

## Coping Skills Home Practice

### Self-Care Part Two: Gratitude



**Self-Care** is a very important part of keeping yourself healthy both physically and mentally. Taking good care of yourself helps you to remain happy and successful in your daily life. One way to take care of yourself is to express gratitude.

**Expressing Gratitude:** When we take time to think about the people and things in our lives we are thankful for, we train our brains to be mindful of the little and the big things that bring us joy and happiness, meet our basic needs, and allow us to thrive and be successful. It has been proven that gratitude positively impacts our physical and mental health because it boosts our mood, strengthens our relationships, and enhances our resilience (our ability to manage the stress and challenges we face).

**Gratitude Exercises:** Try incorporating some of these gratitude exercises into your daily/weekly routine.

- 1) **Gratitude Journal:** Keep a journal of things you are grateful for. You may choose to start and/or end your day with this exercise. Journal entries can be as long or as short as you prefer. You may choose to list them as one or two words each day, a sentence, or in paragraph form. If you are artistic you might even include a drawing of who/what you are thankful for. Here are some questions you could write/draw about:

Name a person you are thankful for

Name a place you are thankful for

Name a food you are thankful for

Name something that starts with the first letter of your name that you are thankful for

Name a thing you are thankful for

Name something that comforts you that you are thankful for

Name something that meets your basic needs that you are thankful for

Name something that brings you joy that you are thankful for

What is something nice or beautiful in nature that you are thankful for

- 2) **Write a Thank You note:** Write a note, design a card, color or draw something to send (through the mail) to a friend or family member. It could be a note of thanks, a note just to say hi, a card for their birthday, or “just because.”
- 3) **Thank your community helpers:** Leave a small thank you note or card for your mail person, trash collector, delivery person etc.
- 4) **Hide a thank you:** write a small thank you note, card or drawing to hide for one of your family members to find in your house. Put it some place you know they will look each day. You will bring a smile to their face, and it will be fun to see how long it takes for them to find it.

**More information for parents about benefits of physical activity for adolescents:**

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/what-mentally-strong-people-dont-do/201504/7-scientifically-proven-benefits-gratitude>

**“Growing Mindful” card deck is for all ages. This card deck features 50 unique mindfulness activities to teach awareness, how to be present in the moment, and cultivate kindness and curiosity.**

**Practice strategies from “Growing Mindful” card deck:**

- 1) “Gratitude Mantra”: Bring to mind something you are grateful for. Silently repeat this while holding the image in your mind. How do you feel?
- 2) “WWW”: Reflect on the day so far and ask yourself: What Went Well?
- 3) “Kind Wishes”: Make a kind wish for someone you care about...one for yourself...one for someone you don’t really know...and one for someone who has challenged you

**Positive Coping Strategies/Fun Activities: Choose a few activities you would like to do this week...**

Listen to music mindfully

Go for a walk, run or bike ride

Lie down and look at the clouds, find different shapes

Read

Draw, Paint

Color

Play in instrument

Spend some time outdoors, enjoy nature

Spend time with a pet

Play a game

Write a story about a fun memory you have

Baking/Cooking

Send a card or letter to a friend or family member (through the mail)

Practice a sport outside

Make a meal for your family

Practice breathing, relaxation techniques

Listen to Guided Meditation

Write something you are grateful for

Send a thank you note or card

Call a friend or family member (on the phone) just to say hi

Mail a card or note to a family member or friend (in the mail)