

# Summer Wellness Challenge



## Gratitude Scavenger Hunt

### Activity for Middle & High School Students

After months of remaining Safer at Home, making adjustments to our normal daily life and planning for the start of the school year, now is a great time to practice gratitude and take time to reflect on the many things in our life we can be thankful for.

Gratitude is a feeling of thankfulness and joy we feel in response to something we've been given, whether the gift is tangible (concrete/physical) or intangible (something you cannot touch), such as a smile of encouragement from a loved one or a beautiful view of the beach.

Spending time reflecting on gratitude has physiological effects on the brain and body – when we think about something or someone we truly appreciate our bodies calm themselves, because the feelings associated with gratitude trigger the calming branch (parasympathetic system) of the autonomic nervous which tells the body to “rest and digest” and counteracts the “fight, flight, or freeze” response in the sympathetic system.<sup>1</sup>

Let's practice gratitude reflection with a gratitude scavenger hunt! This is a great opportunity to connect with others, either within your household, or virtually outside of your household.

#### **STEP 1: Determine your scavenger hunt group.**

**Option 1 – In-person with household:** If you want to play in person, get your family members together that live in your household to play. Then determine how much time you will each get to physically collect all your items on the list and then meet up to share your items as a group.

**Option 2 – Virtual:** If you want to play virtually, determine if you want to gather a group of friends together or do an extended family activity with members outside your household. Then determine how much time you will get to either physically collect all your items/or find representations online, then set up a time to meet virtually to review your items as a group.

<sup>1</sup> The MindUP Curriculum. Brain-Focused Strategies for Learning-and Living. Scholastic, 2011. Pages: 126- 151.

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**STEP 2: Start the scavenger hunt using the list below!**<sup>2</sup> Click here to print the [scavenger hunt](#).

For all the items below, it is up to your group determine if you need to physically find all the items or if you can take a photo/find a photo online to represent all items.

1. Find something that brings you a smile to your face.
2. Find an item to give someone else to make them happy.
3. Find something you love to look at.
4. Find something you like the smell of.
5. Find something that represents your favorite color.
6. Find something you are thankful for in nature.
7. Find something that you use for self-care.
8. Find something that tastes good.
9. Find something that is unique to you.
10. Find something that makes you laugh.
11. Find something that represents your favorite place to spend time.
12. Find something that makes you feel safe and comforted.
13. Find something you are grateful for.
14. Find something that reminds you of people you love.
15. Find something that makes a sound you love OR a song you love.
16. Find something that you cannot live without.

### STEP 3: Gratitude discussion.

- Take turns sharing all the items on the list and comparing similarities and differences.
- Share how certain items make you feel.
- Share who you would give the gift item to and why.
- Share how it feels to think about all the different things you can be grateful for.
- Share if you were surprised at an item someone chose and why.
- Share any happy memories that arose during the scavenger hunt or in sharing the items with others.
- Share why you are grateful for the people who participated in the scavenger hunt with you.

### Want to continue practicing gratitude and mindfulness?

[MindUP](#) is an evidence-based program grounded in neuroscience, mindful awareness, positive psychology and social-emotional learning. You can access all school-based, booster lessons, videos and additional mindfulness resources visit [bchd.org/mindup](https://bchd.org/mindup).

<sup>2</sup> Says, D., Says, K., Says, G., Says, A., & Says, D. (2020, January 20). The Best Gratitude Scavenger Hunt for Kids and Adults. Retrieved from <https://www.naturalbeachliving.com/gratitude-scavenger-hunt/>