



Healthy Practices | Week 2: Mind

Five Minutes of Gratitude

God created us with the ability to be thankful, and this is a *gift*.

Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

-1 Thessalonians 5:18

Clinical studies show engaging with intentional practices of gratitude aids us in our overall state of mental health, helps our wisdom development, assists our bodies in the management of stress and emotion regulation, increases our brain's production of dopamine and serotonin, and can help lower heart rate.

Gratitude Journaling Practice:

- If possible, engage in this practice when you have a few quiet moments to yourself.
- Begin with 3-5 repetitions of 4-7-8 controlled breathing (from the Week 1 Healthy Practice) or just take a few deep breaths before you begin.
- Begin a short list of the people, places, events, things, truths, or circumstances for which you feel grateful. If stuck, begin simply, with the air you breathe or the ground beneath your body.
- If you prefer to draw gratitude-focused pictures instead of writing a list, do so.
- Engage this practice with depth, rather than breadth. Hone in on 1-2 thoughts and elaborate on those in detail for 5 minutes (or longer, if you'd like).

A helpful tip as you journal:

If helpful for you, play wordless music to help you better focus on journaling (choose instrumentals such as classical, jazz, percussion beats, or any genre you enjoy).

Pray:

After engaging in this practice, turn toward the Lord. Lift up the person/people, place(s), event(s), thing(s), truth(s), or circumstance(s) for which you feel grateful. Thank the Lord for the good gifts in your life and how even in expressing gratitude, your body and mind benefit from that practice. And ultimately, thank God for our greatest gift: Jesus.

Adding this practice to your life:

If possible, engage with this exercise at least a few times a week, practicing it as you would any other healthy practice or discipline.

Acknowledgements: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5506019/>, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24326079/>,
<https://www.proquest.com/openview/5937047669ecfc2c5524db291321052c/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=60992>,
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19073292/>.

This Healthy Practice has been curated and/or written by Angela Adour, MAC, who uses this practice with her own clients.



Healthy Practices for Children | Week 2: Mind

Gratitude Engagement

Say this to your child:

The Bible tells us God wants us to be thankful.

What are you thankful for? Are you thankful for (_insert favorite food here_)? Are you thankful for (_insert person here_)? Are you thankful for (_insert favorite cartoon or toy here_)? *(Feel free to choose your own)*

Ask your child to repeat these prayers after you:

"Thank you, God, for making (_favorite food_) for me to eat!"

"Thank you, God, for giving me (_person_) to care for me!"

"Thank you, God, for (_favorite cartoon/toy_) that makes me smile!"

Read this verse to your child:

Be thankful all the time, God wants this for you. -1 Thessalonians 5:18 simplified

In the box below, draw a picture of what you imagined when you heard that Bible verse:

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<https://www.proquest.com/openview/5937047669ecfc2c5524db291321052c/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=60992>,
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