

CORNERSTONE 2019 RESOURCE

Gratitude Practice and Expression, *Start Your Morning*

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SUMMARY:	This session explores the relationship we have with gratitude through practices and mindfulness to give participants a gratitude expression toolbox. - <i>Submitted by Natalie Rothstein</i>
TOPIC(S):	Gratitude, Meditation, Self-Care
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants should leave this session feeling like they have a new tool for expressing gratitude and self-care.
AUDIENCE:	Ages 10 and up, ideal group size is 15 but can be facilitated with larger group.
TIMING:	60 minutes.
APPENDICES:	Gratitude Guided Meditation Script
MATERIALS NEEDED:	-1 pen or pencil per participant -paper for participants to write on (or bring their notebooks) -mats are optional for meditation
SET-UP DETAILS:	Setting should be quiet and isolated from as little noise as possible. Mats set up or chairs in a circle.

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

- Introduction- 5 minutes
- Reflecting on the Role Gratitude Plays in Our Lives- 20 minutes
- Gratitude Practice and Mindfulness Activity- 15 minutes
- Discussion About Taking a Gratitude Practice Back to Your Life and Camp- 10 minutes
- Closing- 5 minutes

Introduction (5 minutes) – welcome and introduce facilitator.

Gratitude
הטוב הכרת
Hakarat HaTov

Discussion and introduction to the power of gratitude (share the following points with the group):

- Gratitude is a powerful way to shift your mindset to positive parts of life even amidst difficult times.
- Expressing gratitude is a reminder of what is going well and can offer fuel to strength and resilience.

- What is a gratitude practice? A gratitude practice is taking time to express gratitude in a natural or planned way during your day.
- The more you practice gratitude, the more it becomes part of the way you think.
- Gratitude come in different shapes and sizes.
 - Grateful for ability to breathe.
 - Grateful for the sun shining today.
 - Grateful for my friends and family.
 - Grateful for my strength.
 - Grateful for the sandwich I had for lunch today.

Reflecting on the Role Gratitude Plays in Our Lives (20 minutes): Facilitate a discussion about the role gratitude already plays in participants lives. If the group is large, you can break them into smaller groups to discuss the following questions:

-What are ways you personally practice gratitude?

-What are ways your camp community practices gratitude?

-How do we practice gratitude in Jewish tradition?

Some examples to share with the entire group: Modeh Ani- recited in the morning. Shehecheyanu- thanking and celebrating for something new. Bruchot- giving thanks.

Modah/Modeh Ani

Modeh/Modah ani l'fanecha
Melech chai v'kayam,
Shehechezarta bi nish'mati
B'chemla,
Raba emunatecha.

I, gratefully thank you,
Living and enduring spirit,
For you have returned my soul
within me-
Great is your faithfulness.

מודה אני לפניך
מלך חי וקיים
שהחזרת בי נשמת
בי בחמלה;
רבה אמונתך

Gratitude Practice Guided Meditation (15 minutes):

Lead the group through this gratitude practice and mindfulness activity. Read through the script and be sure to take pauses periodically to let the information digest and allow the participants to take a moment to think:

As we shift into a gratitude practice and mindfulness activity, you have the option to go through this activity with your eyes closed sitting up or laying down or you can keep you eyes open, focused on a point with the option to write down answers to prompts throughout the activity. It is your choice to write or not to write during this time. Before we get started, take a moment to notice what you're feeling right now and think about or write down answers to these questions. Where are you emotionally? What's on your mind? How does your body feel? Are you feeling any negative energy? If so, where?

Let's start with slow 3 deep breaths.

Breathe in, pause, breathe out.

Breathe in, pause, breathe out.

Breathe in, pause, breathe out.

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Think of 5 things you're grateful for. (pause for 1 minute) Now focus on 1 of those things. (Pause for 20 seconds)

Why are you grateful for it? (pause for 45 seconds)

Take a moment to thank and express kind words to that thing. (Pause for 20 seconds)

What feelings does it evoke for you when you think about your gratitude for this? (pause for 30 seconds)

Sit with those feelings. Feel all of the positive emotions associated with your gratitude through your body.

Now choose one of those feelings and imagine it going through your body. Being sure to take a moment to breath as you go through each body part.

Starting with your feet, sending that feeling through each toe (pause 5 seconds)

Moving up through your legs (pause 5 seconds)

Through your stomach (pause 5 seconds)

Into your shoulders and down your arms (pause 5 seconds)

Sending it into your hands and to each fingertip (pause 5 seconds)

Now back up through your arms through your neck and to the top of your head (5 seconds)

Now take 3 more deep breaths. Take the next several minutes to focus on your breathing. Feel free to recite breathe in, breathe out in your head as you continue to breath steadily. (Pause for 5 minutes)

(Softly say) Take a moment to notice how you're feeling now. Lightly move your fingers and your toes. How are you breathing? (pause) Are your breaths flowing more gently? (pause) Do you notice anything different about how your body feels? (pause)

Think about the one item of gratitude you focused at the beginning of this exercise. What was it like to use that and allow your body to feel the positive energy associated with it?

Take a moment to feel the positive emotion associated one more time. Now gently open your eyes or regain focus and return to the present moment.

Discussion About Taking a Gratitude Practice Back to Your Life and Camp (8 minutes):

Ask the question to the participants: How do you think can you incorporate a gratitude practice into your life and into your camp community? Allow for participants for to offer ideas and thoughts. Then share the following:

- Gratitude practices are unique for everyone.
 - At beginning, middle or end of the day.
 - Can vary from day to day. Figure out what works best for you.
 - I like to take time before I got to bed to name 4 things I'm grateful for.
 - You can write in a journal what things you're grateful for.
 - At camp, you can share as a cabin at the end of the day 1 thing everyone is grateful.
 - Staff meetings.
 - Have a visual display at camp where people can share things they're grateful for. (example: gratitude tree)

Closing (5 minutes): Debrief on the experience by asking the group the following questions:

- What did it feel like to express gratitude?
- What did you learn during this session?
- What do you think about gratitude expressions and practices?
- Do you have any questions?

Last words to the group (something like): Thank you for your time! I'm grateful to all of you for sharing this hour with me expressing gratitude!

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

A gratitude tree is a great way to create a visual display of gratitude in a camp community. You can hang a large drawing of a tree on a wall and have pens and markers for people to write things they're grateful for in the leaves or around the tree. The tree can have writing arched over the top that says "What are you grateful for?." This can be adapted into other visuals!