

## The Gratitude “Report Card”

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**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Frequency:** Weekly

**Level of Difficulty:** Easy/Moderate

**Overview:** Increasing both gratitude and interpersonal connection are two of the most effective ways to increase our happiness and well-being, according to a number of studies. This exercise invites you to cultivate both of these valuable skills, through the direct expression of gratitude towards someone who you see on a regular basis, but whom you would like to thank in a more genuine or thoughtful manner.

Just as it can be easier to focus on the stressful parts of our lives, or the areas that we’re unhappy about, it can similarly be easier to focus on what’s wrong in our relationships rather than what’s right. Whether in our romantic relationships or our friendships, we all fall prone from time to time to focus on our frustrations while taking the positive aspects more for granted. This next exercise helps you to counteract this negativity bias in our interpersonal relationships, and is called the Gratitude “Report Card.”

**Instructions:** Over the next week, choose one person in your life with whom you have a close relationship. Ideally, this will be someone who you see on a regular basis, whether at home, work, or school. It could be a romantic partner, a close friend, a family member, or a colleague.

Each day, write down at least one thing that you appreciate about that person, or one thing they did or said for which you are thankful. These sources of gratitude can range in size or scope, but the important thing is that you identify at least one thing each day to write down. At the end of the week, have a face-to-face conversation with this individual to express your thanks to them. Share your list with them, and express how much they mean to you and how much you appreciate them.

*Person I am grateful for:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Gratitude list:**

Day 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Day 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Day 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Day 4: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Day 5: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Day 6: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Day 7: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**How and why it works:** The Gratitude "Report Card" can be a powerful exercise for a number of reasons. First, it helps us to foster two key ingredients for happiness and well-being: gratitude and close interpersonal connections. In addition, it helps us to combat our brain's natural negativity bias, which leads us to often focus on what's wrong rather than what's right in our lives.

**Notes/Impressions:**

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