

The Power of Gratitude



By Stephanie Drag, Director School and Family Services, Children's Aid and Family Services

"Gratitude turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos into order, confusion into clarity...it makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow." – Melody Beattie

As we enter into the holiday season, especially Thanksgiving, thankfulness and gratitude often come to the forefront of our thoughts. While the words thankfulness and gratitude are often used interchangeably, there is a difference between the two. Thankfulness is an in the moment act and an acknowledgement of something someone has given or done for you. Gratitude is an emotional response to something that has made a difference in your life. It happens at a deeper level than thankfulness and is something that can grow over time, having a lasting impact.

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Gratitude is actually good for our minds, bodies, and relationships. Research shows that people who consistently practice gratitude are less bothered by aches and pains, have lower blood pressure, experience more joy and pleasure, are more compassionate, and feel less lonely and isolated. For a complete list of why gratitude is good, check out this article: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/why_gratitude_is_good

Since gratitude is a way at looking at the world, there are little things that you can do to bring gratitude into your life.

1. Send a note of appreciation to a friend letting them know the impact they have had on your life.
2. Thank someone mentally. Think about something that someone has done for you and thank them in your mind.
3. Keep a gratitude journal (Check out the article on the last page!).
4. Say a prayer acknowledging your blessings.
5. Find something good to say about everyone you meet today.
6. When you hear someone say something critical about another person, say, "Perhaps, but ..." adding in words that are kinder and more forgiving.
7. Meditate by focusing on what you're grateful for in that moment (the warmth of the sun, a pleasant sound, etc.).

You cannot have gratitude without attitude. Through practice anyone can shift thoughts to come from this positive place leading to greater happiness, less stress, healthier hearts, improved lives, and so much more.

Sources:

- 20 Ways to Grow Your Gratitude, <http://meanttobehappy.com/20-ways-to-grow-your-gratitude>
- Giving Thanks Can Make You Happier, <https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier>

Alternative Treatments for Pain: Chiropractic Therapy

A popular and CDC supported treatment for pain is chiropractic therapy. This treatment is recommended as an alternative to pain relief drugs for lower back pain along with heat, acupuncture, and massage.

A Chiropractor will manipulate the body's alignment to relieve pain and improve function. The main technique of this therapy is spinal manipulation through applying

quick strong pressure on a joint between two vertebrae. This therapy often done in collaboration with doctors, surgeons, and pain specialists.

There may be complications such as stroke with this therapy although it is rare. Just like with any new treatment, make sure to speak with your doctor first.

Sources: Chiropractic care for pain relief, <https://www.health.harvard.edu/pain/chiropractic-care-for-pain-relief>

Activity Center

Decode this cryptogram to reveal a Thanksgiving quote. Each letter in a cryptogram stands for another letter; e.g., A=M, B=Z, etc. We gave you one letter to get you started.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
H												

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

F V R N O J H C M W C U O

B P W O U C O J H C M W F

V R V C F S H G T P O

N R N X G S H G U Q G U P X

A V Q N H D D X N Z V H O N

H C S C N R N X O H M N

Q U X F X H C O N S H A A

O J H O G U P J H R N

– Catherine Pulsifer

Answers on back page.

Trivia Time!

Which president was the first to give a turkey a presidential pardon?

Answer on back page.



Sharing Circle

What is something you are thankful for this year?

The fact that my family has been able to gather in my backyard and we have been able to meet in person and celebrate our connections.

– Arline

My wonderful family being there for us and protecting us. – Inessa

GRATEFUL for my family and friends who truly ♥ me. – Sandra

I am grateful for the healthy birth of my beautiful granddaughter Lilit.

– Dawn

Being/Staying Alive & Well!

– Malikah



We want to hear from you for next month's issue!

What is your favorite holiday memory?

Email your answer to mflynn@cafsnj.org or call Marigrace at 201-740-7098.

Keep a Gratitude Journal

Practicing gratitude is good for our mental and our physical health but can be challenging. The more you practice bringing attention to what you are grateful for, the more you will naturally notice what you are grateful for. One way to do this is through a gratitude journal. Before going to bed at night, write down a list of everything you were grateful for that day. Stuck? Then give this activity from Mindful a try.

Start by observing. Notice the thank yous you say. Just how much of a habitual response is it? Is it a hasty aside, an afterthought? How are you feeling when you express thanks in small transactions? Stressed, uptight, a little absent-minded? Do a quick scan of your body—are you already physically moving on to your next interaction?

Pick one interaction a day. When your instinct to say “thanks” arises, stop for a moment and take note. Can you name what you feel grateful for, even beyond the gesture that’s been extended? Then say thank you.

Source: How to Practice Gratitude by Mindful. <https://www.mindful.org/an-introduction-to-mindful-gratitude>

Contact Us

To learn more, submit a response, or ask a question you can contact us at:

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Celebrating Seniors Online

<https://www.tcadr.org/virtual/celebratingseniors>

www.tcadr.org  @TCADR  @TCADR

ANSWERS

Triva: Ronald Reagan

Cryptogram: Give thanks not just on Thanksgiving Day, but every day of your life. Appreciate and never take for granted all that you have.

Resource Spotlight:

Senior Resource Group NJ

We are a group of over 35 dedicated senior-related healthcare and business professionals who provide education, guidance and referrals to local families to better assist them and their loved ones find superior quality care and resources. We work in over 55 communities, houses of worship, businesses, the Wayne YMCA and with any group serving the senior community. Complimentary In-Home visits are available by appointment.

Activities include:

- Wine Bingo
- Senior Trivia
- Chair Zumba
- Health and Wellness Fairs
- Complimentary speakers on various topics: Eldercare Attorney, Medicare/Medicaid, VA Benefits, Chiropractic Care, Estate Planning, Drug/Alcohol Resources, Counseling, Physical Therapy, Home Organizing, E-Commerce, Massage Therapy, Senior In-Home Chef, Etc.

Diane Bromberg-Stern | 201 478-2228
President, Senior Resource Group of NJ
www.Facebook.com
SeniorResourceGroupNJ

If you or a loved one needs help accessing addiction services and support...

Call or Text: 201-589-2976

Confidential hotline services available 24/7 to serve Bergen County

 **THE CENTER**
FOR ALCOHOL AND DRUG RESOURCES
A Program of Children’s Aid and Family Services