



Practicing Gratitude

Our monthly focus for February is Gratitude. When we actively incorporate gratitude into our day to day lives it can have a sweeping impact on the quality of each day. Studies suggest that practicing gratitude contributes to greater well-being, can decrease depression, and improve sleep amongst other things. When we can shift our focus to the goodness, joy and even the lessons we learn, rather than the challenges and hardships we may face, we feel better, even when our circumstances don't necessarily change. As a part of our self-care routines we can seek to build gratitude into our daily routines to help cultivate this mindframe.

Practices for gratitude can include:

- Create a gratitude journal with a format that suits you. One strategy is to take five minutes a day to write down whatever comes to mind that you're thankful for.
- Create gratitude lists, an easy way to build this into your day is to simply jot down 3 things you're grateful for at the end of each day. I put mine right on my daily "To Do" lists.
- A gratitude alphabet is another great practice- this can be open ended, identifying something that begins with each letter of the alphabet for which you are thankful, or you can give yourself a category "A-Z Reasons I'm Thankful for ____"
- Practice saying Thank You- set a goal for how many times you'd like to genuinely thank the people in your life in a day.

To read more about practicing gratitude we like the following articles:

Gratitude Practice Explained <http://ei.yale.edu/what-is-gratitude/>

8 Ways to Have More Gratitude Every Day

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/womensmedia/2016/07/08/8-ways-to-have-more-gratitude-every-day/#7a8711141d54>