

NEWSLETTER

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parenting with GRATITUDE

NOVEMBER
2023

Research shows that having gratitude can improve mental health. In fact, according to [mentalhealthfirstaid.org](https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org), studies have found that a single act of thoughtful gratitude produces an immediate 10% increase in happiness, and a 35% reduction in depressive symptoms. If you have a teenager in your home, you know that those percentages mean a huge difference in the atmosphere around your house. Looking for ways to be thankful can be tough for adolescents, so they will need you to model this for them.

Looking for ways to acknowledge when someone has helped you, finding the silver lining, and simply taking the time to notice the people and things around you are all a good start for this practice.

Being grateful is a great antidote to being entitled. When you notice your child displaying a sense of entitlement to those around them, help them shift their thinking and acknowledge when others have had their back.

Questions for parents to consider:

- When is it easy for you to show gratitude? When is it tough? Why?
- How do you show true gratitude?
- Who do you need to thank in this moment?

Questions to ask your child:

- How do you like to be thanked?
- Is it hard for you to accept true gratitude? Why or why not?
- Who do you need to thank in this moment?

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GRATITUDE:

Letting others know you see how they've helped you

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WEEK ONE:

What is gratitude?

Who has helped you and how have they specifically helped you, and how can you tell them? This week, we will dig one layer below the surface and figure out who you are specifically grateful for, and what they have done for you that is so special. This month is about having that recognition, and then most importantly - it's about telling them.

WEEK TWO:

Honor the helper

How can you tune in to the awareness that someone else has helped you? How can you be on the lookout for helpers? We can get so focused on ourselves and our stuff that we block out seeing all of the people around us who make us who we are. Maybe this is because we are on autopilot, or maybe it's because there's too much happening and we can't focus on anything in particular.

WEEK THREE:

Gratitude no matter what

Sometimes, our lives seem to be moving along just fine. Other times, it seems like nothing can go right, and life is full of disappointment. How can I find gratitude when nothing is going my way? What if my life is in chaos — how can I be grateful for anything?

MENTAL HEALTH FOCUS

WEEK FOUR:

Expanding gratitude

Have you spent much time thinking about the folks who put together airplane landing gear? Most likely not, unless you have ever been on a plane that landed safely during bad weather conditions. Or what about the fact that 15 years ago, a kid in a high school just like yours was playing drums in the marching band, went on to study music, and got good enough to play as a studio musician on your favorite album? To round out this month, we will spend a bit of time expanding our vision from the people we know and can be grateful for to the people we've never met and can be grateful for.