



## Gratitude

Gratitude is in essence, the expression of appreciation for what you have. It is something that comes from within. It is something essential (because so much of our lives as humans is about giving, receiving, and repaying).

By expressing gratitude not only will you make yourself happy, but you will also create happiness in the heart of the opposite person.

Gratitude is a key link between receiving and giving: It pushes you to repay the good that was done to you in an even more beautiful manner. It helps you recognise that you already have enough of what many others have been yearning for. You see, gratitude is a sense of fulfilment that comes not from wanting more, but rather from a knowing that Allah has already blessed you with much more than you need.

You can feel thankful and blessed for the largest to the littlest things: your home, your family, a stranger that helped you cross the road, a safe environment, your eyelashes, your muscles. When you are in a state of melancholy, you find it harder to feel appreciative, but at any given time there is always something or the other to be grateful for. The ability to focus on gratitude gets your brain into the habit of seeing the positive in everything, resulting in a healthy self-esteem.

## Take the Step

Focus on the good in your life and yourself and remember that there is always something to be grateful for.

## Exercise

To develop your gratitude practice, try some of these exercises:

- **Reflect on the positive.** Keep a Gratitude Journal and write about three good things that happen to you everyday. This way you will be able to attain the “attitude of gratitude” and build a healthy self-esteem.



- **Count.** Before you begin your day, take a few minutes to count ten things you are grateful to Allah ﷻ for. Firstly, thank Allah ﷻ for giving you life. Many people go to sleep, never to witness the next day. Do you have a pillow? Add that. Can you eat and drink? Add that. Can you crawl out of bed by yourself? Add that.
- **Write a Gratitude Letter.** Write a heartfelt letter of gratitude to all those you are appreciative of. You could write a short gratitude letter to your teachers, parents, siblings, children, spouse, helper etc
- **Take a gratitude self-check.** Pick out and subtract the positive aspects of your life. Then imagine how different your life would be without those particular things. Now, take a moment and be grateful for all the bounties Allah ﷻ has bestowed upon you.

## Casestudy

Ammar was a very ungrateful young lad. He used to like complaining about everything. He spent a lot of his time thinking about the littlest things, from how spicy the cook made his food, to his teacher's behavior towards him, to his father's orthodox rules, to his struggle with memorizing the Quran, or even to how pale his skin was.

One day, his uncle met in a fatal accident, causing rib fracture and partial paralysis.

Whenever Ammar's mind went towards the things he didn't like about his life, he thought about his uncle. He realized that his uncle would do anything to have Ammar's problems instead of his own. When he pondered over this, his thoughts changed to thoughts of gratitude. He was thankful to Allah ﷻ for all His bounties. He was grateful to have a chef who could give him good food, a father that loved him enough to set boundaries, a skin with no terminal diseases and so much more.

When Ammar changed his thinking habits from complaining to gratitude, he became a happier and more grateful person.