

Expressing *Gratitude*

It's easy to be grateful and express gratitude when things are going well and everything is seemingly under control; however, expressing gratitude when things are uncertain and messy can be tough because our focus tends to be on the negative and on the things that are making us feel uncomfortable and sad.

Gratitude becomes one of those skills that helps to ground us, change our perspective on our current situation, and helps us to take back some of the control that we may feel like we've lost. Things that we are grateful for might be simple and that's okay; this skill is to remind us that there are still good things that surround us in the midst of difficulty and this skill helps to balance our negative feelings towards what we're experiencing with positivity. Sticking to the basics and being thankful for things that really matter can be a helpful place to start in changing our perspective, emotions, and attitudes.

Research has shown that being grateful and expressing gratitude can actually rewire our brains over time, and in such a time as this, it's important to give our brains (thoughts and emotions) the chance and the break to experience this!



Some simple things that we can do to start including gratitude into our daily lives are:

- Starting the day with saying out loud what you're thankful for or ending the day off in this way
- Starting a gratitude journal where you're able to jot down what you're grateful for when it comes to your mind; this can be something that you look back on over time
- Sending a friend or family member a text, email, or letter being thankful for your relationship (gratitude can affect others in a positive way too!)

Unsure of what to put on your list? Here are some inspirational categories to help get you started!

- People (friends, family, even pets - *who* are you grateful for?)
- Opportunities and Resources (*What* do you have that you are grateful for? Clean water, access to healthy food, safety, being a part of an amazing school community)