

## Gratitude as a Stress Management Tool

There are many tools and techniques in the art of stress management from controlling thoughts, to meditation and exercise however there are few that mention gratitude as a way to keep life in perspective and serve as a powerful stress management tool. This article explores how to integrate gratitude into our lives and it can serve as an antidote to stress.

You may be wondering how developing a sense of gratitude can help you manage your stress better and how it can be part of your stress management tool kit.

When you think about how lucky you are to have the things you have and feel thankful, you stop stressing about the things you don't have.

Stress is often caused from feelings of deficiency. If you believe that you don't have or won't have enough of something stressful feelings can arise. When your thoughts become focussed on what is lacking it's difficult to sponsor positive emotions. By thinking thoughts of gratitude and abundance in challenging situations you can keep your stressful thoughts at bay and improve your stress management capability.

Next time you're feeling stressed, think about all the things that you're grateful for in your particular situation. It's important that whenever you're stressed you counter the feeling by thinking thoughts of gratitude, appreciation, love, compassion and abundance. In doing so, your stress will begin to subside. Be mindful however that as soon as you allow your mind to slip back to thoughts of scarcity your feelings of stress may return.

Remember that you always have a choice on how you want to feel. Stress management is about understanding that you can choose feelings of stress or feelings of gratitude and abundance. Make a commitment to be more grateful and appreciative of what you have everyday.

We all have many things to be grateful for. If you compare yourself to others that seem to have more than you, you will only increase your feelings of scarcity and the potential for feeling stressed. Put the stress in your life into perspective by appreciating the many things you are blessed to have.

Let's put this stress management technique into action.

Think about your life for a moment.

What are you grateful for?

When you wake up in the morning do you feel pain in your body? Can you see? Can you walk? Do you have a roof over your head? Do you have food in your belly? Have you laughed today? Have you talked to a friend? Do have a job to go to? Do you have people that love and care for you?

You have a lot to be grateful for everyday, you just need to take the time to appreciate it.

By choosing the attitude of gratitude you are by no means negating or disregarding the challenges you experience. They are real and require your attention. However, by developing a sense of gratitude you will feel more appreciative and, consequently, less stressed.

In every stressful event start by focusing on the positive aspects in the situation and appreciate those as your first port of call. This stress management technique will keep things in perspective for you and not allow the stressful situation to take over.

Start to realise how lucky you are right now.