

## Gratitude Protocol

**Intervention:** Gratitude

**Domain:** Social/Emotional/Spiritual

**Population:** All populations, higher functioning

**Goals:** To improve mood, socialization, and develop personal meaning in their lives

**Number of clients:** 3-10

**Time:** 1 hour

**Supplies:** Pictures of a variety of items that may provoke discussion of gratitude (i.e. animals, water, nature, family, friends, etc.); paper bag; paper tree; paper leaves; markers; tape; tablet/computer; television; HDMI cord; gratitude leaf cards.

### **Description:**

- Position residents around a table
- Introduce yourself and learn everyone's name (get name tags if necessary)
- Ask residents what they know about gratitude and why it's important.
- Inform them they are going to watch a brief video on gratitude:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXDMoiEkyuQ>
- Ask them if they know any benefits for expressing gratitude, explain each one to them.
  - Benefits of ~~reading/writing poetry~~ *expressing gratitude*
    - Improves mood, decreases feelings of depression
    - Improves physical stamina
    - More likely to reach your goals
    - Feel more connected to others and a higher power
    - Have a better outlook on life
    - Improves meaning in one's life
- Following discussing the benefits, begin to play a grab-bag game of gratitude. Place the pictures of the various gratitude items in the paper bag, and go to each resident and have them grab a picture out of the bag. After each resident grabs an item, ask the group what it is, and why we should be grateful for it based on their lives, people around them, things, health, etc. Go through each item until you have identified why we should be grateful for each.
- After the game, explain that they will now create a gratitude tree together. Tape the tree to the wall, and give each participant at least 3 leaves to write things they are grateful for. Have each resident go share with the group the reasons they are grateful, and tape each leaf to the tree.
- Give each participant 3 more leaves, to give to others around the facility, and encourage them to write at least one more gratitude leaf by the end of the day.
- End by thanking each participant.

### **References:**

Andelcare. (2013). The power of gratitude: Seniors enhance life with thankfulness. Retrieved from: <http://www.andelcare.com/blog/power-gratitude-seniors-enhance-life-thankfulness>.