

Gratitude

 60 minutes

Objectives

- To teach students how to practice gratitude. (The practice of actively choosing to focus on what is good in your life) by participating in a fun activity
- To guide participants through a guided visualization that they can learn and practice themselves, using their own senses as a point of gratitude (useful for when participants might struggle with the practice of finding things to be grateful for)

Materials needed

- Comfortable space for mindfulness Gratitude practice.
- Sheets of coloured cards
- Glue
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Large sheet of card with trunk of tree drawn on leaf stencil



Tool Description

This tool uses a creative and interactive approach to the practice of gratitude. Participants are working together to create an art piece, whilst also spending some time reflecting and focusing on things they are grateful for.

The guided visualisation works as a grounding and focusing practice and will serve as a wonderful base for those who struggle to connect with the practice of Gratitude.



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Instructions

1. INTRODUCTION (20 minutes)

- Introduce the manual
- Allow participants time to familiarise themselves with the manual and its content
- Focus on the chapter **Spiritual Rest**
- Introduce the importance of **Gratitude** as a practice and let participants know this will be the main focus of this module

2: Guided meditation to practice some basic Gratitude

- Encourage participants to sit comfortably and to close their eyes (If it feels comfortable to do so)
- Encourage participants to leave all their cares and worries to the side for the next 5 minutes whilst they bring their attention to their breath and allow their breath to flow in and out in a way that feels comfortable to them
- When they feel ready, keeping their gaze very soft, they open their eyes a little, look around the room, and silently, in their mind, name five things they can see.
- Then allow a moment to feel thankful for their gift of sight
- Gently close their eyes again and bring their attention to their sense of hearing. Silently name 4 things they can hear (clock ticking, bird singing, traffic etc)
- Then allow a moment to feel thankful for their gift of hearing.
- Then slowly bring their attention to the sense of Touch. Silently, in their mind, name 3 things they can feel (Watch on arm, breeze, clothes on their skin, toes wriggling in shoes, etc...)



Instructions

- Take a moment to feel grateful for the sense of Touch.
- Then encourage participants to bring their attention to their sense of smell. Silently in their mind, name 2 things they can smell (perfume, coffee, something in the air, if it is difficult, imagine themselves what their favorite smell is, etc...)
- Take a moment to feel grateful for their sense of Smell.
- Then encourage participants to bring their attention to their sense of taste (maybe tea, coffee in their mouth, or the last thing they ate, if it is difficult, imagine your favorite taste.
- Take a moment to feel grateful for your sense of Taste.
- To end this activity encourage participants to wriggle their toes, wriggle their fingers, and when they feel ready, gently open their eyes and take a big stretch, as they return to the room.

3 Creative group activity to create a Gratitude Tree

- Explain to participants that together we are going to make a Gratitude tree.
- Give everyone some coloured sheets of paper, the Leaf stencil (made previously by you) a pencil and a scissors. Ask everyone to take a few moments to write on their leaves (they can do as many as they like).
- When people feel ready they can come up and stick their leaves onto the tree (Trunk of Tree drawn onto large Sheet of Paper) Creating the Gratitude Tree.
- Enjoy the Tree and Discuss. Create a freedom to come and go to the Tree to add things to it.



Reflection questions

- Do you feel you are able to explain this type of rest?
- How did this activity affect your mental state?

**Gratitude turns what we
have into enough.**

- In what ways can you incorporate this practice in your daily routine?
- What challenging moment or event are you thankful for, and why?
- What simple pleasure, like a sunny day or a good movie or book, are you most grateful for, in this year so far?



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