

GRATITUDE PRACTICE

Science shows that practicing gratitude (noticing what we're grateful for) can have positive impacts on our health and wellbeing. Science shows that gratitude may also help you to think clearer, increase sleep quality, or decrease sickness symptoms. Gratitude is another way of saying "what I'm thankful for". There are several different ways to practice gratitude. Here are a few ways different people may practice gratitude, but feel free to come up with your own gratitude practice! What's most important is doing what *your* brain and body need!

a. **Gratitude Journal:** You don't need a fancy journal to write about gratitude. Just a spiral notebook or other inexpensive notebook is perfect. Try to write down 3 things you're grateful for every day. If that doesn't feel useful, maybe just try one thing per day when you start. If every day seems like it's too much, maybe try to write down what you're grateful for once per week. You can pick anything, big or small. At first, it may seem or feel silly to say, for example, "I'm grateful for my thumb"! However, being grateful for your thumb is just as good as being thankful for a new job, or a friend, or a favorite place.

b. **Gratitude Jar/Box:** Find a jar or box that you are willing to commit to gratitude. If you wish, you can decorate the jar or box, or make it your own, if that feels useful. Every day, or every week (or however often feels useful for you), take a small piece of paper and write 1-3 things (or more) you're grateful for. After you write it down, put the piece of paper in your Gratitude Jar or Gratitude Box. Keep going until the jar is full! You can create a new jar, or empty and reuse the first one (save your gratitude notes, if you wish)! On days when you may feel down or stressed out, you can take out your Gratitude Jar/Box and read your gratitude notes!

c. **Gratitude Rock/Stone:** All this requires is you find a stone or rock. It can be the first one you find. Or, maybe you pick one based on its shape or how it feels. Maybe you pick it randomly, or maybe you pick one from a place that's special to you. Maybe you have a different small object that you prefer, instead. Once you find a gratitude rock, carry it with you throughout the day. Every time you see, touch, or notice your gratitude rock, think of one thing you're thankful for. Maybe carrying it all day doesn't feel useful for you. In this case, maybe you choose to only carry it once per week, or, maybe you choose to only carry it for a couple of hours each day. It's up to you! Whatever you choose is the perfect choice.

GRATITUDE PROMPTS

Here are some gratitude prompts may help to start your gratitude practice. You do not have to use these, but they are here to further support you. These may help you learn how to write a gratitude statement.

Try to identify 1-3 things in each category:

- I'm grateful for 1-3 things I see:
- I'm grateful for 1-3 things I touch/feel:
- I'm grateful for 1-3 things I hear:
- I'm grateful for 1-3 things I smell:
- I'm grateful for these 1-3 things I taste:
- I'm grateful for these 1-3 green things:
- I'm grateful for these 1-3 places:
- I'm grateful for these 1-3 people:
- I'm grateful for these 1-3 animals/pets:
- I'm grateful for these 1-3 sounds in nature:
- I'm grateful for these 1-3 things in my home:
- I'm grateful for these 1-3 about myself:
- I'm grateful for these (#) (thing/people/place/etc.):
- I'm grateful for these (#) (thing/people/place/etc.):
- I'm grateful for these (#) (thing/people/place/etc.):
- I'm grateful for these (#) (thing/people/place/etc.):
- I'm grateful for these (#) (thing/people/place/etc.):
- I'm grateful for these (#) (thing/people/place/etc.):

Here are examples of gratitude statements:

“I'm grateful for my two cats and dog”.

“I'm grateful for the color blue”.

You can add reasons for why you're grateful, or names for whom you're grateful, if you wish.

Examples: “I'm grateful for my friend, Jane, because she's always there for me”.

“I'm grateful for my favorite jacket because it keeps me warm”.

Once you begin to practice gratitude, it may become easier over time. Note that it may change as you practice. If you want to, notice how you feel before you practice gratitude and after you practice gratitude.

Do you feel any different? Do you notice anything different about your body or brain? There are no right or wrong answers. Just think about noticing your thoughts, feelings, sensations, etc., if you think it is useful. Maybe they change over time, or maybe they don't.