CREATE YOUR CALM

Practicing Gratitude

Get your gratitude on ... and feel better!
What’s a Gratitude Letter?

**Gratitude Letter:** A hand-written letter, or typed, if writing is not possible, to a person you are grateful for.

**Why gratitude?** Gratitude is the quality of being thankful, a readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness. It’s like a muscle: the more you work it, the stronger it gets!! Energy flows where attention goes.

Research focusing on gratitude demonstrates many benefits!

Increases in...
- psychological health
- empathy
- social connection
- self-esteem
- mental strength
- sleep quality

If you feel comfortable, deliver your letter to its recipient. Your gratitude and feelings of happiness will increase even more if you’re able to observe the receiver’s reactions!

Delivering in person might not be possible due to social distancing. If that’s the case, scheduling a video-chat and sending the letter by email is a good alternative.
Step 1: Identify a Person

- Close your eyes.
- Call up the face of someone still alive who did something or said something that changed your life for the better.
- This person can be a friend, family member, coworker, mentor, etc.
- Write their name down.

Step 2: Write Your Letter

- Write a letter of gratitude to this person (~300 words)
- Begin by addressing the person directly (“Dear …”)
- Describe what this person has done that makes you grateful, and how they have impacted your life.

*** Tips to help generate ideas for your letter are on the next page! ***

Step 3: Share Your Gratitude

- Plan a visit/video chat with the recipient.
- @ the beginning of your meeting let them know that you would like to read them a letter you wrote.
- Ask that they do not interrupt until you are done reading.
- Pay attention to the reactions of you and the recipient as you read.
- After reading, listen to their reaction and be ready to discuss your feelings together.
Gathering Your Thoughts

Your letter should be detailed and concrete. Consider your answers to the following questions to help generate ideas for your letter ...

What did this person do for you?

How did this affect your life?

What are you doing now because of this?

How does this make you feel?