

A Letter of Gratitude- For My Beekeeping Mentor

Dear Mr. Liang,

I've been reflecting on the people who have shaped my life, and I keep coming back to you and the incredible gift you've given me through beekeeping. I wanted to take a moment to tell you how grateful I am for you and the profound impact you've had on my life.

Five Ways You've Made a Positive Difference in My Life:

1. You Introduced Me to the World of Bees

I'll never forget that first day you invited me to your apiary. You opened that hive with such confidence and reverence, and explained how every bee had a purpose. Watching you work with them—so calm, so respectful—I felt something shift in me. You didn't just show me bees; you showed me a whole new way of seeing the world.

2. You Taught Me Patience and Observation

Before beekeeping, I was always rushing, always looking ahead. But you taught me to watch, to wait, to notice the small details—the way bees dance, the sound of a healthy hive, the first signs of swarming. You showed me that the best beekeepers aren't the ones who do the most, but the ones who observe the most. That lesson has changed how I approach everything in my life."

3. You Gave Me Confidence When I Doubted Myself

When I lost my first hive to that winter freeze, I was devastated and ready to quit. But you sat with me, reminded me that even experienced beekeepers lose hives, and helped me understand what went wrong. You didn't let me give up. You helped me order new bees and start again. That compassion and encouragement didn't just save my beekeeping—it reminded me that failure is just part of learning.

4. You Connected Me to Something Bigger Than Myself

Through your eyes, I learned that beekeeping isn't just a hobby—it's stewardship. You taught me about pollination, ecosystem health, and our responsibility to these incredible creatures.

Every time I tend my hives now, I feel connected to something ancient and vital. You gave me a sense of purpose I didn't know I was missing.

5. You've Become More Than a Mentor—You're Family

What started as beekeeping lessons has become so much more. You've celebrated my successes, supported me through challenges, and welcomed me into a community of beekeepers who feel like family. You check in on me, share your honey harvest, and always make time for my questions—even the ones I've asked a dozen times. You've enriched my life in ways that go far beyond the bees.

Mr. Liang, I don't think you realize how much you've changed my life. Beekeeping has brought me joy, purpose, peace, and connection—and all of that traces back to your generosity, patience, and willingness to share your knowledge and passion with me.

Thank you for opening your apiary and your heart to me. Thank you for every lesson, every hive inspection, every jar of honey we've shared, and every moment you've made me feel like I belong in this beautiful world of bees.

With deepest gratitude and appreciation,
Ethan

My Reflection on This Experience

Writing this letter brought back a lot of good memories. I remembered that first day at the apiary, all the times they answered my questions, and how they checked on my hives after bad weather. It felt good to think about all the ways they've helped me over the years.

I was a little nervous about reading it to them. I wasn't sure if I'd get emotional or if it would feel awkward. But I also knew it was important to actually say these things instead of just assuming they knew how I felt.

I was definitely nervous when I started reading. My voice shook a bit, and I had to pause a couple times. They got really quiet and were clearly listening carefully.

When I finished, there was a moment of silence, then they said "Thank you. That really means a lot to me." Their voice was a bit shaky too. They mentioned they'd been wondering lately if their mentoring actually made a difference, so hearing this came at a good time for them. They also said that watching me learn and grow with the bees has been rewarding for them too.

We both got a little teary, but in a good way. It was a nice conversation.

I feel good. The conversation made our relationship feel a bit more solid, like we both understand what we mean to each other now. It's not that things changed dramatically, but there's something nice about actually saying what you appreciate instead of just thinking it.

I realized that people don't always know how much they've impacted you unless you tell them. My mentor genuinely didn't know some of those things meant so much to me. It felt good to let them know.

I think I should do this more often—just tell people when they've made a difference. It doesn't have to be a big formal thing, but it's worth saying.