



Gratitude and Gladness

Gratitude is a feeling of thankfulness about something you've been given. Gladness as a more general sense of feeling pleased, rewarded, delighted, or happy about something without it necessarily being a gift. Much of the time, these two sweet feelings form a blend. So, we'll explore them together here. Gratitude, gladness, and their related feelings like appreciation may seem so homey and Hallmark cardish that they're easy to dismiss. But studies, in fact, show that cultivating them has lasting and important benefits including lifting your mood, increasing satisfaction with life, and building resilience.

So, to get started, just noticed feelings of gratitude or gladness that are already present in your mind. Perhaps there is a background sense of being glad about where you live. Were you're pleased that your child is in a good mood today? As you go about your day, be particularly attentive to any feelings of gratitude or gladness that naturally arise. Also, create an experience of gratitude or gladness by looking for things to feel grateful for or glad about. They can be seemingly small or simple. Perhaps something nice happened recently or you have enough food or you have a friend who likes you. You could feel grateful for a pet, flowers blooming, good fortune, helping hands, or the gift of life itself. Reflect in similar ways about your past and your future. Find things to feel grateful for or glad about in the lives of others.

Open to this sense of gratitude and gladness. Explore what these experiences are like and keep them going. Gently help them become as rich and as intense as possible, filling your whole body. Open to the related feelings like joy, ease, or fulfillment, and embody the sense of gratitude and gladness by smiling, bouncing up and down in delight, softening your face or reaching your arms out to the world.

You can let gratitude and gladness sink in deeper. As you give your mind to gratitude and gladness, let yourself feel content that there's already plenty for you in this moment and that you don't need to chase after it or hold onto it tightly. Be aware of gratitude and gladness and also feelings of disappointment or loss. But keep making gratitude and gladness more prominent. And if you get carried away by the negative material in your life, drop it from your awareness. Sense that gratitude and gladness.



mindfulness

E X E R C I S E S

Imagine that some of the many things you feel grateful for or glad about are showering down and gradually filling an emptiness inside. Perhaps gratitude and gladness are touching young parts of you that felt unhappy and when you want, you can let go of any negative material and stay with that sense of gratitude and gladness.

A few times over the next hour, a dozen or more seconds at a time, be aware of any neutral or positive material like the sense of gratitude and gladness will also bring to mind a neutral trigger of disappointment or loss. This can help balance out our minds to notice everything in our awareness. To bring non-judgmental awareness or mindfulness to our whole life as we experience the ups and downs with a sense of equanimity as we cultivate the sense of warmth ease and fulfillment by practicing gratitude and gladness.