

## Preliminary Exercise - Gratitude Letter / Visit



1. Take a moment to think of someone that you are truly grateful for and have not had the opportunity to thank yet (regardless of the reason). Perhaps this person has given, helped, or done something for you, etc. The person can be anyone. It can be a co-worker, friend, or teacher, for example.

2. Write down his or her name: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Close your eyes and think of how this person has had a positive effect in your life.

List a few of the things that came to mind: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Briefly describe how this makes you feel: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Throughout the rest of the day reflect on this person and how they make you.

6. When ready, complete the following Gratitude Letter / Visit Exercise.

# Gratitude Letter / Visit



## WHY GRATITUDE

Practicing gratitude has many tremendous psychological and physical benefits. Gratitude can strengthen our relationships, improve health and increase levels of life satisfaction. It can decrease stress and even depression all while increasing happiness! This activity asks us to intentionally and thoughtfully write a letter to someone whom you are truly grateful for and have not had the opportunity to thank. Ideally, you will visit this person and read the letter out loud to them. If you are unable to meet them in person due to geographical distance, you may choose to have a phone or video call instead. This exercise may be one of the greatest gifts you can give yourself!

## HOW TO

Take a moment to think of someone that you are truly grateful for and have not had the opportunity to thank yet (regardless of the reason). Perhaps this person has given, helped, or done something for you, etc. The person can be anyone. It can be a co-worker, friend, or teacher, for example. Once you have given this some thought follow these next steps.

### Part 1:

- Think of how this person has contributed to you in a positive way.
- Write down a list of general and specific things this person has done to contribute in this way and write about how these things make you feel.
- Write the letter. Take as much time that is needed - some take a week or two to complete the letter.
- Write as though you are talking to this person. Do not worry about grammar or spelling. Write roughly 2-4 paragraphs.

### Part 2:

- Schedule a time to meet with this person. Mention that you have something special to share but be sure not to tell them about the purpose of the meeting.
- Begin the meeting by letting them know you are grateful for them and that you would like to read a letter to them. Kindly ask them not to interrupt while reading the letter.
- Read the letter out loud (taking time and reading slowly) and then give this person time to reflect and think about what they heard. During this time notice the feelings in your body. *It is important to be receptive and not have expectations of how this person will respond.*
- Lastly, spend time reflecting together and be sure to give the letter to the person before leaving.

## SOURCES

- 2009 research led by Jeffrey Froh, [https://people.hofstra.edu/jeffrey\\_j\\_froh/fall%202009%20web/froh%20article%20PDF\\_JOPP%20final%20proof-1.pdf](https://people.hofstra.edu/jeffrey_j_froh/fall%202009%20web/froh%20article%20PDF_JOPP%20final%20proof-1.pdf)
- Martin Seligman, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, <http://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/default.aspx>
- Greater Good in Action, <https://ggia.berkeley.edu/>