the middle of a New England winter. The weather was just barely warm enough that the rain pelting us soaked into our skin instead of freezing into snow. It was early evening and the sun had long since dropped below the horizon. The team was laying prostrate on the wet turf after nearly an hour of calisthenics in the rough elements. As they rose as a team into a plank position one of the leaders let out a rallying cry. Cold, wet, hungry, and exhausted the team repeated the cry “**How lucky are we?**”

To an outsider it would seem to be an odd thing, to yell while exercising in the cold and wet. However, this team who has competed for and won multiple championships over the last decade and will continue to do so. This team knows that gratitude is what allows them to truly appreciate their successes and makes them hungry for more.

It has been proven in scientific studies that gratitude can improve mental health, boost confidence, and enhance relationships. It is tough to keep pushing and grinding if we don't appreciate where we have come from and what our hard work has brought us. Having a grateful mindset doesn't negate the hard work that we personally put in to accomplishing our missions.



We will accomplish very little in our lives without the help of our teammates and gratitude only enhances the satisfaction we get from chasing greatness. It may seem at times that we have little to be for which to be grateful. During these times we must make a conscious and concerted effort to find thing to be grateful. Other times, we get so caught up in our own struggles and focus on our mission that that feeling of gratitude may sneak up on us.

During a firefight in Iraq, I looked around at my teammates. Despite bullets snapping over our heads and Rocket Propelled Grenade rounds exploding behind us, every one of my vehicle commanders stood tall in the turret. They could have each ducked down and peeked over the edge. They could have stayed safe. However, ducking down meant that they wouldn't be able to see the enemy, enemy that would be trying to maneuver on our comrades at any point. Instead, to a man, they exposed themselves and directed withering fire at the enemy units. Even though we were in the middle of a fire fight and my headset was blaring chaotic reports and commands, I couldn't help but look at my Marines and think **"How lucky am I?"**

In the midst of countless workouts, so far outside of my comfort zone that I can't even see it anymore, with my lungs and legs burning and thoughts of quitting creeping into my mind – it is always at that moment that one of my teammates extends a hand and a word of encouragement and I keep going. **"How lucky am I?"**

Opening presents on Christmas morning and watching my son's face light up as he tears off the wrapping paper and his baby sister crawls around under the tree, I think back to Christmas's and other countless holidays that I have spent overseas. I think back to the poverty and suffering I saw in some of those places. I look at my beautiful family again. **"How lucky am I?"**

Swimming with my son or laughing with my baby daughter and thinking about my teammates at The Program on the road, travelling and working with teams and organizations so that we can accomplish our mission. **"How lucky am I?"**

Travelling around the country working with some of the most successful teams and organizations in the world and knowing that I have the opportunity to impact their lives in positive way. **"How lucky am I?"**

Writing this letter as 2018 winds down and knowing that I get to attack 2019 with my family and teammates. **How lucky am I?**



*“The greatest thing is to give thanks for everything. He who has learned this knows what it means to live. He has penetrated the whole mystery of life: giving thanks for everything.” ~ Albert Schweitzer*

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