

# Foundations

## The Many Benefits of Gratitude

**Best for ages 9 and up. The purpose of this discussion is to teach children about the multiple benefits of feeling and expressing gratitude.**

Expressing gratitude is a concept that is discussed in depth in psychology, sociology and science in general. It is also one of the first concepts introduced in the Torah.

Research shows that in addition to the physical benefits that result from gratitude (stronger immune system and lower blood pressure, to list a few), grateful people are more stress-resistant and have a higher sense of self-worth.

Explore with your child their perspective on feeling and expressing appreciation. Ask them how they feel when they focus on the benefits of how things turn out. Challenge them to begin a "gratitude journal" for a week straight to see if focusing on the positive increases the quality of their life.

**Here's an example of how the conversation may play out:**

**Parent:** What do you think about gratitude?

**Child:** It's something people talk a lot about. It's important to be grateful for what you have.

**Parent:** Yes! Do you know that there's actual scientific research that proves that grateful people are not only happier, but also physically and emotionally healthier?

**Child:** Really? I didn't know that; that's cool. Makes sense.

**Parent:** Yes! Expressing gratitude is also a big concept in the Torah, if you think about it. We say *Az Yashir* and *Yishtabach* every day, thanking *Hashem*. Do you want to start a gratitude journal with me and we will each record 2 things at the end of every day that we are grateful for? We can try it for a week and see how we feel after.

**2 things a day is a reasonable number. When trying something new, like a gratitude journal, it's important not to take on too much.**

Follow up with your child after a week to talk about how the journaling is going.



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