



THE  
*Gratitude*  
PLAN

**CHECKLIST**

## Defining Gratitude

- Gratitude is a state of being
  - Extremely complex and dynamic
  - Contributes to relationship satisfaction
- Gratitude is an emotion
  - A personally meaningful experience
  - Different from a mood
  - An empathic emotion

## Gratitude in Society

- Plays a seminal role in shaping your destiny
- Ways to find gratitude vary
- Gratitude Today
  - Often pursued through materialism
  - Viewed from a use-and-discard perspective
  - Gratitude is contagious
  - Can bring you happiness

## Gratitude in Relationships

- Make the mistake of the assumption error
  - We make assumptions
    - Others know what we think and feel
    - Believe others should know what we are thinking
- Many go through life on autopilot
  - We put little thought into our daily lives
    - Too busy making lists and future plans
  - Have stopped being consciously aware
- Communicating Gratitude
  - Sharing gratitude nurtures relationships
  - Verbally convey gratitude to foster connections
    - Through observation
    - Through feeling
    - Through need
  - Letting someone know you notice can make a difference
  - You have to acknowledge that you need others
  - Show gratitude for the things others do for you
  - Show gratitude for the things others say to you
  - Show gratitude for who someone is as a person

## **The Power of Positive Emotions and Gratitude**

- Happiness isn't an unrealistic desire
- Half of your happiness levels are based in genetics
  - Another 10 percent is determined by your life circumstances
  - Leaving 40 percent based on your behavior
- Can reduce frequency and duration of depression
- Can block negative and unpleasant emotions
- Can help you keep things in perspective
- Keeps you from getting stuck in negative emotions
- Gratitude has many benefits
  - Increase capacity for experiencing positive emotions
    - Love
    - Compassion
    - Humility
    - Comfort
    - Passion
    - Confidence
  - More resilient and resistant to stress
  - More capable to get through difficult times
  - Helps you find strength
- Gratitude can be learned
- Can choose to not become overwhelmed with challenges

## **Mindfulness, Meditation, and Gratitude**

- Often adopt someone else's emotional story
  - We pick up habits and behaviors of those we're closest to
  - Benefit from being aware of it
  - Build awareness through mindfulness
- Mindfulness is paying attention on purpose
  - Bringing your full attention to the details of your experiences
  - Notice the experience in the moment
- Practicing mindfulness has many benefits
  - Help treat and prevent depression
    - Changes the imbalance of the chemical circuitry in the brain
    - Shift you out of negative thought patterns
  - Enhances the body's general functioning
    - Promotes healing
    - Improves immune response
    - Improve stress reactivity
    - Provides general sense of well-being

- Can practice mindfulness through meditation
- Can practice gratitude meditation
  - Can start feeling more contented with life
  - Helps you achieve a deep state of relaxation
  - Makes you feel good

### **Unbalanced Gratitude**

- Missed opportunities for gratitude
- False expressions of gratitude
- Superficial gratitude
  - Not genuine or from the heart
  - Occurs when there is a public expectation
  - Rarely makes you feel good
  - Often associated with resentment and anxiety
- Obligatory Gratitude
  - Feel the need to say thanks for a kindness not wanted

### **How Gratitude Empowers**

- Helps both psychologically and physically
  - Allows one to become happier and more positive
    - Boost immunity levels
    - Reduce occurrence of illness
    - Live a more active life
    - Become more optimistic
    - Become more thankful
    - Gain energy
    - Find the meaning in life
    - Become more social

### **How to Learn Gratitude**

- Master gratitude with practice and discipline
- Realize that there is always something to be grateful for
- Grateful people have some common behaviors
  - Realistic expectations of life
  - Unconditionally happy
  - Know that the good comes with the bad
  - They are optimistic

## **Developing Gratitude Habits**

- Can take time to develop a new habit
- Requires support and encouragement
- Practice giving
  - Switch from an attitude of entitlement
  - Engage in activities that focus on sharing, giving, and connecting
- Writing Gratitude
  - Write thank-you notes
    - Positive step in developing gratitude

## **Cultivating Gratitude**

- Practice gratitude meditation
- Start writing in a gratitude journal
- Practice gratitude breathing exercises
- Set gratitude reminders
- Practice gratitude with your family
- Write a gratitude letter
- Write thank you notes