POPULAR GRATITUDE ACTIVITIES & EXERCISES

Gratitude comes from the Latin word "gratus" meaning "thankful" or "pleasing." Being grateful is a feeling of appreciation for acts of kindness and thankfulness for what we have, such as supportive friends, family, coworkers, pets and service animals, fulfilling careers, and good health.

When practicing gratitude, we actively choose to find joy in life, especially in little or big things (e.g., favorite coffee, passing a tough test). This way of thinking is challenging during difficult times like deployments, single parenting duties, or adjusting to a new school, but with practice, it is possible.

An attitude of gratitude helps develop emotional balance and overall well-being for adults, children, and families.

A daily gratitude focus has many benefits for the mind and body. For example, practicing gratitude can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression while improving mood, motivation, happiness, self-esteem, and life satisfaction.

Research studies have found that daily gratitude is linked to fewer signs of heart disease, better sleep, reduced cortisol levels (stress hormone), and chronic pain.

Reducing stress is a healthy coping skill, teaching us resiliency to stay balanced when responding to life's changes with a positive mindset. Gratitude also strengthens our relationships, creating more loving and meaningful connections throughout life.

GRATITUDE ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP THANKFUL HABITS

GRATITUDE JOURNAL
Make a daily list of positives, including what you appreciate in life.

FAMILY GRATITUDE JAR
Write gratitude items on pieces of paper to place in a jar. Reflect on them as a family, especially when facing tough times.

GRATITUDE LETTERS
Think about someone you are grateful for by writing them a letter expressing appreciation.

GRATITUDE COLLAGE
Create a collage about an experience, loved one, or cherished memory using photos, notes, or other small items.

For more information, please contact your local
Family Advocacy Program (FAP) or Family Care Program

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