

About the gratitude page

Many of us get caught up in unhelpful thinking. We get used to berating ourselves, judging ourselves or others or getting caught in anxious or depressive thoughts about the future and past. Practising gratitude is a wonderful way to interrupt that way of thinking and to help us become more present. It also helps us realise what is good in our lives and what brings us joy. Very often many of us lose touch with those knowings as all our attention focuses on what we don't want and what we don't like. This can make our world seem small and painful. Gratitude helps interrupt that way of thinking. It helps us look outward and encourages us to notice the good things in life. In doing so we may start to get a sense that the world is perhaps not as scary or dangerous as we perceived. And that perhaps there are some things in our life that are good and bring us joy. And that there is more than just our problems and pain we have been focusing on for so long for. Gratitude opens up our perspective and the world.

Neuroscience shows us that as we focus on the similar thoughts over and over the more they become hard wired in the mind. So when we practice gratitude we are creating new pathways in our brain. As we do this over and over they eventually become hard wired which means we are more likely to notice and experience what is great in our life.

Practising gratitude is also particularly useful when we are going through challenging times. All the practice now means we are able to access other resources of positivity, safety, beauty etc. In the past we may have just felt lost in the challenging feelings and thoughts, but now where we have exercised that part that notices what we are grateful for, we are able to incorporate that into the moment. We may notice that there is some space and that we are not quite as caught up in the feelings and thoughts as we were previously.

By the way you can get really creative with the gratitude list. You can make things up as if you already have them. For instance 'I am grateful for my new lovely partner', 'I am grateful for my job and the people I work with'... It helps to get really specific with this ... It's like a post-it note to the future.

The mind does not know the difference between what is imagined and real. That's amazing! So if we imagine something to be true our body behaves as if it is real. And if our body behaves as if it is real then there is a chance of us manifesting this in real life.

What will help make today great?

What can I do/be to help make the day go well for me.

Here are some ideas; reduce time on Facebook to 5 mins, go for a 5 minute walk, cook myself a nice meal, ring a friend, watch an uplifting film, meditate, have a luxurious bath, get a massage, hug my partner.....

Just thinking about what can improve your day can set you up for a more positive day. As you imagine what can help you you are helping to transform your life and create new possibilities. If you carry these ideas out you are then helping to reinforce this new way of being and at the same time enriching your life.

Tip; don't set yourself up with big challenges or too many. Start with small steps. Often if the challenge is too big or too much we end up not doing it at all or giving up very quickly.

What is great about me?:

If you don't know, imagine you are your best friend, or you are an angel or god and you can see all the great things about you. Write it all down, as much as you can. It's important.

We are so used to finding the flaws in ourselves. A big part of healing starts with compassion.

When we are able to bring compassion to ourselves we are more able to let go of the struggle with ourselves and thoughts and feelings. We are able to be on our side and support ourselves through that instead of beating ourselves up or telling ourselves that we are broken, stupid etc.

Most of you have been raised with parents that could not truly support you through your pain/fear/anguish. When this happens we don't know how to support ourselves through it. As we learn to be compassionate and see the good in ourselves the more we are able to be that parent we never had and enable healing and self love to occur.

Amazing things that happened today. Write as much as you can:

Doesn't matter how small it is. Find something. It could be a smile from a stranger, the taste of a nice cup of tea, a conversation with a friend...anything!

Parallel Universe. Replay today and have it go exactly how you would like it to go:

This is a great one. Remember what I said earlier; The mind does not know the difference between what is real and what is imagined. So go for it. Play your day out, play it out again until it's perfect, it's just how you want it to go. Then write it out. Each time you do this you are helping create what you want to be or have in your life.

Here's a suggestion.

Get yourself a nice journal, something that feels good to write in. Preferably that has enough pages for the year.

Print the Gratitude page and this page out and stick it in the front of your journal.

Then ever morning and evening answer the questions on each page.

The key is to keep this up. Practice, practice, practice.

What reward can you give yourself for completing the first week?**What will help you maintain writing your gratitude page?**