



THE POWER OF GRATITUDE

In the past two decades, researchers have learned that gratitude is strongly related to all aspects of well-being. Gratitude has also been shown to reduce mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). A person who has suffered a traumatic experience, for example, is able to recover better and even achieve a higher level of emotional well-being afterward if they are oriented toward noticing and appreciating the positive in the world.

Gratitude also reduces stress, lowers heart rate, decreases inflammation in the body, improves sleep, strengthens relationships, reduces conflict, and triggers reciprocally helpful behaviour. This last finding means that a person who shows gratitude—for a friend’s input, a home-cooked meal, a parent’s help with homework—will increase the likelihood that the recipient will show more care and compassion toward others. Gratitude generates kind-hearted acts like the ripples of a pebble dropped in water.

THE GRATITUDE PROJECT

This tool is meant to remind you to take two minutes to step back and notice the good parts of life, to help you appreciate them even more. Doing this simple practice will help you focus on what is important so you can avoid getting caught up in short-term issues.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

At the end of every day (or in the morning), write down three to five things that you are grateful for that day. It doesn’t have to be formal but writing it down can help you develop the habit.

STEPS

Practice daily gratitude

Take a few minutes to jot down the three to five things you are most grateful for in your life right now. It can be anything - grateful for a friend, grateful for what you have, or grateful for being in the present moment. Here are some examples of different types of gratitude:

Appreciation of other people

“I’m lucky to have David as a friend/teammate/brother.”

A focus on what you currently have

“I’m thankful for my family/for the healthy food available/for a safe and warm home.”

Feelings of awe when encountering beauty

“This waterfall is a wonder!”

Focusing on the positive in the present moment

“I’m going to sit here on this park bench for a moment and take in the autumn colours.”

Appreciation arising from understanding that life is short

“I will die and people I know will die, so this day matters so much.”

Positive social comparisons

“There are so many people who have less than I do.”





DAILY GRATITUDE

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

