



Cultivating Gratitude to Support Wellbeing

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B4Stage4

Objectives

- Participants will explore:
 - The science behind the brain and wellbeing;
 - How to use what we know about the brain to work for not against us; and
 - How to intentionally incorporate gratitude and other wellbeing tools into your life.



Survival works...

- We are designed to survive as an organism
 - We need food
 - We need water
 - We need shelter

... to a point

- We do not need the following to survive as organisms
 - Happiness
 - Joy
 - A sense of well-being

So what about thriving over surviving?

As human beings we evolved and developed a cerebral cortex that gives us the ability to reason and analyze. The frontal lobe provides executive function for our brain. This allows us to choose what we train our brain.

We have a say in how our life goes.

Training our brain to work for us as opposed to settling for survival takes effort and intentionality.

Gratitude to the rescue

- One way of intentionally training your brain to thrive is with gratitude
- Thanksgiving and gratitude are spontaneous emotions.
- They can also be learned and harnessed for wellbeing.

Practices that work

- Today we will cover three practices that can help develop wellbeing through gratitude
 - Gratitude lists
 - Savoring
 - Gratitude anchoring memories

Gratitude Lists 1

- Set aside some time to focus on gratitude
- Write down at least five (5) things you are grateful for
 - Focus outside of yourself
 - It can be something simple or profound
 - I am grateful for the air I breathe
 - I am grateful for life itself
 - Pick one of the things you wrote and elaborate on it

Gratitude Lists 2

- Write a list of things you are grateful for, at least 12 things
- Each day add at least three (3) things to the list and elaborate on one of them
- Avoid being repetitive.

Gratitude List 3

- Choose a focusing tool that has things you can count such as prayer beads or a rosary or a small series of objects that you can finger.
- Bring to mind something you are grateful for as you focus on the texture of the focusing item.
 - The smoothness of the bead
 - The structure of the object
- Have at least 12 items on your focusing tool
- When using prayer beads or a rosary, challenge yourself to find something for each bead to be grateful for

Savoring

- Bring to mind something that happened during your day that had you feel grateful.
- Replay the event and the experience in your mind's eye like you are watching a video.
- Appreciate everything about the memory, where you were, who you were with or what was around you, how you were feeling.
- Enjoy the appreciate and gratitude.

Gratitude Anchoring Memories

- Set aside from time to be quiet and think
- Have something to write with and to write on if you usually write out thoughts
- Get in a comfortable and relaxed position
- Bring to mind the memory of an event that gave you great joy and peace
- Put yourself in the memory as if it is happening in the present moment

Gratitude Anchoring Memories

- Be grateful for the experience, really focus on feeling the appreciation and gratitude
- If the memory fades, focus on the event again and re-experience it in the present moment and feel the gratitude for having the experience
- Bring the memory to mind and be grateful whenever you have a minute to re-focus
- Intentionally bring the experience up on those moments when you are feeling distressed or uncomfortable

Thank you for the opportunity!

It has been an honor to be with you today.

To reach me you can email: ahgray59@gmail.com

Please visit our websites:

www.TheProsumers.org

www.theprointernational.com

Science of Wellbeing

For more information on the science of wellbeing and how to intentionally work on being happy consider taking the Yale course on the Science of Well-being

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/the-science-of-well-being>

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