

# Gratitude Partners: A Fun, Easy, Social Gratitude Practice

Gratitude becomes a practice when we take simple actions that help remind us of our intention to be grateful on a daily basis. Examples of gratitude practices include: morning gratitude intention setting, gratitude meditations, and reviewing the slogan, "Live with an attitude of gratitude" multiple times a day to remind you to be thankful.

Another gratitude practice is having gratitude partners. It works like this: find one or more friends and send each other one message a day containing three or more gratitudes for the day. This turns our gratitude practice into a social and community-building activity where we can learn from, support, and connect with each other.

## Benefits of the Gratitude Partner Practice

Some of the benefits we may find with gratitude partners include:

- **Seeing New Reasons for Gratitude.** Our gratitude partners may be thankful for things or situations that we would never have thought to be thankful for. This may inspire us to reevaluate these things and start seeing what is beautiful, beneficial, and wonderful in them as well.
- **Cultivating Appreciative Joy.** In addition to the joy we get from our gratitude, we may practice being joyful at our partner's successes and good fortunes.
- **Deepening Our Relationships.** To share what you appreciate often requires vulnerability and trust, which helps us strengthen our relationships with one another.
- **Accountability.** Let's face it, doing the practice with others inspires us to do it, because of our commitment to our partners and the joy of doing it together.

## The Gratitude Partner Practice

- **Any time in the evening, send a group message to your gratitude partners sharing three or more things that you were thankful for that day.** An example might be:

*I am thankful for: the ability to do my best, the ability to be flexible when things are not as expected, people who have the courage to vocalize their appreciation, the courage and strength that allows me to be vulnerable.*

Be flexible. If you know you won't be able to message in the evening, send it earlier in the day. If you forget to send your text in the evening, please send it early the next morning, or at your next opportunity.

- **As you write the text, try to feel the pleasant sensations of gratitude in your body and SAVOR THAT FEELING.** It may take time to be able to generate and know this feeling of gratitude, so whenever it arises, savor its pleasantness for at least 20 seconds. This will help your brain recognize the importance of heart-felt gratitude, making gratitude arise more easily in the future.

- **Read the gratitude messages that your gratitude partners send you and practice sympathetic joy.** Practice being happy for their happiness. After reading their texts, think to yourself, "May your joy/success/love/happiness/whatever-is-appropriate continue, increase, and never end!" or "I am happy that you're happy." Try to feel the joy in your body as you do this.

- **It is not required to respond to your partners' texts.** You may respond to each of their texts with supportive and encouraging messages or emojis, but responses are not required. We want this activity to be as simple and effortless as possible so that even very busy people can participate.

- **Practice equanimity relating to your partner's participation.** If a gratitude partner does not text for a day or two, energetically send them loving-kindness. If it helps, think "May you be peaceful and happy," "May you resolve all conflicts with love and ease," or similar blessings. Try to generate and feel love in your heart and radiate it out to them. People get busy and forget. No big deal. Be content to just keep texting your daily gratitude message, and allow them to walk their own path. Do not harass, pester, or shame your partners into sending their gratitude messages daily. Trust that they are reading yours and that they will start up again when they are able. Of course, if you haven't heard from them in five days or so, feel free to send them an "Everything all right?" message to check in.

- **Be genuine, heartfelt, and honest in what you send.** If you are genuinely appreciative of the same things, day after day, that's fine. In this practice, honesty and genuineness are important, uniqueness is not.

- **Do this practice for 3 to 6 months before evaluating it.** It takes time to create a new habit and rewire our brains. Be patient to see the results. In the meantime, do the practice as best you can.



# Intention Setting Practice for Week 2

## Meditation & Gratitude

### Purpose

Starting new habits can be hard. This intention-setting practice reminds you why you do your mindfulness practices, and helps you recommit to doing them.

Let this practice help you meditate daily, give thanks throughout your day, and remind you to message your gratitude partners.

### Start Celebrating

It's important to celebrate the little things. Professional athletes often celebrate their well-done plays with a celebratory movement – like pumping their fist and saying “yeah.”

If you have a celebratory move, great! If you don't have one, make one up that feels genuine for you: clapping or rubbing your hands, squeezing your arm, making a fist, rubbing your head, etc.

Use your move throughout your day to celebrate all the little wins and victories, like completing your intention setting for the day.

### Instructions

The instructions are the same as for week one. To recap:

- Do this activity as early in the day as possible, right after meditating.
- Read out loud using a kind, powerful voice.
- Have your posture be upright, strong, confident, and energetic. Keep your head held high.
- Read these intentions with meaning and feeling. Do your best to feel joy and kindness in your heart.
- If helpful, look at yourself in a mirror when you read them.
- Aim to memorize it within one to three weeks of practice.
- Review the Mindful Pause handout whenever necessary to refresh yourself on that practice.

### Consider Personalizing These Intentions

The first day you do this activity, read these intentions using the words listed in parenthesis to get a feel for the activity.

Then, if you want, you may substitute the words in parenthesis with other words that more genuinely speak to your heart. Write them on the blank lines and read them instead.



# Intention Setting – Week 2

*Read this script out loud two times in a row. Instructions in italics, below, are to be followed and not read aloud.*

I don't have to meditate, but I choose to meditate so I can live with more (mindfulness, wisdom, and love):

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I could focus on what's negative, but I choose to give thanks so I can live with more (joy, creativity, and abundance):

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Today, I set an intention to give thanks (before meals, when spending time with friends or family, after finishing a project, when seeing the

beauty of nature, when celebrating small victories, when seeing my gratitude slogan, and whenever else I remember to.)

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I don't have to message my gratitude partners, but I choose to, so I can (share what's wonderful, practice sympathetic joy, and learn to celebrate their successes and mine.)

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*\* Take a one-breath mindful pause \**



Today and every day, I live with an attitude of gratitude.

I am on the lookout for all that is beautiful, wonderful, successful, and skillful, and I give thanks for it all.

I give thanks for the air I breathe, the food I eat, the energy in the body, the people in my life, and even the good that comes from the difficulties I face.

I give thanks for all of the beautiful qualities I express such as: (love, wisdom, courage, and joy.)

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I do everything with a playful, creative, inquisitive attitude and an open, courageous, and loving heart. I see everything I do as an opportunity to play, create, and enjoy life.

I celebrate my own successes and the successes of others. Their happiness is my happiness. Their success is my success. Their beauty is my beauty. Their skillfulness is my skillfulness. May their wonderful qualities and

good fortunes continue, increase, and never end.

In a kind, playful, and joyful way, I do my best to embody all of these beautiful qualities, and live with an attitude of gratitude more and more.

*\* Take a one-breath mindful pause \**

*Read through the entire script two full times.*

*After completing the script for the second time, give thanks and celebrate with your celebratory move.*

*Finally, mark in your log that you completed this activity for the day. Way to go, friend!*

