

BEHAVIORAL & FINANCIAL INSIGHTS

Practicing Gratitude

‘Tis the season of gratitude. Yet sometimes the true essence of Thanksgiving gets lost among the turkey, football, and Black Friday sales. Unless we are intentional in our thoughts, we may spend the Thanksgiving season thinking of things we *want* rather than things we are *grateful* for. One surefire way to create happiness, regardless of our circumstances, is to practice gratitude. As this year has clearly shown, we may not be able to control our circumstances; however, we do control how we respond, and whether we *choose* to have an attitude of gratitude.

Mindset Reset

- *What do you do first thing in the morning?*
- *How do you end the day?*

Many people check their phones for news headlines of the day and work emails – things that are often negative and/or stressful. This can easily set the tone for the remainder of your day or impact the quality of your sleep at night.

Be mindful of what you are “letting in,” and when!

Why is Gratitude so Difficult?

There is so much to be thankful for. The fact is, however, that most of us probably don’t spend enough time counting our blessings, especially during these trying times – and that is life. While we do our best to be thankful, it is often short-lived or easily neglected, overshadowed by our daily to-do-list, or drowned out by the never-ending waves of headlines designed to distract and control our focus.

Making Gratitude Easier

Developing positive daily routines can make it easier to cultivate gratitude. Engaging in what interests your children or grandchildren, exercising, playing with your pet, or writing in a gratitude journal can make it easier to both *feel* and *express* gratitude.

There are also people who are thankful for the smallest things – you probably know a few. They are like magnets. We want to be around them because they exude positivity, love, and joy – they are “batteries-included” people. Then there are those who are “batteries-not-included.” They are impossible to please and full of negativity. They drain our energy. Choose wisely who you are around. Like it or not, we all have a finite reserve of emotional energy. Furthermore, we tend to take on traits of those we surround ourselves with. Want to be more grateful and get a natural “re-charge” or psychological boost? Spend more time with positively-charged people who practice gratitude regularly.

Warmest wishes for a happy ***Thanks-giving*** holiday!

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