

WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW

ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE



WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW

MON



STAY STRONG

Physical Well-Being

TUES



ALIGN

Spiritual Well-Being

WEDS



ENGAGE & GROW

Career & Intellectual Well-Being

THURS



CONNECT

Social Well-Being

FRI



FEEL WELL

Emotional Well-Being

Activity Title:

Grow Your Gratitude

Well-Being Dimension:

Social

Required Resources/Materials:

See below

Author:

Anne Brafford labrafford@aspire.legal

Activity Objective:

Try out different ways of practicing gratitude to bolster social connection and well-being.

Well-Being Connection (How/Why Does this Work?)

Gratitude is defined as a sense of thankfulness and joy in response to receiving a gift. Multiple studies have found the positive power of gratitude for fostering social connection, pro-social behaviors, and mental well-being.

Procedure

There are many ways you can practice gratitude--individually and with others. Below are a variety of ideas.

GRATITUDE JOURNAL

One well-tested well-being-boosting gratitude activity is keeping a gratitude journal to regularly record [three good things](#):

- Once a week, think about everything—large and small—for which you're thankful (e.g., got great feedback on work, dinner was delicious, tulips are blooming). Think about things you're good at, advantages you've had, people who care about you and have touched your life.
- Then pick three things and write a brief note about them.
- Include how this event made you feel at the time and later
- Explain what you think caused this event—why it happened.
- Try out a gratitude journal website or smart phone app (e.g., My Gratitude Journal by Happytapper), which will send you regular reminders.

Keep in mind that the good effects can wear off without variety if boredom or a sense of obligation sets in. So you'll want to try out other gratitude activities too.

Procedure

GRATITUDE NOTE, LETTER, OR VIDEO

Think about all the people for whom you feel grateful—a colleague, a good boss, a family member, old friends, a special teacher or coach. Then prepare messages expressing your gratitude—in a letter, a short note, or even a video. If you write a letter consider visiting or calling the person to read it aloud. In your message, describe what they did for you and how that affected you. Check out this fun [video from Soul Pancake](#) showing real-life results from a gratitude letter activity.

APPRECIATIVE ART

Engage in something artistic to express your gratitude to others. Draw or paint them a picture, make a collage, sculpt with clay, etc. Or write a poem, a song, or a story. Research has found that art-creation can reduce anxiety and boost mood—especially when it depicts something happy or uplifting (as opposed to venting negative emotions). A variety of different art-making activities have positive psychological effects—e.g., drawing, painting, collage-making, clay work. So, engaging in an appreciative art activity can give you benefits both from artistic engagement and also from your grateful thinking.

GRATITUDE PHOTO COLLAGE

Taking and sharing “selfies” is popular, but try this too: For a week, watch for every-day things for which you’re grateful (e.g., your dog, a warm garage in winter, dinner with friends, your baby niece) and take photos of them. At the end of the week, post them all on your favorite social networking website with fun notes. Research has found that sharing good things with others (the more the better) actually increases your enjoyment of them. So share your photos with friends and explain why they represent something for which you’re grateful.

GRATITUDE JAR OR BOARD

Create a Gratitude Jar or Gratitude Board and invite others to drop in or post notes whenever someone does something helpful. Then read the notes aloud periodically. Use this activity with your family, work colleagues—any group that spends time together.

MEETING STARTERS

People report that they’re less likely to feel or express gratitude at work than anywhere else—even though they acknowledge getting a positive boost from saying “thank you” and otherwise showing gratitude. This is a lost opportunity for fueling resilient, optimal functioning, and engagement. Consider starting meetings by asking everyone to identify something for which they’re grateful or one good thing that has gone well this week.

GRATITUDE SURVEY

Below is a survey to measure and track your progress on growing your gratitude. On a scale of 1 to 7 (with 1 being the lowest), how much do you disagree or agree with the following? (An electronic version is available on U Penn’s [Authentic Happiness website](#).)

- I have so much in life to be thankful for.
- If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list.
- When I look at the world, I don’t see much to be grateful for.*
- I am grateful to a wide variety of people.
- As I get older I find myself more able to appreciate the people, events, and situations that have been part of my life history.
- Long amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful to something or someone.*

* Reversed Scored