

Make Gratitude Your Attitude

About gratitude

Gratitude is about appreciating what we have, rather than craving what we don't. Gratitude is worth cultivating because there are stacks of benefits. Dr Robert Emmons is a world expert on Gratitude and has conducted research on it (see: emmons.faculty.ucdavis.edu/gratitude-and-well-being/). His research has demonstrated that Grateful people feel better physically, are more optimistic, more alert, enthusiastic, determined, attentive and energetic. They also have a greater sense of connection to others, and have longer and better quality sleep. Others have linked Gratitude to less stress, less anxiety and depression, higher long-term satisfaction with quality of life and greater capacity to cope with life changes.

Making gratitude your attitude

Gratitude can be learned. We can teach our brains to look for gratitude and make gratitude a habit. This is what I did in a project called Make Gratitude Your Attitude. I posted a daily record on Facebook of something I was grateful for that day.



I rewired my brain. It started off as a 21-day challenge and I continued it for a year because I noticed I began to look for things to be grateful for and it felt good. Gratitude became a way of being. This is not to say I wasn't every angry, sad, flat – and all the other human emotions. Rather, the practice of gratitude gave me something to hang on to, particularly when life was difficult. A life raft of sorts.

Everyday at around the same time I document what I am grateful for – this process of documenting (photos and memes or drawings and words etc) helps to ensure I am mindful about the practice. It really makes it conscious for me.

Setting up a gratitude project

Doing a Gratitude practice with family and friends is a very special thing to do. They can help keep you on track. They can give you ideas, reminders and encouragement. You may feel like you have someone in your corner – speaking the same language. Think about sharing the gratitude cards you make. Set yourself realistic goals eg: once a day and don't be hard on yourself if you miss a day. Keep going till it becomes a habit. If possible try to do it at the same time each day.

If you are planning a group project, think about setting up a web page or sharing your cards on facebook. This can help others feel supported and encouraged. Contact Catherine (details below) to discuss having a page or e-album on the project website (ticketsonmyself.com/gratitude). You could develop a blank postcard template and invite friends and family to return their Gratitude cards to a particular person who could upload them. Here are some simple instructions:

1. Think about something you are grateful for today
2. Take a blank piece of paper (I call these 'tickets')
3. Write down what you are grateful for
4. Decorate the card
5. Scan and share it with friends (download CamScanner on your phone)

There are some great apps for taking pictures and writing memes (words) about what you are grateful for. The image on this document was taken on an iphone and words added in an App called Phonto. Another great free app for doing special effects to photos is PicsArt.

More information

If you would like more information please contact project founder Catherine Barrett by email on: ticketsonmyself@gmail.com