

## Letters of Gratitude: Handout

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Practicing gratitude is a powerful way to enhance levels of happiness, by cultivating attitudes of thankfulness and appreciation. Gratitude also serves to counter the effects of pessimism, and in some cases, can even help alleviate depression. Counting one's blessings, and recognizing that one's positive circumstances was partly due to another's kindness is one way to deliberately tap into the positive effects of this powerful positive emotion.

**Instructions: Think about someone you feel gratitude towards. This can be any individual – family, friend, or colleague, whom, you feel thankful to have known or who may have helped you in the past. Write a letter of gratitude expressing your thanks to this individual. In your letter, be sure to tell the person:**

- *How you feel towards this person; that you wanted to thank the person and remind them about something he/she has done for you in the past*
- *Why he/she has been a positive influence in your life, and how you have changed for the better because of him/her.*

**Here are some phrases you may find useful for writing your letter:**

- *I wanted to thank you for...*
- *Just wanted you to know that I didn't forget about the time when you...*
- *I recalled the time when you helped me...*
- *I remember the time when you did... when you said ...*
- *I appreciated what you told me at that particular time/incident...*
- *I am thankful for how you treated me back then...*