



## TOOL 4: **GRATITUDE HABITS**

Cultivate Habits of Grateful Thinking  
and Appreciation for Others



### **WHAT it is**

The habit of being grateful starts with appreciating every good thing in life and recognizing that there is nothing too small to be thankful for. Gratitude is not only about being thankful for positive experiences. Thinking about negative or difficult situations can also help our children identify what they have in their lives to be thankful for.

### **WHY it matters**

A sense of entitlement is common among children today, but it is possible to teach them gratitude. When they feel gratitude, they feel a sense of abundance. When they express gratitude, they strengthen their relationships with others. Grateful children are happier and more fulfilled. And gratitude leads them to be nicer to other people: more cooperative, patient, and trusting.





## HOW it works



Gratitude can be regarded as an experience that has **four** parts:



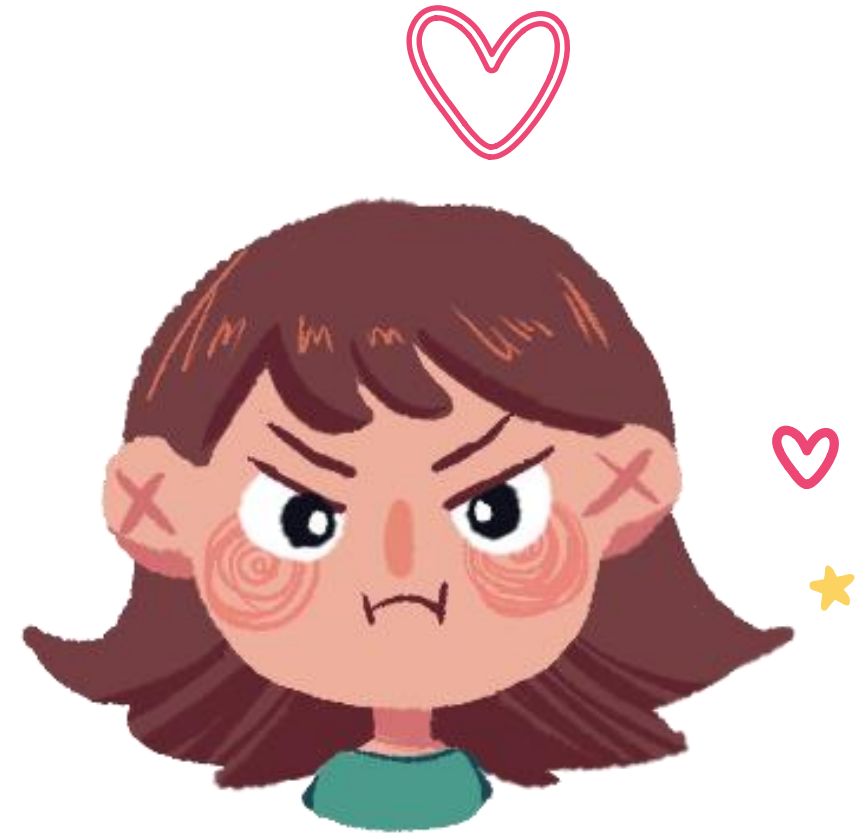
1. What we **NOTICE** in our lives for which we can be grateful
2. How we **THINK** about why we have been given those things
3. How we **FEEL** about the things we have been given
4. What we **DO** to express appreciation in turn





## Tracie's Story

Tracie always gets what she wants. She wanted to be the first one in class to get the latest title from her favourite author – and she did. She wanted to play the lead role in the school play – and she did. However, when she didn't get what she wanted, she would cry. She cried when she got an A- for her research project. She cried when her favourite cheese cake was sold out in the cafe. "It's so unfair!", "I don't want to waste my time in this club anymore", "My friends can get to do whatever they want", "What do you mean NO?" Tracie is never satisfied. She is often unhappy.





Get Tracie to reflect:

**What are you focusing on when you...**

**Take things for  
granted**

**Complain**

**Are envious**

Your focus shifts *away*  
from what's good  
in life

Your focus is on what's  
*bad* in life

Your focus is on what  
someone else has that  
*you don't have*



## Gratitude Diary

Get Tracie to reflect on:

# Three Good Things

There are many things in our lives, both large and small, that we can be grateful for.

**Think back over the events of the past week and write about three things that you are thankful for.**

Frequency: Once a week for 8 weeks

### WHAT am I grateful for?

1. I am grateful for my computer because I like to play computer games.
2. I am grateful for my story book collection because I enjoy reading.
3. I am grateful for the shelter at the basketball court because we can still play basketball when it rains.





## WHO am I grateful for?

1. I am grateful for my parents because they take good care of me and help me understand things that I don't.
2. I am grateful for my friends in school because they always support me in my time of need.
3. I am grateful for my wonderful teachers because they make learning fun and keep me disciplined.



## WHAT IN MY LIFE am I grateful for?

1. I am grateful for my life because I am able to live life to the fullest.
2. I am grateful for my good health because it allows me to do many things and I do not fall ill easily.
3. I am grateful for the gratitude diary because it taught me to be grateful for things around me.

## Gratitude is a Skill

Like all skills, it must be **practised deliberately** before it can be **done naturally**. So, if you'll **devote one day a week** to the practice of feeling true gratitude, you will have gained a dazzling new skill... and a joyous, grateful heart.

## Gratitude Letter

Get Tracie to think of someone in her life whom she would like to thank. Write a Gratitude Letter to this person.

Write "Dear," followed by the person's name, on the first line.

It doesn't matter if you print or write in cursive; choose whichever you feel more comfortable with.

- Write a simple, opening sentence that says **what you are grateful for** underneath the first line. For example, you could write, "Thank you for the useful advice that you have given me in my project work."
- Explain **why you are grateful**. Your explanation should focus on why that person's help made a difference. You can give one or two examples of what the gift or gesture meant to you. For example, "The advice that you have given has helped me to improve the quality of my project. Without your advice, I wouldn't have been able to produce such a good piece."
- End the letter with "Sincerely," or "Thank you," before signing your name.





Do a **pulse check** with your child.

**Do I practise grateful thinking and show appreciation for others?**

- ☐ I said “thank you” to someone.
- ☐ I did something nice to show my appreciation.
- ☐ I can list people and things that I’m grateful to have in my life.
- ☐ I noticed when someone helped me.





# References

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