



Gratitude by Mental Elimination

Gratitude

Exercise

5-15 min

Client

Yes



Goal

The goal of this exercise is to increase gratitude by counterbalancing the "taking-things-for-granted effect" to which we are often prone.



Advice

- This exercise works very well in combination with mindfulness-based interventions. Mindfulness is needed to step out of the autopilot. The autopilot prevents us from paying attention to the taste of our food at lunch, the beautiful trees and sky as we walk, or the smile on a friend's face. Likewise, we often take the good in our life for granted. This exercise can help clients to become more mindful of the good things about which we have become complacent/mindless.



References

- Frijda, N.H. (1988). The laws of emotion. *American Psychologist*, 43, 349-358.
- Koo, M., Algor, S. B., Wilson, T. D., & Gilbert, D. T. (2008). It's a wonderful life: Mentally subtracting positive events improves people's affective states, contrary to their affective forecasts. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95, 1217-1224.



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Instructions

Part 1

Think about something good in your life that falls into one of the following areas of your life:

- Health
- Education
- Safety/Security
- Weekends/Holidays
- Support from others
- Personal achievement
- Possessions

Part 2

Take a moment to imagine what your life would be like without that one good thing. How would it impact your life? How does this make you feel? Write down below how your life would be different without this one good thing. Write about your feelings and how it would affect you.