

the turn of a faucet, the light that goes on with the turn of a switch, or the comfort of clean sheets on your bed. These things exist because of the efforts of many people, like those who constructed the building, engineered efficient roads, researched medications, created water systems, wired your building for electricity and made your bed. What if you noticed the countless gestures and actions of people who make your days more graceful?

Taking in the good by allowing for moments of gratitude in the face of living with ongoing losses and impermanence helps us to build inner resilience in the face of our difficulties. Taking in the good and pausing to say “thank you” helps us remember those who have helped us in the past and those who continue to contribute toward making our lives easier in whatever conditions we find ourselves. The following exercises are intended to help you remember to take in the good and pause with it. Doing so will help balance your attention, holding the good alongside the losses.

“Can you see the holiness in those things you take for granted—a paved road or a washing machine? If you concentrate on finding what is good in every situation, you will discover that your life will suddenly be filled with gratitude, a feeling that nurtures the soul.”

—HAROLD KUSHNER

AN INVITATION TO REFLECT AND WRITE

“The miracle of gratitude is that it shifts your perception to such an extent that it changes the world you see.”

—DR. ROBERT HOLDEN

A gentle reminder: You don’t have to answer all the questions or do all the exercises. Simply choose one or two that resonates with you, work with it for a while, and then rest.

Gratitude journal

- Consider things in your life that make you feel happy (for example: talking with someone, seeing the sun through the clouds, enjoying people who visit, or feeling cared about).
- As you write about feeling grateful and appreciative, allow yourself to feel happiness in your body. Linger with the reflection as you write about it.
- At the end of a day, list five things that happened that day about which you feel grateful. It might be as simple as being greeted with a smile or receiving an unexpected visitor or phone call. Perhaps it was the sounds of birds outside the window or music on the radio.
- Use your senses to remember an unexpected sight, a sound, a pleasant scent, or a touch. It might even be the soothing sound