



Gather Everyone Together

A Family Engagement E-Letter from the ADAMHS Board Prevention Project

ISSUE 3: GET GRATEFUL

Now that we're a couple of weeks into our isolation you might find that you or others are starting to get cranky. Cabin fever is a real thing and can cause mental and emotional distress. It comes from feeling a lack of choices or control over your situation. But, where do those feelings come from? Imagine if you went around thinking: "This stinks! I'm stuck at home." You would probably start feeling pretty grouchy. What if you followed those thoughts with "Hey, at least I don't have to get up at 6:00 a.m. and I get to spend all day in my jammies!" Most likely you would find yourself feeling better! Sure, both are true, but which thoughts do you want swirling around in your head: the ones that make you feel bad or the ones that make you feel good? You have the choice. Acknowledge the negative thoughts and let them float by like a breeze, then come up with and hold on to positive ones to replace them. Read on to find more ways the words in our heads can improve our health and happiness when we GET Grateful! You may be surprised what you discover and how much better you feel!

Develop an Attitude of Gratitude!

Gratitude is defined as: the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness. It's a quality we all have access to simply by being conscious of it. It's one of the easiest ways to improve our lives! Here are 7 science-backed ways we benefit from having an attitude of gratitude.

- **New relationships:** Expressing gratitude by thanking an acquaintance can create an opportunity for them to seek an ongoing relationship. Showing appreciation can help you gain new friendships.
- **Improved physical health:** Grateful people experience fewer aches and pains and report feeling physically healthier. They are also more likely to take care of themselves.
- **Improved psychological health:** Gratitude reduces toxic emotions like envy, resentment, frustration, and regret. Studies have shown that gratitude increases positive emotions and may reduce depression.
- **Enhanced empathy and reduced aggression:** Grateful people are more likely to be positive, even when others are being negative. They experience sensitivity and empathy toward other people and a decreased desire to do harm.
- **Better sleep:** Take 15 minutes before bedtime to jot down a few things you're grateful for into a journal or on a notepad and you may find yourself sleeping more soundly. Having the last thoughts before falling asleep be positive ones can build positive brain pathways while you're sleeping.
- **Higher self-esteem:** Gratitude increases self-esteem, improves performance, and reduces social comparisons. Rather than being negative toward those who have "more," grateful people are able to be happy for others.
- **Increased mental strength!** Gratitude reduces stress and may play a role in overcoming trauma. Recognizing all that you have to be thankful for (even during the worst times) nurtures resilience.



Learn Gratitude by Playing Games!

Teach your children about gratitude by playing a game. Before taking a turn in games like Jenga, each player can say something they are grateful for. Make sure you go first so your child will learn the concept and see how good it makes you feel. This will make it easier for them to do the same. (It's also a great way to improve communication and critical thinking skills!) Switch-up games like charades or Pictionary by swapping the random topics for things you are grateful for. Each person can write down 5-10 items on separate sheets and then draw or act them out. Or come up with something you're grateful for that starts with each letter of the alphabet. You can use the link below to turn your list into your own personalized family gratitude Wordsearch! Whatever you decide, be sure not to judge or criticize what anyone chooses. The important part is thinking about the positive people, places and things in your life, not what someone else values. You never know: you may find yourself on the receiving end of someone else's gratitude!

W	S	E	S	E	M	A	G	D	I	L	Q
T	G	D	M	D	L	Z	O	R	C	A	R
S	K	I	N	O	Q	G	N	W	Z	M	E
D	I	D	R	E	H	C	A	E	T	D	F
Q	N	S	X	W	I	T	B	A	X	N	Z
Q	D	L	I	F	E	R	P	S	A	A	H
D	N	Q	U	R	O	D	F	I	R	R	D
A	E	D	P	T	N	S	K	S	M	G	O
D	S	U	H	A	Y	Y	V	T	M	X	O
P	S	E	R	O	E	G	Q	E	X	O	F
I	R	G	T	A	C	B	R	R	N	N	M
J	E	B	F	R	E	E	D	O	M	X	N

Find & circle some things people are grateful for:

- BROTHER
- CAT
- DAD
- DOG
- FOOD
- FREEDOM
- FRIENDS
- GAMES
- GRANDMA
- GRANDPA
- HOME
- KINDNESS
- LIFE
- MOM
- SISTER
- TEACHER
- TOYS
- WATER

Is the Glass Half Empty or Half Full?



Maybe, just be Grateful to Have a Glass