



FAMILIES

TACKLING TOUGH TIMES

TOGETHER



FAMILY

YOUTH

Our Family Can Do This! Sharing a Positive Outlook

Many people might experience pockets of gratitude even when things get tough. Feeling grateful for what we have (instead of worrying about what we don't) helps with many different areas of our lives. A positive outlook and feeling grateful can help relieve stress and boost our ability to try again even when things don't work out the way we want them to. Sometimes, stepping outside into the sunshine or walking around the neighborhood can become a simple pleasure with extra meaning. Preparing food and enjoying a slow meal with our family may bring a moment of joy and laughter. We may also learn to appreciate quiet time cuddling with a pet or streaming a movie with our family. Thinking about what we are grateful for can help us appreciate the comforts of our homes and families when everything else feels out of control.

Showing Our Gratitude

Brain research shows that positive emotions, like gratitude, can be good for our body and mind. Sharing gratitude can give us an instant mood boost and may increase a positive outlook which helps us to spread positivity to others. Positivity is an important part of being resilient. When we try to look at things in a positive way, we are better able to deal with life's stressors.

Gratitude Challenge Activity

Ask yourself: WHO or WHAT are you GRATEFUL for and WHY? You may feel grateful for something special or important, or you may feel grateful for something small — as long as it's a good thing or makes you feel good. It's good to be SPECIFIC about what you are grateful for so you can write down and remember meaningful events! Challenge yourself to find or see the good in your life every day, big or small. The more you find, the better! Below are some ways to keep track of WHO or WHAT you are GRATEFUL for and WHY.

- Keep a gratitude journal throughout the week. Each time you make an entry in the journal, be sure to list three things or people you are grateful for, and why.
- Create a video by yourself or with your family and record what you are grateful for. In the video, mention three things or people you are grateful for. Use #gratitude when sharing the video with friends and family.
- Take pictures that show what you are grateful for. You may wish to post the pictures on social media using #gratitude.
- Give thanks. Write a letter to someone and let them know why you are grateful for them.
- Dinner Table Activity: Start a daily gratitude tradition with your family. During mealtime, go around the table and encourage each person to share something they are grateful for. You may also wish to share what you are grateful for into your evening routine. Ask family members to name one thing they liked about their day.
- **Celebrate mistakes.** Gratitude isn't about perfections. Sometimes it can be most helpful to think about what you are grateful for when things don't go as planned or when things are difficult.

At the end of the week, take a few minutes to reflect on your week of gratitude. Did you notice things you were grateful for that you hadn't thought about before? How can you continue to think about what you are grateful for?

The above activity was adapted from [Thanks! A strengths-based gratitude curriculum for tweens and teens by Greater Good Science](#)

To learn more about the science behind the benefits of gratitude, you may wish to read the below research:

- [Happiness intervention decreased pain and depression, boosts happiness among primary care patients](#)



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College of Health and Human Sciences

Welcome to Families Tackling Tough Times Together!

We hope you find the enclosed ideas and suggestions helpful as you care for your family during the pandemic. We know the pandemic is a very big challenge. How families cope can affect both parents and children for a long time.

We are scientists, educators, and students from Purdue University, and we are here to help! For nine weeks this fall, we will provide weekly collections of ideas for families to use to build on their strengths.

These tools are free, flexible, and informed by science. They are designed for families of all types, with tailored suggestions for children, youth, young adults and older adults, and suitable for both civilian and military families. We hope that your family will try one activity each week!

Would you like to earn financial rewards?

We especially welcome families living in the continental US who are interested in trying out project materials and telling us about their experiences. These families can earn financial rewards by sharing about one hour of their time over the next two months. Sign up now at the link below!

https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3vK1BJq2EiUksAJ

For more information

- Join the Families Together Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/HHSFamiliesTogether/>
- Or visit the project website: <https://www.hhs.purdue.edu/families-together/>