

The New Science of Gratitude

Gratitude Basics: Why You Should Care

- The benefits of practicing Gratitude are nearly endless
- Free, open to everyone regardless of circumstance, 24/7
- access, no equipment needed, effective whether we are feeling
- good or bad, short- and long-term benefits
- Gratitude is now mainstream in mental wellness conversations

Research-based benefits of gratitude

- Gratitude leads to reduced physical symptoms and increased exercise (Emmons R & McCullough M 2003)
- Gratitude makes us happier (Seligman ME, et al 2010)
- Gratitude can help us cope better with stress (Emmons R, 2007)
- Depression shown to be inversely correlated with gratitude (Seligman ME, et al, 2005)
- Gratitude increases appreciation and positive action in children (Froh J, et al 2008)
- Gratitude enhances romantic relationships (Lambert NM, et al, 2011)
- Gratitude is good for business (Grant A & Gino F, 2010)

If gratitude is so good for us, why don't we do it?

- **Hedonic Adaptation**... without intentional gratitude practice... our brain gets 'used to' the good stuff and doesn't see it.
- **Negativity Bias**... without intentional gratitude practice... our brain stays on lookout for the 'bad stuff' to help keep us safe, instead of on the 'good stuff' we can appreciate.

5 Simple gratitude practices to increase your well-being

- Send a 1-2 sentence email/text thanking someone for something.
- Write 3 sentences that begin with "I am grateful that..." or "I am grateful for..." It can be quite helpful to use your senses for ideas.
- Complete the included Gratitude Worksheet (or similar version).

- Keep a Gratitude Journal – set aside time to recall moments of gratitude associated with mundane or ordinary events, people you value, or personal positive attributes. Take 2-10 minutes.
- Write a letter of gratitude to someone who has not been thanked sufficiently for a good s/he has done. (Give it to them, or not. Thus, those living or passed, human or pet, are all fair game.)

Daily Practice Tracker. Check off each day you complete any simple gratitude practice.

Day 1 _____

Day 2 _____

Day 3 _____

Day 4 _____

Day 5 _____

Day 6 _____

Day 7 _____