



This document provides you with some quick and easy to do activities focussing on gratitude, self-appreciation and self-care. They are intended to support the development of self-awareness and enhance wellbeing. They are all most effective when practiced regularly over time. Choose the ones that most appeal to you and fit in with the practicalities of your life!

Attitude of gratitude

Focusing on feelings and expressions of gratitude can have a positive impact on our wellbeing and create 'ripples of gratitude' which impact on those around us.

Here are some ideas for quick and easy activities that help us develop appreciation and gratitude habits and connect with the feelings these generate.

Daily gratitude check-in

In this three-step "check-in," you will connect to this feeling of gratitude. Complete these three steps every day for the next two weeks. You can do this at any time of the day. After the two weeks, take a few minutes to reflect on your experience. Notice whether this practice has helped you feel more grateful and what the positive benefits of this have been for you. Decide whether you want to continue with this practice.

- 1) Close your eyes and bring to mind a recent positive event, something good that happened to you in the last few days.
- 2) Take a moment to think about who or what was needed for this event to occur.
- 3) Notice how your body feels in response to this memory; scan through your body from head to toe and observe any new physical sensations

Optional: Share your gratitude reflections with other people or in a gratitude diary.

Silent heroes

Think of someone who has done something important or amazing for you.

- 1) What benefits did you receive from this person?
- 2) What would you like this person to know?
- 3) Write down what you would like to say to that person.
- 4) Plan how you will deliver this message to them.

Mind the gaps

Think of a person or other aspect of your life that you are grateful for. Think about what life would be like without the presence of that person, event, experience or opportunity.



Notice the difference between this and your actual experience to help identify the difference this aspect of your life makes to you.

Tiny attitudes of gratitude

- Random reach out: Thank someone you don't usually show appreciation to. This can be an email, note, comment or any other way you choose to show this appreciation
- Three good things: Think of 'three good things that happened today' at the end of each day. This could be private reflection, shared with others, or record it in a gratitude diary.
- Immediate gratitude expression: Show appreciation straight away for something small. Be genuine and specific.
- Greeting with gratitude: When you first see someone express why you are grateful that they are there and the difference they are going to make.
- Slow it down: Choose on an ordinary part of your day, for example, eating your lunch. Purposefully focus on this and slow down your appreciation of it. How does it smell/taste? Who provided this food for you? What difference does having this break to eat your food make to you? Did anyone else do anything that made it possible for you to have this food now? Notice how focussing on this makes you feel.

Gratitude for groups

- End of day/meeting gratitude practice: Ask those present to share their appreciation of something that happened during the day/meeting. Ask them to share what they are grateful for and what difference this made to them.
- Celebrate excellence: Show gratitude for the effort/skill/time that a person has put into an activity rather than focussing on the outcome. Celebrate the difference their contribution has made.
- Appreciation station: Similar to the end of day/meeting but gratitudes are written post-it notes and passed around or put on show somewhere in the room. The advantage of this is that they are anonymous. These gratitudes don't have to be about the activity immediately preceding the activity. They could express gratitude for something that has happened during the previous week/term.
- Gratitude board. Create an individual or shared visual display highlighting people, events or resources that have made a difference to the experience of those involved.
- A box of gratitude. A box containing items that represent gratitudes. These could be photos, notes or physical items. Thankyou cards, a pen to represent gratitude for help with marking, a photo of a person who has made a difference. This could be shared by a community or created individually. Plan to pick items out regularly and reflect on what they represent, and how this focus on gratitude impacts on feelings.
- Gratitude mapping: With large sheets of paper ask groups to draw out things they are grateful for. Draw a line from each and write why they are grateful for it. Draw lines



linking other people's gratitudes to your reasons and vice versa. This activity can be done silently or with discussion.

Wonderful me!

Purposefully extending gratitude to the ways we think about ourselves also has positive benefits to the way we feel and navigate the ups and downs of life.

Here are a few quick and easy ideas to help develop our appreciation of our own strengths and personal characteristics and how we use these to make a difference.

Self-appreciation and strengths

Choose five strengths or positive personal characteristics that most describe you.

These free online questionnaires may help you:

[Personality Test, Personality Assessment: VIA Survey | VIA Institute \(viacharacter.org\)](#)

[Free Strengths Test | Discover what you're really good at \(high5test.com\)](#)

[Personality Test by Red Bull - find your strengths | Wingfinder](#)

Think about how you use these strengths and how they impact on the people around you. Make a point of noticing when you use them and how this feels.

Spotlight on strengths

When you get a chance during the day, take a moment to pause.

- 1) Notice the day and time.
- 2) Briefly describe the activity you were engaged in. Note the parts of the activity that you have control over, avoid writing about the contributions of other people.
- 3) Take note of any strengths you are using now as you engage in the activity and the difference these make.
- 4) Notice how focussing on these strengths makes you feel about yourself and the activity.

Once you engage in this activity daily, you will notice that you have a better idea of what your strengths are, how often you use them, and how your strengths usage makes you feel.



Personal Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats analysis

This free downloadable sheet from mindtools.com will take you through your own personal analysis to help you develop greater self-appreciation and self-awareness.

[Personal SWOT Analysis Worksheet.pdf \(mindtools.com\)](#)

Savour the moment

- 1) Think about or make a list of contributions you made this day/week/term/year that improved the experience of another person, or group of people.
- 2) How do you know this made a difference? (think about what you might have noticed and any feedback from others)
- 3) Notice feelings of pleasure/pride/contentment that focussing on this gives you.
- 4) Take a deep breath and really luxuriate in these feelings, let yourself fully take credit for your contribution and bask in appreciation for yourself.

Look after yourself!

Looking after ourselves is really about getting our own needs met. It is essential that we do this if we are going to be effective and help others. Self-care can show up in many areas of our lives and healthy habits look different for different individuals. There are no hard and fast rules! Some areas of self-care will be more important at particular times of our lives. Even when we know what healthy self-care habits look like for us we are unlikely to practice good self-care habits in every area all the time. So be kind to yourself. You are only human!

Some areas of self-care:

- Care for our bodies. Looking after our sleep, diet, alcohol intake, Releasing physical tension through movement, relaxation or exercise. Protecting time for rest.
- Care for our minds. Making space for important decisions. Giving our minds time to refocus and replenish using meditation, mindfulness or activities that generate 'flow'. Staying curious and taking opportunities for learning or new challenges.
- Care for our emotions. Giving ourselves time to process difficult emotions, drawing on support with this if we need it. Purposefully generating positive emotions through gratitude, fun, kindness, self-appreciation.
- Care for our time: Boundaries around the times we carry out work tasks, looking at emails for example. Breaking tasks down into small steps. Using diaries, planners or post-it notes to help us prioritise and focus.



- Care for our connections: Immersing ourselves in activities that make us feel connected to something greater than ourselves, religious practices, or spending time in nature. Protecting time to be really present with the people we care about (keep the technology away!). Purposefully building connections with colleagues and children, using kindness, humour and fun to strengthen bonds with others.

A step in the right direction...

Make a list of the self-care habits that you already commit to and engage with regularly.

Choose one small habit you'd like to start or strengthen. Choose something achievable, that appeals to and motivates you.

Make a plan. We need to practice, practice, practice to embed a new behaviour. You can use the free 5 step wellbeing plan on my website www.goodlifepsychology.co.uk to help you record and structure this.

Consider:

- When you will start with this habit? (soon!)
- How often are you going to do it?
- How you will remind yourself to do it? (post-it notes, ticking it off on a list, linking it to something you already do, asking someone else to hold you accountable)
- Who you might need to help you? (if anyone)
- How you will notice the difference the change has made and celebrate this?
- How you will refocus on the change if you occasionally lapse? Be kind to yourself when this happens!

Self-care bingo

Want to remind yourself to practice healthy self-care habits?

- 1) Make a list of all the habits that you know help you and put these into a grid. You can use the free blank grid at www.goodlifepsychology.co.uk to help you with this. If you want to practice some things multiple times over a given period these could go on the grid more than once.
- 2) Put the grid up somewhere you are going to see it. Next to your desk, on the fridge, wherever works for you.
- 3) Every time you carry out that habit mark it or cross it off on the grid. Be carefully to make sure you really focus on the habit and practice it in a helpful way to avoid this feeling like a 'tick box' exercise.

If you have found these activities useful and would like to access similar resources and tools, or find out more about our other services

email us at: enquiries@goodlifepsychology.co.uk

or sign up to our distribution list via our website: www.goodlifepsychology.co.uk