



# Let's Make a Gratitude Jar



## What is Gratitude?

When we are dealing with everyday life, it can be difficult to remember the things we are grateful for. When we can see the good, it becomes more difficult to complain and stay stuck. Did you know regularly practicing gratitude can re-wire the brain's neuropathways for happiness and decrease anxious or depressive thoughts? Practicing gratitude helps switch our focus from what we are lacking or wish for, and instead appreciate our current reality. Higher levels of gratitude are associated with an improved sense of well-being, stronger social ties, better school performance, and lower levels of depression. Being intentionally grateful can help children practice empathy, a critical part of social and emotional development.

### How to Prepare



- Pick a jar, box, or small container. This can be a mason jar, a recycled jar, a shoebox, or any container you have around the house. Your family can personalize them with paints, stickers, ribbons, and/or markers.
- Cut out slips of paper or use sticky notes and place them near your jar.
- You can be as creative as you want to be. Use color-coded messages by assigning colors to different types of gratitude. For example, one color for family, another for friends, another for activities, and so on. You can also assign each family member their own color. The colorful notes make the jar look cheerful.
- You could also use paper shaped like stars or hearts.
- Keep crayons, markers, or pens next to the jar so you can write it down and stick it in the jar as soon as you think of something.

### What to Do

#### Set a Gratitude Routine

Encourage your family to write a note daily or weekly, or even whenever something special happens.

#### Draw Your Gratitude

For younger kids who may not be writing yet, drawing pictures of what they're thankful for is a great alternative.

#### Gratitude Jar Family Time

Set a time each week to gather as a family and read a few notes from the jar. Not only does this create bonding time, but it also encourages kids to see how much there is to be grateful for in their lives.

#### Themed Days of Gratitude

Try creating a theme for different days of the week. For example:

- Monday Memories: Encourage kids to think back on a favorite memory from the past week and add it to the jar.
- Thankful Thursdays: Each Thursday, write down one person they're grateful for and why.
- Self-Love Sundays: Write down something they like about themselves or an accomplishment they're proud of.



Please reach out to me if you have any questions or would like further information.

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