



## **Gratitude Grab Bag**

- **Gratitude**- *the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness. The state of being grateful.*

*Gratitude List Directions: Come up with at least one thing that you are grateful for under each category. If using telehealth participants can use separate list on paper but **\*MAKE SURE TO NUMBER each item 1 to13***

1. **Family/Loved Ones** - Meaningful relationships and relatives
2. **Friends and Others** - Things about other people you are grateful for outside of your family
3. **Self** - Things about you (Qualities, strengths, experiences, achievements, etc.)
4. **The Big Picture** – Things you are grateful for in the bigger world outside of you and your immediate view
5. **The Small Stuff** - Little things that may seem insignificant, but you are still grateful for them
6. **Life in General** – Why are you grateful to be alive?
7. **Activities/Actions** – What things are you grateful for that you are able to do?
8. **Future** – Things potentially in your future you are grateful to look forward to
9. **Past Experiences** – Things you have done or experienced that you are grateful for
10. **Current** – Things in your life today you are grateful for right now at this current time, right now.
11. **Gifts** – Things others have given you, done for you, taught you, shared with you, that you are grateful for
12. **Knowledge and Insight** – Things that you are grateful to know and understand
13. **Other** – Come up with one more thing that has not been mentioned yet

**When complete do one of the following (Choose)**

**BASIC VERSION** – Everyone just discuss their lists as a group without the game on the next page

**OR RECOMMENDED FUN VERSION** – **\*DO NOT DISCUSS LISTS YET**

Rather, play the “Wheel of Gratitude” game on following page to generate discussion



**The Wheel of Gratitude** – This is an interactive and fun way to discuss the group's gratitude lists from the previous page.

Directions – The group should take turns sharing their answers in random order using the [online spinner](#). The group leader should open up the [spinner](#) and set the wheel size to **13 Numbers** using the “Wheel Size” function in the upper left hand corner. The spinner is used two times per turn for each group member. Someone in the group should volunteer to go first then go around the group taking turns in order afterward

These are the two separate wheel spins per turn – [LINK TO ONLINE SPINNER](#) - *(If for some reason this link does not work, just go to Google and search “Spinner” and it will open up right on your search page)*

**Spin #1** – The group leader should spin the spinner and come up with a number 1-13. The person taking their turn should share their answer from their gratitude list corresponding to the number – Pause and allow the group member to share their answer out loud with the group – When done, move on to Spin #2

**Spin #2** – When the sharing for Spin 1 is over then the group leader should spin a second time. The same person should share in more detail as directed by the following list (1-13 corresponding with the spinner)

Spin 2 List - Tell the group more about your answer as directed by the number selected:

1. **Dig Deeper** – Going deeper than what you already explained about being grateful, what more can you say about why you appreciate this?
2. **Actions** – How can you take action to show that you are grateful for this in your life?
3. **Increase** - How can you increase this, improve on this or connect more with this in your life?
4. **Special** – Why is this special to you personally?
5. **Example**- Can you share a story or provide an example about this that can tell us more?
6. **Pay it forward** – How can your appreciation for this move you to do good for others in the future?
7. **Feelings** – Using some real feeling words, what feelings and emotions does this bring out in you besides gratitude? (Pride, love, happiness, confidence, inner strength, resilience, motivation, etc.)
8. **Reminders** – What helps you to remember to stay grateful for this?
9. **Advice** – What would be your advice for others related to this thing that you are grateful for?
10. **Self-Improvement** – How does your gratitude for this make you a better person?
11. **Protection/motivation** – How does your gratitude for this keep you on the right path or keep you motivated to do what is right or avoid what is wrong?
12. **Hope** – What is your hope for this part of your life?
13. **Freestyle** – Now that you've shared: What is the first thing that pops into your mind - anything goes

*There is an example of the game play on the next page if you are not sure yet how to play the game*



### EXAMPLE of The Wheel of Gratitude game play:

**SPIN 1** - “Harry” volunteers to go first and the counselor/group leader spins the spinner, and it comes up with a “5” which corresponds to “**The Small Stuff**” on the gratitude list.

- Harry gives his answer: *“One small thing in life I am grateful for is when people hold the door for me. It is such a small act of kindness, but I appreciate it so much because people don’t always notice but I have trouble walking sometimes due to my leg injury”*

Then Harry moves on to **SPIN 2** – The group leader spins the spinner a second time and comes up with number “11” which corresponds to the item “**Protection/Motivation**” on the Spin #2 list

- The counselor/group leader asks Harry - **Protection/Motivation**: *How does your gratitude for this keep you on the right path or keep you motivated to do what is right or avoid what is wrong?*
- Harry answers – *“Paying attention to the small stuff, like people holding the door for me, helps keep me on the right path because it helps me to remember to stay appreciative of the small things in life so I don’t become resentful or bitter in life and possibly end up relapsing one day”*

Game play then moves to the next group member and repeat

### Part 2 – Education: Gratitude has much to do with perspective

Something that one person may complain about can be something another that another person is grateful for. It all depends upon **perspective** –

- **Perspective** - *“Mental view” - the capacity to view things in their true relations or relative importance*
- **“One man’s grumbling is another’s gratitude”** - READ and DISCUSS - What does this mean?

Perspective Examples – *Discuss these below as a group*

One Person complains about traffic driving to work every day– Another Person without car or license only wishes they could fight the traffic to be able to drive to work

One Person complains about their kids and all the stress – Another Person who cannot have kids or who lost their kids would gratefully rather take on all of those problems in a heartbeat

One Person on probation or parole complains about curfews and restrictions- Another Person behind bars would happily volunteer to take on all of those restrictions in order to have more freedom and get out of jail

One Person complains about their living situation – Another Person without a home at all would take that living situation any day

One Person in recovery complains about drug tests, treatment and having to go to meetings – Another Person in active substance use wishes they could stay clean long enough to get into a program and have all of that positive structure in life

**Can anyone in the group share their own real-life examples?**



GROUP QUESTION - Discuss - How can you change your perspective to be more grateful?

### Strategies for Increasing Gratitude

- **Turn on your “gratitude radar”** – Look for gratitude wherever you can find it. Let yourself be attuned to it – search for it – find it – “Stop and smell the roses” in life – You will be happier as you are more grateful
  
- **Flip the script on the negative** – Reframe negatives to consider the bright side – Some examples:
  - “I got flat tire today- At least I didn’t get a blowout and crash my car”
  - “I failed a test – At least I have a chance next test to study harder and improve my grade”
  - “My girlfriend/boyfriend broke up with me – At least I know I will find someone else someday who may be even better”
  - “I lost my job – Maybe this is a doorway to an even better opportunity for me”
  - “I relapsed – Still, if I face it honestly, I can learn from this and be even more prepared in the future”
  
- **Daily Gratitude list-** Start or end each day either writing or speaking out loud 5 things that you are grateful for each and every day – This is time tested and works for increasing gratitude
  
- **Don’t compare, but if you do - Compare down, not up - “Comparison is the thief of joy,”** is a saying attributed to President Theodore Roosevelt and others, which can be very thought provoking and can instill a strong sense of gratitude. If we compare ourselves to others, we may be left with feelings of inferiority or superiority, both of which are unhealthy and have the potential to block feelings of gratitude. Instead avoid comparison altogether whenever possible. If you can’t help comparing, then think about the many people in this world who may have it worse than you – Some examples below -
  - Involved with Drug Court? – Rather than comparing yourself with people who have no legal charges, compare you life with what it would be like to have to serve the years in prison you may have been facing had you not been accepted into the Drug Court program
  - Addicted? – Don’t compare with people who can use socially – Think about the person who is at their bottom and how much better you are today even if you are still struggling. That person may even have been you. Think about how much better you have it now
  - Poor/broke or unemployed? – That is stressful but imagine what it’s like to live in a refugee camp or a country where people struggle daily just for clean water or a bowl of rice to eat. Think of the potential opportunities awaiting you in life if you do not give up
  
- **Never forget the basic building blocks of human gratitude** – As long as you are breathing, you have hope to get better – It can always be worse – If you are alive then each day is a blessing and an opportunity to change for the better and build the life you deserve, even if its little by little, each day matters. Hope can sustain you if you keep it alive in your heart and mind.
  
- **Surround yourself with positive, hopeful, and grateful people** - Avoiding negative, critical, complaining, and self-destructive people can drain you of your sense of gratitude