



# December *Newsletter*

*Gratitude is more than just saying “thank you”, it is a way of appreciating the good in our lives, both big and small.*

At its core, gratitude is a positive emotion that strengthens our well-being and helps us build better connections with others. It is about recognizing and valuing the kindness, support, and everyday experiences that make life meaningful, even during challenging times. Studies show that regularly practicing gratitude can lead to better mental health, improved relationships, and a more optimistic outlook on life. When we focus on what we are thankful for, we shift our attention away from negative feelings, which can help reduce stress and increase resilience.

Gratitude does not have to be complicated. It could be as simple as appreciating a friend’s encouragement, a teacher’s guidance, or a sunny day. By acknowledging these moments, we train our minds to notice more positives and feel more content. Gratitude is a skill that grows with practice, and for students and teachers alike, it is a powerful tool to create a more supportive, connected, and joyful school environment.

# *Gratitude*





Gratitude can be expressed in many ways, big and small, towards others and even towards yourself and the world around you.

Here are some ways to show gratitude:

1. Writing a thank-you note: Taking the time to express your gratitude in a heartfelt way.
2. Offering help: Returning the favors or doing something kind for someone who has been there for you.
3. Acknowledging someone's efforts: Recognizing and appreciating the contributions of others.
4. Showing your love and affection: Spending quality time with loved ones or simply letting them know you care.

## Gratitude Toward Yourself:

1. **Appreciating your strengths and talents**: Recognizing and valuing your unique positive qualities, abilities, and accomplishments.
2. **Practicing self-care**: Taking time for activities that nourish your mind, body, and spirit.
3. **Forgiving yourself**: Acknowledging your mistakes and learning from them without dwelling on them.
4. **Celebrating your successes**: Taking pride in your achievements, big or small.
5. **Being grateful for your health**: Appreciating your physical and mental well-being.

## Gratitude Toward World:

1. **Appreciating nature**: Taking time to enjoy the beauty of the natural world, even in small ways.
2. **Finding joy in the simple things**: Taking pleasure in everyday experiences, like a warm cup of coffee or a good laugh.
3. **Contributing to your community**: Volunteering your time or resources to make a positive impact.

# How Gratitude Boosts Mental Health, Physical Wellness & Social Connections:



- **Gratitude!** The word does wonders alongside helping to get your mental, physical, and social wellbeing to its peak. Mentally it helps in boosting your confidence and putting up a huge smile to take along your daily routine.
- Being grateful makes your body release oxytocin; a hormone that brings a perfect glow to your overall physical activities and routines, gifting you a prosperous and healthy lifestyle. Good mental and physical health automatically influences the way you communicate, lightening up the burden of controlling your behavior when you are in public.

## An Interesting Study *On-Gratitude*

### ***Effects of Gratitude Journals:***

Researchers Dr. Robert A. Emmons and Dr. Michael E. McCullough investigated the effects of gratitude journaling. Participants who focused weekly on things they were grateful for exhibited increased optimism and improved life satisfaction compared to those who wrote about irritations. This study showed that gratitude significantly promotes well-being and physical health.



## How Gratitude Promotes *Well-being*

Gratitude is critical in enhancing well-being through various means identified in recent research.

Notably, studies by **Dr. Martin Seligman** and others show that expressing gratitude (via letters or journals) boosts optimism by a long shot. For example, Seligman's research revealed that delivering gratitude letters led to lasting increases in happiness for participants. Furthermore, **Dr. Robert Emmons** and **Dr. Michael McCullough** found that people who constantly reflected on their blessings reported greater life satisfaction and better physical health unlike those who focused on negative experiences. This highlights gratitude's role in creating a positive mindset.

**Research from the University of California, Riverside**, reinforces the findings by showing that gratitude letters produce more profound emotional benefits than traditional journaling. In relationships, expressing gratitude strengthens bonds and facilitates open communication, promoting overall relationship satisfaction. Lastly, the use of gratitude apps during the pandemic illustrated how technology can support mental health and reduce anxiety and depression through regular gratitude practice.

***Collectively, these studies teach us that gratitude not only enhances individual well-being but also enriches interpersonal relationships and contributes to a more fulfilling life.***

# Gratitude *Quotes*



*“Be present in all things and thankful to all things”*

– *Maya Angelou*

This quote by the renowned poet Maya Angelou reminds us of the importance of acknowledging and having gratitude in our surroundings and teaches that mindfulness and gratitude go hand in hand.



*“The roots of all goodness lie in the soil of appreciation for goodness.”*

– *Dalai Lama*

This quote suggests that gratitude is the root of all good qualities in life like kindness, compassion, and generosity. Just like how a root nurtures a plant having gratitude also helps you be a better person.



*“Gratitude is the sign of noble souls.”*

– *Aesop*

Gratitude reveals the depth of character a person has, a noble soul, which is kind and compassionate. Rather than taking things for granted, they honor these acts of generosity or beauty, no matter how small they are.



# Everyday *Gratitude* Practices

1. **Maintain a gratitude journal:** Note down all the things you are grateful for at the end of the day and mentally thank those responsible for this profound happiness.
2. **Remember your past:** When taking note of gratitude, remember the hardships that you overcame to reach this state of happiness and clarity. The stark contrast allows us to embrace this gratitude wholeheartedly.
3. **Gratitude meditation:** Meditation is another helpful way to take notes of gratitude. The mental clarity and focus that it gives us allows us to slow down and gain awareness of our surroundings, senses, and experiences.
4. **Take care of yourself:** Taking care of yourself is a way of showing self-directed gratitude. Show yourself that you care and are thankful by having a small self-care session every day.
5. **Gratitude jar:** Prepare a jar filled with positive affirmations promoting gratitude. Start your day with positivity and gratitude, one affirmation at a time.
6. **Gratitude Affirmations:** Gratitude affirmations are positive statements that emphasize thankfulness and appreciation. By repeating these positive affirmations, we're able to shift our mindset towards gratitude and foster a more positive outlook.

## Journal Prompts:

Gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps us feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve our health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships. By using the prompts provided, you can start your journaling journey with confidence and clarity.

- What recent lessons or experience has helped me grow, and why am I grateful for it?
- What is one small thing that happened today that brought me joy?
- What upcoming experience or opportunity am I excited and thankful for?
- Who is someone who recently did something nice for me, even if it was small? How did it impact my day?
- What is something I have been improving, no matter how small, and how far have I come?