

Fostering Wellness Exercise

Email/Letter

Time Required: *5 minutes*

Call to mind *someone who did something* for you for which you are extremely grateful, but to whom you never expressed your gratitude; this could be a relative, friend, teacher, or colleague. The goal of this exercise is to *remember a good event*, experience, person, or thing in your life—then enjoy the good emotions that come with it. Try to choose someone who is alive and accessible to you, as you will be writing an email/letter to them using the following steps.

1. *Write* as though you are addressing this person directly [Dear _____]
2. Describe in *specific terms what this person did*, why you are grateful to this person, and how this person's actions affected your life
3. Go for depth over breadth—*elaborating in detail* about a particular person or thing for which you're grateful carries more benefits than a superficial list of many things
4. Describe what you are doing in your life now and how *you often remember* his or her efforts

Next, you should try, if possible, to deliver your letter via email or in person. If you can email the letter, follow-up with this person, paying attention to his or her reaction as well as your own. If you can deliver it in person, spend time with the recipient and share how their action made you feel. ¹²



¹ "Gratitude Letter." Greater Good in Action: Science-Based Practices for a Meaningful Life. University of California, Berkeley. 2017. <https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/gratitude_letter#data-tab-how>

² Seligman, M. E., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). "Positive psychology progress: empirical validation of interventions." *American Psychologist*, 60(5), 410.

³ Image retrieved from: <https://pixabay.com/en/email-marketing-online-marketing-2362038/> on July 9, 2017. Creative Commons License associated: <https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/deed.en>