

EXERCISE: Expressing Gratitude to Others

Therefore, as you continue to keep your weekly gratitude journal, look over what you have written and consider which of these things you could express to other people. There are two different kinds of gratitude you might express to others. First, you can comment (even to strangers) about things you appreciate in the world and your life (**Worksheet 12.10**). For example, "I feel so lucky we are having nice weather today when other people are experiencing those bad storms." Second, you can look over your Gratitude about Others worksheet (**Worksheet 12.11**) and choose someone in your life you have written about there. Then either talk directly to this person or write the person a letter/email to express gratitude. Take some time to think through the ways this person has positively affected your life. You can write about what you appreciate in letter form, even though you may or may not choose to send the person what you have written.

If you do decide to tell someone about how you appreciate her or him, there are many ways to do this: face to face, over the telephone, or in an appreciation letter. You could even visit the person to read a letter or to talk about how you feel.

Write down which people you expressed gratitude to and what happened as a result. Here are some of Louisa's examples:

I thanked the shop clerk for being so helpful in finding me the shampoo I was looking for.

What happened?

She seemed really pleased that I appreciated her help. I felt good for cheering her up with such a small thing.

I mentioned during lunch break that I appreciated our nice weather.

What happened?

This got everyone talking about fun things they planned to do outdoors this weekend. It was a more positive conversation than we usually have at lunch-time.

I wrote a letter to the woman who was my piano teacher years ago. I told her how much I still enjoy playing the piano, and I thanked her for her patience and kindness to me.

What happened?

I felt a lot of positive emotion as I was writing the letter. I haven't heard back from her, but I imagine it brightened her day to get this unexpected letter.

Worksheet 12.14 provides a place for you to write down any expressions of gratitude you make and what happens. Be sure to notice any effects these have on your mood, other people, and/or your relationships. Sometimes the effects may be quick and in the moment; at other times, the effects may be more lasting.

WORKSHEET 12.14. Expressing Gratitude

1. Who I expressed my gratitude to: _____

What I said or wrote:

What happened?

2. Who I expressed my gratitude to: _____

What I said or wrote:

What happened?

3. Who I expressed my gratitude to: _____

What I said or wrote:

What happened?

4. Who I expressed my gratitude to: _____

What I said or wrote:

What happened?

5. Who I expressed my gratitude to: _____

What I said or wrote:

What happened?