



Dear CCNY Community,

This week we present:

## ***Letters to Home – Mindfulness and Gratitude***

During shelter-in-place, it can be difficult to stay in the present moment due to experiencing higher levels of stress, feelings of nostalgia, and uncertainty. Additionally, our minds tend to focus more on the negative aspects of the current situation. The ability to control unwanted thoughts and create a positive mindset are beneficial skills in addressing these issues. Mindfulness and gratitude are two skills that, when practiced daily, can help us increase positivity. Below are some tips and examples on how to get started.

- **Understand the Definition:** Mindfulness and gratitude can be difficult to engage in when we do not fully understand them. Mindfulness refers to intentionally living with awareness in the present moment – without judging, rejecting, or attaching to the moment. Gratitude is the acknowledgement of goodness in our life and recognizing the sources of these good things.
- **Start Your Morning with Mindfulness and Gratitude:** Try to practice mindfulness activities and/or gratitude first thing in the morning. That way you can be sure that it actually gets done and is not bumped off the to-do list as your day gets more hectic. Plus, engaging in these skills in the morning can be a pleasant way to start the day – you are refreshed, awake, and on track for a mindful day. Try this [morning meditation](#) to find your focus or check out this [how-to](#) get started practicing gratitude.
- **Consistency Is Key:** If you cannot find the time to practice these skills in the morning, try to make a commitment to practicing gratitude at the same time each day. In addition, make a commitment to increase your mindfulness (awareness) in even the simplest daily activities. Making these practices a regular part of your daily routine is key to developing a lasting habit.
- **Explore the Various Types of Mindfulness:** Mindfulness can describe engaging in any activity, with intentional non-judgmental awareness. This can look like washing the dishes mindfully or taking a mindful walk. Another, is mindfulness meditation – which teaches the ability to control/manage racing thoughts, negative thoughts, and calming the body and mind.

- **Don't Reinvent the Wheel:** Beginning mindfulness and gratitude practices can be difficult. Rest assured you do not have to figure this out alone. There are many applications that provide guided mindfulness meditation exercises. Furthermore, there are various templates and books specifically for individuals beginning their gratitude practice.
- **It Is Okay to Experience Discomfort:** People who are new to mindfulness and gratitude and even people who have been doing it for years often experience negative emotions like anxiety, restlessness, or irritation while practicing. Rather than trying to resist these emotions, give them your full attention and allow them to come and go. Try this [meditation for anxiety](#) designed for beginners.

**Additional resources:**

[What Is Mindfulness](#)

[Mindful - Free Videos and Articles on Mindfulness](#)

[Calm - Application](#)

[Meditation to Increase Focus](#)

[Meditation to Open the Mind](#)

[Gratitude Meditation](#)

[Bliss - Gratitude Journal Application](#)

[Gratitude - Practice Application](#)

[Ted Talks on Benefits of Gratitude](#)

[Gratitude Journal Examples](#)

If you are worried about your safety or the safety of a loved one, **call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 800-273-TALK (8255)**.

If you or a loved one is confined to an unsafe home, call the **National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-SAFE (7233)**; if you're unable to speak safely, visit [thehotline.org](http://thehotline.org) or text LOVEIS to 22522.

For immediate mental health support please call NYC Well 1-888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355). NYC Well provides free, confidential services to support mental health concerns. NYC WELL is available 24/7 and can provide assistance in over 200 languages.

You can also text WELL to 65173 or access the NYC WELL website at <https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/> to chat with a counselor.

Stay safe and take care of each other,  
The Counseling Center