

Gratitude Visit

Gratitude can make your life happier and more satisfying. When we feel gratitude, we benefit from the pleasant memory of a positive event in our life. Also, when we express our gratitude to others, we strengthen our relationship with them. But sometimes our thank-you is said so casually or quickly that it is nearly meaningless.

Call up the face of someone still alive who years ago did something or said something that changed your life for the better. Someone who you never properly thanked; someone you could meet face-to-face next week.

Your task is to write a letter of gratitude to this individual and deliver it in person.

- ✓ The letter should be concrete and about three hundred words: be specific about what she did for you and how it affected your life.
- ✓ Let her know what you are doing now, and mention how you often remember what she did. Make it sing!
- ✓ Once you have written the testimonial, call the person and tell her you'd like to visit her, but be vague about the purpose of the meeting; this exercise is much more fun when it is a surprise.
- ✓ When you meet her, take your time reading your letter. Notice her reactions as well as yours. If she interrupts you as you read, say that you really want her to listen until you are done.
- ✓ After you have read the letter (every word), discuss the content and your feelings for each other.

Research by Seligman, Steen and Peterson (2005) showed that this exercise produces positive changes for one month.