

The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Vice-Chancellor Prof. Joseph SUNG's open letter to all staff

Dear Colleagues,

This 16 December is the "Thankful Day" promulgated by the University's Committee on Positive Workplace and Staff Development. Please let me share with you my views on the idea of thankfulness.

I have recently decided to lose weight and I hope that the initial result is there for all to see. Giving up two bowls of rice every meal for two tablespoons is a wonderful experience and it dawned on me that what I need to sustain myself is actually not much. When we are able to distinguish between craving and need, learn to cherish and treat everything and everybody we come across as a precious gift, thankfulness will naturally fill up our hearts.

Another key to staying thankful is learning to think a bit less of oneself. Whilst we focus on our own needs, we can still try to understand other people's perspective and efforts, which will often transform our moods from being critical to being tolerant and finally appreciative and thankful.

The University has begun to recruit the next Vice-Chancellor, so I feel like I am not far from leaving office. The challenges the University has faced over the past few years went far beyond what any single person can do. Your conscientious work on a daily basis has indeed been my greatest help, for which I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks once again!

Let go of one's self; learn to cherish. Let us express our gratitude to our working partners on the "Thankful Day" and many more days thereafter! A few kind words, specially prepared delicacies, or attending the talk on thankfulness together on that day, or any other innovative ways of giving thanks will be like a winter sun warming our workplace!

Joseph J.Y. Sung