

Mindsets for Happiness and Success



GRATITUDE

It is not happiness that makes us grateful, but gratefulness that makes us happy.

Let's TALK about LIFE

The single most important thing we can do for our children is talk to them about life. At dinner, at breakfast, eating burgers in the car, or sipping hot cocoa before bed. Decades of research has shown that children who eat 3 to 4 times a week with their parents are 3 times less likely to get involved with drugs, alcohol, or smoking. They do better in school, have higher self-esteem, and stronger relationships with their parents. With the little time busy parents have, we might as well talk about what's important. All it takes is 10 minutes a day.

LET'S TALK conversation starters have been strategically designed in a specific sequence to help children (and parents) learn the

Happiness and Success

twelve most important mindsets that lead to happiness and success. They are based on decades of research and the literature from hundreds of experts who study happiness and success. In the same way that we learn to walk, play a musical instrument, speak a new language, or dance the salsa, we also build mindsets through repetition. By repeating new, similar thought patterns over and over again during a 30-day period, we actually rewire certain ways of thinking into our brains. Eventually it becomes a habit that we continue without any effort. LET'S TALK is designed for ages five and up. Feel free to adapt the questions to what you know your children are able to understand and can relate to.

GRATITUDE Intro - 1

Gratitude is not a trait we're born with, but rather a mindset that can be learned like any habit. Most people think of gratitude as the feeling that follows our positive experiences. In reality, it is a way of looking at life that creates happiness. This has major implications for how we live our lives. It means that joy isn't dependent on external circumstances we can't control. We can actively choose to be happy by practicing gratitude. It's easy to fall into the negative habit of thinking we're NOT ENOUGH. We're not rich enough, smart enough, thin enough, good-looking enough, or successful enough. We even wonder if we are happy enough.

Introduction for Parents

GRATITUDE Intro - 2

JP Pawliw-Fry is the co-author of *Performing Under Pressure*, and the founder of IHHP, a global, research and learning company that specializes in helping organizations and leaders leverage the science of emotional intelligence. They did a multi-year study of over 12,000 people to find out what is it about the top 10 percent of individuals that helps them handle pressure effectively and be successful. JP Pawliw-Fry tells us that, "While working with these groups ... what is clear is that once they understand what the practice is and how it impacts their brain, it is one of the power tools that many find the most benefit from." Gratitude tools are now used by the US Army, Navy, NASA, and NFL.

Introduction for Parents

GRATITUDE Intro - 3

Every time you pay attention and focus on the things you appreciate your brain is creating new neural pathways that eventually become automatic. The longer you extend the thoughts and feelings of gratitude, the stronger the neural connections become. Writing down your GRATEFULS will help strengthen those neural connections, because it forces you to be very focused on the thoughts. All it takes is 8 weeks of practicing gratitude for people to start showing different brain patterns that result in enhanced empathy and happiness. Practicing gratitude is all about making an intentional shift from the negative to the positive that, over time, becomes a habit.

Introduction for Parents

Activities

Health

Talents

Hobbies

Experiences

Belongings

Music

Food

Nature

Sights

Sounds

Smells

Other...

Other...

Other...

Other...

My GRATITUDE Journal

Every day, for 25 days, take one topic from the list below and think of one or two things you enjoy, appreciate, and are grateful for, from that category. Take a few minutes to share "why" with members of your family. You may not have a sibling or a coach. You may not go to church or like music. If so, just skip that topic and create your own at the end of the list.

Family

Parents

Siblings

Grandparents

Home

Traditions

Neighbors

Community

Values

School

Friends

Teachers

Coaches

Cut the artwork above into 1 rectangle, just inside the grey dotted lines. Fold in half and crease the fold. Cut the artwork on page 3 into 2 separate rectangles and glue them onto the two inside panels of the folded artwork. Line them up along the outside edges so there is a little empty space at the fold.

Day 30: Sometimes NOTHING is the greatest GIFT.

Gretchen Rubin, Author of *The Happiness Project*, shares a unique approach to gratitude: One of the sad things about life is that it usually takes a major loss for people to appreciate all the simple joys they once had and took for granted. Gratitude should include thinking about all the things that could have gone wrong, but didn't. No matter how dismal your life might feel at the moment, there are always things that could be worse. Sometimes NOTHING happening is the greatest gift of the day. Make your own list of things you would be grateful for if they didn't happen. Some examples are listed below to get you started. The first five are for adults, the second five are for kids.

1. I didn't get a parking ticket.
 2. I didn't lose my job.
 3. I didn't have to wait 2 hours at the doctor's.
 4. No one in the family got sick or injured.
 5. The plumbing problem didn't cost \$6000.
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1. I didn't mess up my class presentation.
 2. I didn't strike out at baseball practice.
 3. My best friend didn't leave me for the popular kids.
 4. My little brother didn't embarrass me at school.
 5. I didn't get a bad grade on the math test.

15 Things that I'm GRATEFUL didn't happen.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____

What is Gratitude?

Discuss the following questions: What does it mean to be grateful? How do people show gratitude? Is it something we do once a year at Thanksgiving, or should it be more often?



Day 1

How does it make you feel when someone says thank you?

When you make an effort to help someone, compliment someone, listen to someone, or be thoughtful, how does it make you feel when they show they are grateful for what you have done?



Day 2

How does it feel when there is no thank you?

Have you ever done something for someone that was kind or thoughtful, maybe even time consuming or hard work... and there was no thank-you? How did that make you feel?



Day 3

Are there other ways to show gratitude?

Can you think back to times when you appreciated something someone did, and you showed them you were grateful in a different way? Or times when someone showed you gratitude differently?



Day 4

GRATITUDE Journal - Family

Think of one thing that you really enjoy, appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to your family. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share "why" that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 5

GRATITUDE Journal - Parents

Think of one thing that you really enjoy, appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to your parents. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share "why" that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 6

GRATITUDE Journal - Siblings

Think of one thing that you enjoy, and are grateful for, when it comes to your siblings (or other relatives). Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 7

GRATITUDE Journal - Grandparents

Think of one thing that you appreciate and are grateful for, when it comes to your grandparents. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 8

GRATITUDE Journal - Home

Think of one thing that you really enjoy, appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to your home. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 9

GRATITUDE Journal - Traditions

Think of one thing that you really enjoy, and are grateful for, when it comes to your family traditions. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 10

GRATITUDE Journal - Neighbors

Think of one thing that you really enjoy, appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to your neighbors. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 11

GRATITUDE Journal - Community

Think of one thing that you really enjoy, appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to your community. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 12

GRATITUDE Journal - Values

Think of one thing that you are grateful for when it comes to your faith, beliefs, values, or principals. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 13

GRATITUDE Journal - School

Think of one thing that you appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to your school (work for parents). Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 14

GRATITUDE Journal - Friends

Think of one thing that you really enjoy, appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to your friends. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 15

GRATITUDE Journal - Teachers

Think of one thing that you really appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to your teachers. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 16

GRATITUDE Journal - Coaches

Think of one thing that you are grateful for when it comes to your coaches (or others that help/inspire you). Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 17

GRATITUDE Journal - Activities

Think of one thing that you are grateful for when it comes to activities such as sports, music, dance. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 18

GRATITUDE Journal - Health

Think of one thing that you appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to your personal health. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 19

GRATITUDE Journal - Talents

Think of one thing that you appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to your own talents. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 20

GRATITUDE Journal - Hobbies

Think of one thing that you really enjoy, appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to your hobbies. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 21

GRATITUDE Journal - Experiences

Think of one thing that you appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to an experience you have had. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 22

GRATITUDE Journal - Belongings

Think of one thing that you appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to one of your belongings. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 23

GRATITUDE Journal - Music

Think of one thing that you really enjoy, appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to music. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 24

GRATITUDE Journal - Food

Think of one thing that you really enjoy, appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to food. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 25

GRATITUDE Journal - Nature

Think of one thing that you really enjoy, appreciate, and are grateful for, when it comes to nature. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 26

GRATITUDE Journal - Sights

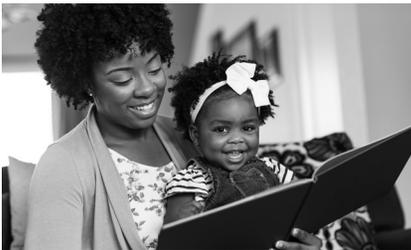
Think of one thing that you are grateful for, when it comes to scenes or items you enjoy looking at. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 27

GRATITUDE Journal - Sounds

Think of one thing that you are grateful for, when it comes to sounds you enjoy listening to. Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 28

GRATITUDE Journal - Smells

Think of one thing that you are grateful for, when it comes to smells (fresh baked bread, ocean air). Write that in your GRATITUDE Journal. Share “why” that means so much to you and include a word or two to describe it in the journal.



Day 29

NOTHING can be the greatest Gift

Read what Gretchen Rubin has to say about her unique approach to gratitude. This should be on the card you've glued to the inside of your Gratitude Journal. Then fill in 15 things you'd be grateful for, if they DIDN'T HAPPEN to you.



Day 30