



GRATITUDE JOURNAL

GRATITUDE CAN SHAPE THE WAY YOUR FUTURE PLAYS OUT. AND DEVELOPING AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE IS KEY TO CONSTRUCTING A FUTURE YOU WANT, AND BUILDING YOUR MENTAL FITNESS. USE THIS TOOL TO KICK START YOUR EFFORTS TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN YOUR OWN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE.

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FOCUS ON THE GOOD THINGS

Gratitude is a powerful ally. It is your secret weapon in the fight against the things that drag you down, and it is the magnifying glass that takes all those things that lift you up and blows them up jumbo-size.

But gratitude does not come naturally for many of us. In the hustle and bustle of life, and especially when things are not unfolding in the way you hoped, gratitude can often be the last response you reach for. But, when you get intentional about gratitude – when you make it a conscious choice, come what may – those niggles, gripes, and even the catastrophes that feature in day-to-day life, are robbed of the power they wield to drag you down and keep you away from being the person you truly want to be and performing at your best across every area of your life.

But how do you get intentional about gratitude? How do you make it a conscious choice? Well, that's what this tool explores, and equips you to do.

So, let's take a closer look.

GETTING INTENTIONAL ABOUT GRATITUDE

On the next few pages you will find a range of ways that you can tap into, and express, gratitude, come what may. Some will feel like a good fit, others may not. You don't have to adopt them all – simply take a considered look through them, and pick out the ones that make sense to you, and that you feel you could apply in your life. And, once you have selected the strategies you want to employ, commit to implementing them.

Now, I'm not going to make out like the process of building gratitude into your life, come what may, won't prove to be a challenge from time-to-time. But, cut yourself some slack and give it a go.

And, if you find that gratitude makes all but the briefest of appearances before being overshadowed by something at the other end of the spectrum, that's OK. Stick at it. It's like anything – the more you practice it, the easier it gets, and the better you get at it.

Try picking just three strategies to begin with. Pick one that you employ just once a week – maybe on a set day, or maybe not, you decide. Pick one that is just for weekdays – maybe it's something you could do at work – and be sure to build this into every day from Monday to



Friday (or whatever five days you class as a 'week day'). And, finally, pick one for weekends, and whether a weekend is a Saturday and Sunday or some other combination of days altogether for you, be sure to employ this strategy on *both* your 'weekend' days.

Now, you could try a week of a particular set of three strategies, then pick another three for the next week, and another three for the week after that, and so on. It's really up to you, so I suggest you see how it feels.

If you find it difficult, maybe stick with a particular set of three strategies until they feel like they flow naturally into your day, before picking another three. Then stick with those three until they feel like they flow naturally before you try another set of three, and so on. But, if you find it relatively easy to find ways to tap into gratitude using your first set of three, why not pick a new set and try those the following week?

Eventually, you will settle on a set of strategies (and a set could be any number of strategies, not just three) that work for you.

PUT GRATITUDE TO WORK FOR YOU

Take your time to read through the strategies on the next few pages. Make a note of the strategies you feel comfortable trying in the 'This is for me' column (just tick the ones you are happy to try using). Then, in the 'Implement' column, pick three that you will try in the week ahead. Mark one of those three 'Weekday', one 'Weekend' and one 'Week'.

Then do it! Put them into practice.

And, after you have tried them out, come back to the last column, and make a note of how it felt to apply gratitude in a situation. What was the situation? How would you normally have responded in that situation? How did you respond this time? What difference did that gratitude-focused response make to how you felt, and how things turned out, compared to the results your usual response would have produced?

When you are ready, flip the page and get started. And, remember – give yourself permission to find it tough, give yourself permission for it to take time to master, and give yourself permission to have fun!



GRATITUDE STRATEGY	This is for me (Y/N)	Implement	How implementing this strategy made me feel
<p>Random Reach Out</p> <p>Who do you feel grateful to have in your life? Someone who you maybe don't tell often enough just how grateful you are for them. Reach out to them and tell them. A phone call, an email, a text, or, heck, even a good old hand-written letter – whatever seems appropriate. Tell them why you feel grateful that they are in your life.</p>			
<p>Immediate Gratitude Expression</p> <p>This is an 'in the moment' expression of gratitude. When someone does something that makes you feel happy, glad or downright grateful, let them know. Right away. Send a quick email, a text, WhatsApp, or tag them in social media, but make sure you shout out to them just how grateful you are for what they just did for you, and how it made you feel.</p>			
<p>Greeting with Gratitude</p> <p>When you meet up with someone, begin the encounter by telling them just one thing about them that you are grateful for. Maybe it's a characteristic, something they said, or something they did. By doing this, you will immediately create an environment that is friendly, welcoming, open and honest. And an environment like that really opens up effective communication and the opportunity to develop the relationship to much deeper levels.</p>			



GRATITUDE STRATEGY	This is for me (Y/N)	Implement	How implementing this strategy made me feel
<p>Slow it Down</p> <p>This is a mealtime strategy. For the first ten mouthfuls of a meal, be conscious of every bite. Chew slowly. Notice the textures and the flavours. Notice how it feels as you swallow the food, and it makes its way down to your stomach. Be grateful for the nourishment that the food is giving you.</p> <p>Seriously – actually thank the food!</p> <p>And notice, as you chew and consume your food more slowly, how much more quickly you feel full. Take time to be grateful that you are able to adjust your food consumption to only that which your body needs, and the health benefits that will bring.</p>			
<p>Evening Gratitude</p> <p>If you share a house with someone, make it a daily dinner-time practice for each person to take a moment before anyone starts eating to share one thing that they are grateful for that day.</p>			
<p>Celebrate Excellence</p> <p>When a colleague, friend, or loved one does something significant – successfully completing a challenging task, for example, take time to acknowledge that and mark it by celebrating it in a tangible way.</p> <p>It could be anything from a meaningful and intentional high-five or fist-bump, or a ‘congratulations’ card, right through to taking them to their favourite restaurant for a celebratory evening out, or for a weekend away.</p> <p>Whatever you know will be special for that person (and that your budget can stretch to). Be sure to not only acknowledge their accomplishment, but also to tell them how grateful you are that you get to share in it.</p>			



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<p>Share the Gratitude</p> <p>Host a get-together (maybe even a full-on party) that is focused on the good things in life. Ask everyone attending to bring along a note that sets out one thing that they are grateful for (preferably handwritten, as hand writing your thoughts is generally held to increase your conscious awareness). Share the note publicly at the gathering, and encourage everyone present to share in the gratitude.</p>			
<p>Now and What Will Be</p> <p>Every evening, make a note of three things you are grateful for in the present, and three things that you will be grateful for in the future. Imagine that those future gratitude states have actually happened – how does that make you feel? What senses does it awaken? What emotions arise? Do you feel calm, excited, eager, for example? Take that feeling – whatever it may be - and hold onto it as you drift off to sleep.</p>			
<p>Gratitude Board</p> <p>If you are familiar with Dream or Vision Boards, this will be a familiar exercise. Begin by pulling together images or mementos of things that you are grateful for. Then, using a board or a space on a wall, or a large piece of paper, make a collage of all those things.</p> <p>Gathering everything you are grateful for into one place is a powerful message to give yourself, and helps you to hold onto your gratitude for longer. Take time to look at this board in line with your implement strategy (daily, weekly or at the weekend).</p>			



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<p>A Box of Gratitude</p> <p>Similar to the Gratitude Board, but without the clearly visible reminder, this strategy involves getting those mementos and pictures of things you are grateful for and gathering them into a box. Take time to decorate the box so that you know how important it is. Be sure to rifle through that box, and remind yourself of those things you are grateful for, in line with your implement strategy (weekly, daily or at the weekend). Add to it (and take from it) as things change – new things you are grateful for appear, and other things pass.</p>			
<p>Fall Back to Gratitude</p> <p>When you feel that anger or agitation is being triggered – maybe someone just cut you off, maybe your cell phone lost signal in the middle of an important call – take three deep breaths; a full inhale, hold it for a second, then a full exhale. With each inhale, think of one thing you are grateful for, and why. And, with each exhale, name it – actually speak out loud what it is. And, as you do this, you will find that you do not get carried away with the emotion (or, at least, not to the same degree as you may have, had you not done this).</p>			
<p>Gratitude Becomes Fun</p> <p>Make gratitude a game. Pick an occasion when, typically, tensions rise, tempers fray and gratitude feels far away – a long plane ride, a traffic jam – and challenge everyone with you to think of as many things as they can that they are grateful for. The winner is the person who comes up with the most things. By yourself? No problem! Set yourself a target (say ten things, for example) and you win when you hit that target.</p>			



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<p>To Get to Sleep, Replace the Sheep</p> <p>Can't sleep? Let gratitude carry you off into the land of ZZZZZs. Instead of counting sheep (or whatever method you generally use to try and induce sleep), count your blessings.</p> <p>Lie with your eyes closed, your mind stilled, and just recount all the things you feel grateful for. Not only will this most likely help you fall asleep as your body and mind relax into all the things you feel grateful for, you will take all of that positivity into sleep with you, which is likely to improve the quality of your sleep and your mental state.</p>			
<p>Daily Gratitude</p> <p>This is as simple as it sounds. Every day, grab a hard-copy journal and write down what you feel grateful for.</p>			
<p>Giving Time</p> <p>As often as your schedule can accommodate without jeopardising other things, volunteer your time. Once a day, once a week, once a month – the frequency is not the important thing here. The important thing here is that you develop a habit of doing something that is 100% outward-focused – an act of 'no strings attached' giving.</p> <p>Be grateful for your opportunity to contribute in this way, and the sense of well-being, citizenship and engagement it provides.</p>			

