Exercise

UK English

Gratitude Journal

PSYCHOLOGYTOOLS®

Downloaded by Beverley Cummins on 2022-04-23

Gratitude Journal

Description

Gratitude has been described as "the appreciation of what is valuable and meaningful to oneself and represents a general state of thankfulness and/or appreciation" (Sansone & Sanson, 2010). Conceptually gratitude has been viewed as an emotion which occurs after receiving assistance, or as a dispositional "orientation towards noticing the positive in the world" (Wood et al, 2010). This dispositional or trait gratitude is positively associated with a number of measures of well-being and there is evidence that it is possible to increase gratitude through practice – with associated increases in well-being. The *Gratitude Journal* is a positive psychology worksheet. It describes the concept of gratitude, briefly reports research findings supporting its beneficial associations, and provides recommendations to aid in the completion of a gratitude journal / gratitude list.

Instructions

This is a Psychology Tools information handout. Suggested uses include:

- Client handout – use as a psychoeducation resource.
- Discussion point – use to provoke a discussion and explore client beliefs.
- Therapist learning tool – improve your familiarity with a psychological construct.
- Teaching resource – use as a learning tool during training.

References

Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: an experimental investigation of gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(2), 377.

Froh, J. J., Sefick, W. J., & Emmons, R. A. (2008). Counting blessings in early adolescents: An experimental study of gratitude and subjective well-being. *Journal of School Psychology*, 46(2), 213-233.

Sansone, R. A., & Sansone, L. A. (2010). Gratitude and well being: The benefits of appreciation. *Psychiatry (Edgmont)*, 7(11), 18.

Sheldon, K. M., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2006). How to increase and sustain positive emotion: The effects of expressing gratitude and visualizing best possible selves. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 1(2), 73-82.

Wood, A. M., Froh, J. J., & Geraghty, A. W. (2010). Gratitude and well-being: A review and theoretical integration. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 30(7), 890-905.

Downloaded by Beverley Cummins on 2022-04-23

Copyright © 2020 Psychology Tools Limited. All rights reserved.

Gratitude Journal

Gratitude is the appreciation of what is valuable and meaningful to oneself and represents a general state of thankfulness and/or appreciation.[1]

Having a grateful disposition – being the kind of person who notices and appreciates the positive in the world – is associated with greater physical and mental well-being. Grateful people experience more positive emotion, feel better about themselves, are less depressed, and are more satisfied with life in general.[2]

We can become more grateful through practice. There is a good evidence that cultivating the practice of gratitude leads to increases in physical and mental well-being. Compared to keeping lists of hassles or neutral events, keeping a gratitude list has been shown to:

↑ **Increase:** well-being, optimism, life satisfaction, and happiness.

↓ **Reduce:** negative feelings, depression, worry, body dissatisfaction, and physical symptoms.

How to keep a gratitude journal

Gratitude researchers have some advice for keeping a gratitude journal:

- **Write it down.** Don't just make a list in your head. Write about the people and things you are grateful for in your life. Keep a record so you can review it.

- **Be specific.** The more specific you are the better. For example "I am grateful that my children are healthy and doing well in school, and that I have a loving relationship with someone who truly cares for me" is better than "I am grateful for my family".

- **Focus on people.** Focusing on people to whom you are grateful is more effective than writing about things.

- **Deeper is better.** Elaborating in detail about a particular thing for which you are grateful is more beneficial than making a shallow list of many things.

- **Savor surprises.** Recording events that were unexpected or surprising tend to elicit stronger feelings of gratitude.

- **Set your intention.** Your motivation to be happier plays an important part in your development of gratitude. Like many things in life the more you engage the more you will get out of it – if you just 'go through the motions' it will be less effective.

- **Be consistent.** Once you have set your intention to record things you are grateful for honor your intention by sticking to it. Set aside fifteen minutes at specific time of day to complete your journal.

- **Don't overdo it.** Writing occasionally (1-3 times per week) has been shown to be more effective than writing daily.

[1] Sansone, R. A., & Sansone, L. A. (2010). Gratitude and well being: The benefits of appreciation. *Psychiatry (Edgmont)*, 7(11), 18.
[2] Wood, A. M., Froh, J. J., & Geraghty, A. W. (2010). Gratitude and well-being: A review and theoretical integration. *Clinical psychology review*, 30(7), 890-905.

Downloaded by Beverley Cummins on 2022-04-23

Copyright © 2020 Psychology Tools Limited. All rights reserved.

Resource details

Title: Gratitude Journal
Language: English (GB)
Translated title: Gratitude Journal
Type: Exercise
Document orientation: Portrait
URL: https://www.psychologytools.com/resource/gratitude-journal/

Terms & conditions

This resource may be used by licensed members of Psychology Tools and their clients. Resources must be used in accordance with our terms and conditions which can be found at: https://www.psychologytools.com/terms-and-conditions/

Disclaimer

Your use of this resource is not intended to be, and should not be relied on, as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you are suffering from any mental health issues we recommend that you seek formal medical advice before using these resources. We make no warranties that this information is correct, complete, reliable or suitable for any purpose. As a professional user, you should work within the bounds of your own competencies, using your own skill and knowledge, and therefore the resources should be used to support good practice, not to replace it.

Copyright

Unless otherwise stated, this resource is Copyright © 2020 Psychology Tools Limited. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2020 Psychology Tools Limited. All rights reserved.

Downloaded by Beverley Cummins on 2022-04-23