

# gratitude.



**HEALTH**  
**PROMOTION**  
CARLETON COLLEGE

# what is gratitude?

Gratitude is...

- The affirmation of good things
- Believing that there are good things in the world, even when faced with challenges or stress.
- Acknowledging that the source of good things is outside yourself
  - Receiving something from another person, being thankful for daily experiences, or about qualities of your life

# the benefits of gratitude

Practicing gratitude has been shown to:

- Increase sleep quality and sense of wellbeing
- Boost prosocial behavior that leads to increased emotional support
- Prevent onset of hypertension through stabilizing heart rate variability
- Decrease circulating stress hormones
- Provide greater life satisfaction

Prosocial  
behavior:  
an action  
that benefits  
others



# gratitude and the brain

Gratitude improves mental health over time.

Engaging in gratitude can increase blood flow to the:

**Hypothalamus**, which  
is responsible for  
bodily functions such  
as sleep & stress



Research suggests that  
gratitude can help  
**improve** sleep and **reduce**  
overall stress levels.



Brain regions  
associated with the  
neurotransmitter  
**dopamine**



Dopamine promotes  
feelings of **reward**,  
encouraging the practice  
of gratitude in the future



# ways to practice gratitude

Write 3 good things you are grateful for.

Check out our mindfulness board and meditation workshop on the OHP website!

Try putting a sticky note on your mirror or leaving a reminder in your phone

Practice gratitude through meditation and mindfulness.

Write a gratitude message and send it to someone you appreciate

Notice patterns in your journaling. If you often write about nature, the outdoors might bring greater feelings of gratitude.

Showing gratitude can help you feel more connected. Try giving a thumbs up in a Zoom meeting next time!

Journal for 15 minutes on a positive experience before bed.

# ways to connect with gratitude on campus

## Nook Activities

- Gratitude rocks
- 2 Minute mornings
- Gratitude jars
- Gratitude guide

## Meditation Workshop

Discusses the concept and benefits of meditation through practice & reflection.

## Time to Meditate

Offered weekly by  
SHAC and the  
Chaplain's Office

## CCCE

Get involved  
volunteering or  
something larger than  
yourself.



# getting to gratitude

Being grateful may not always come easily.

Here are some challenges to be aware of:

Self-serving bias:  
attributing good  
outcomes as a result of  
your own actions.



Consider whether the  
source of good might be  
outside yourself by  
practicing gratitude.

Control: the tendency to  
want control in our  
environment and life.



When this happens,  
gratitude can help you  
accept life as it is and  
encourages you to be  
grateful for what you have.

External circumstances:  
life can throw curveballs,  
making it difficult to find  
good outside yourself



Find time to breathe and  
remind yourself of the  
good that has happened  
in the past and hold onto  
the good in the future.





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fold over or cut off



# what are you grateful for?

fold over or cut off



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Prosocial behavior: an action that benefits others



**Note: we recommend that you print the tree larger than the rest of the board.**

sticky notes here

pens here



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Brain regions associated with the neurotransmitter dopamine

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Dopamine promotes feelings of reward, encouraging the practice of gratitude in the future

## getting to gratitude

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Control the tendency to want control in our environment and life.



External circumstances: life can throw curveballs, making it difficult to find good outside yourself



Consider whether the source of good might be outside yourself by practicing gratitude.

When this happens, gratitude can help you accept life as it is and encourages you to be grateful for what you have

Find time to breathe and remind yourself of the good that has happened in the past and hold onto the good in the future.

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