

TIPS FOR FOSTERING GRATITUDE



Start a Gratitude Journal

Taking time each day to jot down new things you are grateful for slowly changes the way you perceive situations in your life. It adjusts your focus and prompts the brain to stay alert for fresh grateful moments in your day.



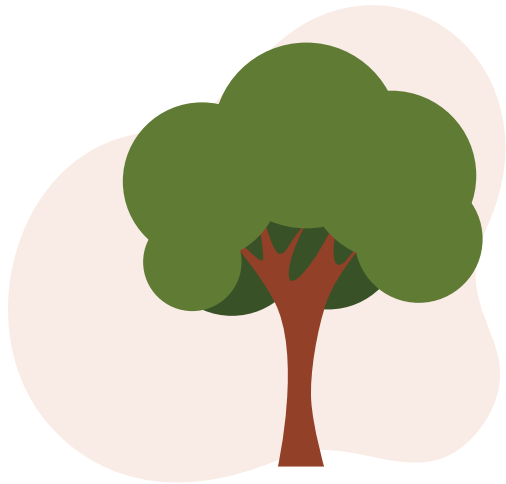
Be Social With Your Gratitude

If you are grateful for someone in your life, *let them know*. Send a text, make a phone call, or write a hand written note. While it's always best to express your thanks in person, mentally thanking the people you are grateful for is another way to reinforcing gratitude.



Leverage Meditation

In mindfulness meditation, you learn to focus on the present moment without judgment. While people will often focus on a word or phrase (such as "peace"), it is also possible to focus on things you are grateful for (a physical sensation or element of your surroundings, etc.).



Confront your mortality

To a certain extent, remembering "the bad" and acknowledging its presence as a given in life can help you appreciate the good. This ties into a concept called "grateful coping", in which you are able to reframe unpleasant events and decrease their emotional impact by looking for positives in the aftermath (i.e. remembering how a particularly stressful situation contributed to who you are today.)



Be creative

The goal is to weave gratitude into the fabric of your daily life. Don't limit yourself. From slips of paper in a jar with things you're grateful for, to carrying a gratitude "token" that reminds you to stay grateful--the possibilities are endless. By expressing gratitude in whatever new or familiar ways you feel compelled, you only further integrate the habit into your daily life.



Be realistic

Lastly, if you're going to make gratitude a habit in your life, recognize and plan for obstacles upfront. Think (realistically) about when you can set aside time to journal and already have a plan for getting back on track if you happen to miss a day or two.