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Five Ways To Practice Gratitude Each Day

- by Dr. Donna Jagielski

The most powerful means of practicing gratitude each day is through our five senses. Sensory awareness is an extremely impactful means of centering, grounding, and ultimately connecting with God. To fully demonstrate the power of our senses, one particular centering, grounding method from trauma-informed yoga practice is a de-escalation strategy, effective within less than 10 seconds.

Referred to as 3-2-1. Perform in rapid-fire succession verbally naming the following:

- 3 things you see (physically look at the items as you verbalize them)
- 2 things you can touch (include the physical contact with these items as you verbalize them)
- 1 thing you can hear

Additionally, in terms of prayer and meditation, I would add: thought/thinking as a sixth "sense".

So this is what our Five Ways to Practice Gratitude Each Day looks like as aligned to the five senses.

1. Sight/seeing - Notice each day, the many beautiful creations and the work of God. Thank God for all the beauty He has created especially in nature. Notice and see your loved ones around you. Notice and see children laughing and having fun playing in the park. Notice the beauty of your yoga mat the next time you roll it out.

2. Hearing - It doesn't matter if you live in a rural, suburban, or urban community, there are wonderful sounds to hear all around you. Notice and hear the birds. Notice and hear running water - water is the source of life, whether it be a river, pond, brook, or simply running your facet or bath/shower. Thank God for being able to hear the songs the birds sing and the life force of water around us. The next time your loved ones speak, really listen to the melodic nature of their voice.



3. Touch/Feel - Each day as you pick up the Bible, notice the texture, the delicate nature of the paper of the pages. Feel the weight and heaviness of it. Thank God for the Word in your Bible and that you can open it each day and read Scripture. Notice the touch with your loved ones, their hands, skin, hair, soft clothing that they wear. If you have a pet, notice the softness of their fur. Thank the Lord for providing them with the protective layer of their fur. Feel your feet firmly rooted and planted the next time you stand on your yoga mat.

4. Smell - There is such beauty in aromas. Simply in nature. Live by the phrase "stop and smell the roses". There are so many lovely scents in nature with flowers. Take notice of the aroma from your morning coffee or afternoon tea, especially if this is what is next to you as you read the Bible. Thank God for the wonderful food. Take time to smell your food before eating.

5. Taste - After smelling that beautiful aroma of food, coffee or tea, thank God for the bountiful harvest He has provided us with, and then take a bite or sip. We always have just exactly what we need. We have enough.

6. Our sixth one is our thoughts

- This may not be an actual 'sense', but it is a powerful sixth element since we use our minds to meditate on the Word, read the Word, pray and talk to God numerous times throughout the day. In fact, you have spoken with him during each of these five sensory awareness areas. You have thanked Him in each of these areas.

In closure, using our "sixth" sense of thought as we pray and meditate on the Word, next time you open your Bible to read, take note of how often the five senses are referred to in the Bible.

Which Scriptures refer to sight and being able to see and witness miracles? Which Scriptures refer to us hearing the Word of the Lord? Which Scriptures refer to the aroma of fragrant offerings?

Which Scriptures refer to taste and the plentiful food provided? Which Scriptures refer to the healing of touch?

Our five senses were a gift from God so that we can pray, worship, and honor God as a whole being. Continue to be grateful ever so fully.

