

Practicing Gratitude



What is Gratitude?

Affirming goodness and **recognizing** the sources.



Research on the Benefits of Gratefulness

- **Psychological** (positive emotions: alert, energetic, enthused, attentive)
- **Physical** (more exercise, better sleep, fewer symptoms)
- **Interpersonal** (more helpful and connected, less lonely and isolated)

Source: R.A. Emmons & M.E. McCullough, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2003, 84, 377-389.

Gratitude & Physical Health

- Enhances healthy behaviors
- Enhances healthy sleep
- Reduces blood pressure
- Taking care of one's health



What Good is Gratitude?

- Allows celebration of the present
- Can block toxic emotions (envy, resentment, regret)
- Builds stress-resilience
- Strengthens social ties



Grateful vs. Ungrateful

- Lens of abundance vs. lens of scarcity
- What life is offering vs. what life is denying
- Life as a gift vs. life as a burden
- Satisfaction vs. deprivation



Obstacles to Gratefulness

- Negativity
- Entitlement
- Distractions
- Inability to accept dependency



How to Develop a Practice of Gratitude

- Develop a practice that's best for you
- Try thinking about 3 good things that went well recently
- Write about why you are grateful for these things
- Be creative and genuine

Questions?

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