***Put A Little Gratitude in Your Pocket***

by Deborah Yaffee, CH, CN

G is for Gratitude and gratitude may well be the fastest and most direct way to feel better, gain perspective, and gently open the heart and mind to make the space for creating change. The darkness of negative thoughts that attract discord into our lives cannot exist where the positive light of gratitude shines in our consciousness. Developing a regular attitude of gratitude often effects a radical change in attitude even in the most difficult of circumstances. Here are several exercises to start you on a very special Journey. Mix and match them to keep things fun and fresh. It is said that it takes 21 days to acquire a new habit but 90 days to make it permanent. Practice gratitude for 90 days and dare to be surprised!

***GRATITUDE LIST***

Take out a sheet of paper (or use a special journal) and write a list of all that you feel grateful for...from every category in your life. Start sentences with phrases like:

*I feel grateful for...*

*I appreciate...*

*Thank you, God, for...*

*Thank You, Higher Power for...*

*Thank you, Universe for...*

Your subconscious mind can sniff out any insincerity in a heartbeat so only write down what is emotionally true for you.

If expressing appreciation and gratitude feels awkward, make love instead….

*I love my dog. I love the color of the sky today. I love this time of year. I love having hot water. I love the pictures of my kids when they were little. I love that my husband cooks for me. I love my warm brown eyes. I love this note that my daughter wrote me. I love having this quiet time to myself to sit and write. I LOVE being grateful!*

***WALK YOUR TALK***

Turn your Attitude of Gratitude into a Joyful Movement Game. Your body will be grateful!

Take a walk and recite your Gratitude List out loud. When you get through your list, keep going, reeling off whom andwhat you appreciate in your life, include everything you are grateful for. If, by any impossible chance, you should run out of things to be grateful for, go through your list again. Repetition is a good thing! As you walk, notice how choosing to be grateful expands and sharpens your awareness of what's around you; go ahead and express gratitude for that lovely tree, the green of the grass, the joy in that tail wagging the dog. Use the return stretch of your walk for affirmations: *I appreciate all the blessings in my life, I am open to receiving guidance; I am willing to allow change to occur in my life without resistance or fear; I have a choice---in this moment I choose Joy.*

**How to Play:**

**Be Honest:** if you're not feeling grateful, let your mind sit this one out while you take your regular walk today.

**Don't let shyness stop you:** Oh, I see...you are worried about looking silly, maybe even certifiable, Heaven forbid, if people see you living out loud. Not a problem. Just be silent and let them pass by you, and then exuberate to your grateful heart's content!

**Know when to stop:** Smiling from ear to ear and laughing out loud might give you a clue!

**Enjoy unexpected benefits:** Be grateful for the shower of blessings that the practice of gratitude brings into your life.

***GRATITUDE INTERVIEW***

Lighten up your Gratitude Game with this immensely enjoyable variation.

**Choose** someone to interview you. (hmmm...Albert Einstein, John Lennon, Mother Teresa, your local lawyer)

**Write** out a list of questions they could ask you about your appreciation and gratitude

**Imagine** they are asking you that list of questions about why you feel grateful in your life

**Answer out loud**......with gusto! Say it like you mean it! Some sample questions from your "interviewer" might be:

1. Explain to me what makes you so joyful at the moment.
2. Tell me what you appreciate about your spouse.
3. What are the family situations you feel grateful for today?
4. What do you love most about your body?
5. What makes you feel centered during the day?
6. What is the positive message in that pile of papers on your desk?
7. Complete this sentence for me, please: I adore Mondays because...

***PUT YOURSELF ON THE LIST AND TURN ON YOUR LOVE-LIGHT***

Sit quietly and place your hand on your Emotional Heart Center (center of your chest). Use the cycle of your breath to give your nervous system a gift of gratitude with the word Relax…..Re- (inbreath), Lax (outbreath). When you are ready, gently speak to yourself: I appreciate who I am and how I feel. I deeply and completely love and accept myself.....without judgment. Now list all the reasons why the world is grateful......for YOU!

***FEARFUL TO GRATEFUL***

1. Every day, write down 1 or 2 of your fears.
2. Do a reality check (e.g., how likely is it that the house will burn down while I am out today?)
3. Re-write the fears as gratitude statements.
4. Take action on what needs it (e.g., afraid that the overloaded circuit will start a fire? Pare down the number of appliances in the plug).
5. At the end of every week, put all the gratitude statements together. If you do EFT, Tap them in. If you do Zero Point Process, repeat the cue word YES! at the end of each statement.
6. Turn your gratitude declarations into joyful prayers of Thanksgiving and Praise.

Example:

I'm afraid of losing my house and being out on the street.

It's not likely that I am going to lose my house.

Right now I have a roof over my head and a regular paycheck.

Praise this house! Praise this job! Thank you, house! Thank you, job! Thank you, Lord, for all the bounty you have bestowed upon me. All is well and good.

Example:

I fear that I'll never lose this weight and it will kill me.

Right now, I am alive and I can access healthy, slimming foods and good, clean water. I am glad for every moment I have and I rejoice in the health I have! I'm not dead yet!

Praise this body! Praise this food! Praise you, breath! Praise you, legs that carry me! Praise you, eyes that see. Praise you, intestines that digest my food! Praise you, liver that detoxifies! Thank you, kidneys. Thank you, heart. Thank you, God, who knit me together MARVELOUSLY in my mother's womb!

***GRATEFULLY YOURS...***

One way I entertain my restless mind is to invest words with personal meaning by viewing them as using acronyms hiding treasure between the letters. Gratitude reveals itself to me as:

Give Rapt Attention To Insights That Unveil Divine Energy!

How do YOU spell G.R.A.T.I.T.U.D.E.?

I will be grateful to know!

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