

Mindful Gratitude

Do you struggle with feeling satisfied when you reach your goals or often think about what you don't have? If so, you may benefit from making gratitude a mindful practice.

Mindful gratitude helps you focus on being thankful for what you have rather than dwelling on what you lack. There are numerous benefits to including gratitude in your daily routine, including:

- ▶ Improved mental and physical health
- ▶ Stronger coping skills
- ▶ Increased happiness in relationships and interactions with others
- ▶ Decreased anxiety and depression

Here are some tips for cultivating an attitude of gratitude:

- ▶ **Stay present.** When you notice yourself dwelling on the past or worrying about the future, think of at least one thing that you can be grateful about in the present moment. For instance, if a rainy day has ruined your plans, you could recognize how good it is to be in a safe, dry place.
- ▶ **Notice your surroundings.** Taking a moment to enjoy the natural world or appreciate your co-workers can help you manage stress and regain focus.



- ▶ **Keep a gratitude journal.** Write down what you are grateful for on a regular basis. Reread these entries whenever you feel negative or frustrated.
- ▶ **Skip comparisons.** Theodore Roosevelt once said that “comparison is the thief of joy.” Keep in mind that contentment does not come from material things, but from within.
- ▶ **Avoid perfectionism.** Respect your efforts, even when they don't turn out as hoped. Remember, most people learn far more from their mistakes than they do from their successes.
- ▶ **Express appreciation.** Thank others when they help you. Tell people the reasons why you respect or admire them. If someone experiences success, congratulate them on a job well done.

LifeMatters can suggest additional ways to make gratitude a habit. Call 24/7/365.

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