

# JPotter Health Cultivating & Sharing Gratitude



Gratitude is a powerful practice that can be explored as both a blessing to ourselves and a gift to others. It is practiced through cultivating appreciation for all that we have and can be explored even during times of difficulty.

This exercise explores several ways we might practice gratitude. The suggestions listed can also be followed in sequence. Begin within and see where you might like to share your gratitude with another.

## Practice:

### 1. Recognizing One's Blessings

The first part of any gratitude practice is awareness of all we must be thankful for. To practice, we simply need to take a moment's pause – to tune in with the gifts with which we are blessed.

Take three to five minutes to sit down and mentally scan through all you must be grateful for. Some of the things you might acknowledge could include:

- |   |  |                                       |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your breath          | <input type="checkbox"/> Health and wellbeing    | <input type="checkbox"/> Books        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A place to call home | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Pets/Animals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electricity          | <input type="checkbox"/> Food on the table       | <input type="checkbox"/> A garden     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Refrigeration        | <input type="checkbox"/> Loved Ones              | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean water  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music and Art        | <input type="checkbox"/> Security / work / money | <input type="checkbox"/> Your pets    |

\*Note: Even on difficult days, we can practice gratitude by noting what is going well for us. There are always things to be grateful for, even during struggle. Gratitude does not mean we need to ignore or deny our suffering, but it does invite us to be open to other aspects of life as well.

### 2. Keeping a Gratitude Journal

You can deepen this practice by putting pen to paper and making a list of all the things you must be grateful for. This could be turned into a daily ritual, becoming part of your evening or morning routine. You can begin by writing down what you must be grateful for in the space below:

### 3. Sharing our Gratitude

After we have cultivated a sense of gratitude for ourselves, we can share it with others in a variety of ways. Some of the ways we might do this include:

- a. Starting a conversation about gratitude
  - i. This could be formal or informal. For instance, with a close friend you might suggest each sharing that for which you have to be grateful.
  - ii. For a less formal practice, you could simply bring gratitude into the conversation by saying something like, "I don't often stop to acknowledge what a blessing it is to have access to such an abundance of food, but I am truly grateful for it."
  - iii. Without expecting the other person to share a similar sentiment, let the conversation unfold naturally. The more you share your gratitude, the more this outlook will ripple into the lives of others.
- b. Writing a gratitude letter
  - i. If you feel immense gratitude for someone in your life., why not let them know through a letter? Take your time to consider all the reasons you appreciate this person, write it all down, and share it with them
- c. Establishing an at home gratitude practice
  - i. If you live with others, you might make gratitude a daily practice by bringing it into mealtime. Start with one meal when you all typically eat

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together. Before taking your first bite, invite everyone around the table to share one thing they are grateful for in that moment.

## **Reflection:**

Make a commitment to practice gratitude in some form every day for a week. After the week has passed, consider:

How has this gratitude practice shifted my inner experience? In what ways have I felt the benefits of gratitude? How can I deepen this practice?



*JPotter Health*