



Sharpen Our Skills

Expressing Gratitude
S.O.S. Class 23
December, 2018

“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.”

~William Arthur Ward

How to Express Gratitude

1. Traditional options:

- Thank you cards—a handwritten note of thanks
- Thoughtful gift—a well thought out gift conveys your depth of appreciation
- Phone call—picking up the phone with a message displays your gratitude

2. Non-Traditional Forms:

- **Like posts on friends’ social media feeds**
Pressing a button to “like” a post might seem like a small thing, but in our digital age, this tiny act can be a great—and easy!—way to express gratitude. Those little notifications can mean a lot to some people and, unless you actively disagree with what’s being conveyed in the post, why not show your appreciation for the person who shared it by giving it a thumbs-up or a heart?
- **Connect two friends who might like each other—aka make a friend match**
Friendships are one of life’s greatest gifts, and what better way to express gratitude for them than to help create more positive relationships? If you think two friends might hit it off introduce them to one another. This is a great way to not only express your gratitude for friendship in general, but also to show these two people that you care for and value them.
- **Put your phone away when you’re with people**
One of the absolute best ways to express your gratitude for others is by doing your best to be fully present in their presence. This is not always easy (especially with all of the digital distractions!), but try your hardest to put your phone away when you’re interacting with others. Doing so will allow you to be more appreciative of the experiences you have with them.
- **Write a handwritten letter (not just a note!)**
You’re hopefully no stranger to the thank you note. A handwritten thank-you is one of the most impactful ways to express gratitude in an era when most people simply jot off an email or a text. But when was the last time you wrote a *letter* to express your gratitude? Break out that loose leaf paper, a pen, and take some time write a full-page letter to a loved one, expressing your gratitude for everything they’ve done for you.



2. Non-Tradition Forms:

- **Share your positive reviews with others**

More often than not, when people take time to speak to a manager at a shop or restaurant or write an online review, it's because they've had a bad experience and want to vent about it. But imagine what it would be like if people shared every positive they had with a product or service! Tell others about your experience. Leaving positive reviews and telling managers about positive employees is a fantastic way to express gratefulness.

- **Volunteer**

Volunteering is the best way to demonstrate your gratitude for what you have been given. Every community has needs. Find a food pantry, church or charitable organization and give of yourself.

Why live an Attitude of Gratitude

1. **Gratitude opens the door to more relationships.** Gratitude is attractive. Good manners go a long way towards helping other see you for more than just an acquaintance. Your mother wasn't wrong—say thank you!
2. **Gratitude improves physical health.** Recently, researchers surveyed people and those who lived a life of gratitude reported less aches and pains (they also exercised more and saw their doctor annually).
3. **Gratitude improves psychological health.** Grateful people report less regret, envy, resentment and other toxic emotions. The research goes on to cite that gratitude tends to increase happiness and reduces depression.
4. **Gratitude enhances empathy and reduces aggression.** Gratitude increases pro-social behavior. Grateful people experienced less need to retaliate and developed more empathy for others—even negative or hurtful people.
5. **Gratitude improves self-esteem.** Studies have found that gratitude increases self-esteem. It reduces the need for social comparisons. Rather than becoming resentful toward people who have more, grateful people are able to appreciate other people's accomplishments
6. **Gratitude increases mental strength.** Gratitude not only reduces stress, but it may also play a major role in overcoming trauma. Studies have shown that recognizing all you have to be thankful for – even during the worst times of your life – fosters resilience.

Multiple sources were used. Thanks to Tiny Budda, Forbes and other publications