



THE Gratitude Business

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The Daily Dozen

12 Ways to Build a GRATEFUL Family

One of the GRATITUDE questions I get most is, “How do I develop GRATITUDE in my family?” First of all, I would tell you that building a GRATEFUL family is much more than manners. It’s about creating the “FEELING” of gratitude rather than just the “WORDS” of gratitude. Children are sponges (regardless of their age) and they’re watching you. Research consistently shows that modeling GRATITUDE is the most effective way to teach it. Here are 12 simple ways you can get started building GRATITUDE in your family.

1. **JOY Jar:** Get a jar, box, can etc. (to keep in your home) that any member can write down something JOYFUL that happened they were grateful for and put it in the jar. Ex. I made cheerleader today and I am so excited! Then, when things aren't going well, or at a scheduled time each week, pull one out and read it.

2. **Fridge List:** Keep a magnetic pad on your refrigerator and write on it anytime you want to THANK someone in your household for something. Ex. Thank you Dad for picking out my clothes this morning since I wasn't feeling well.

3. **Say something NICE:** Go around the table at dinner time and everyone at the table has to say something nice (either about someone at the table, or about their day). Ex. James, (brother) you looked so handsome in your tuxedo for prom.

4. **Family GRATITUDE Journal:** Keep a journal somewhere in the house where everyone can find it, and let anyone write things they're grateful for in it. Be SPECIFIC and describe it with as much detail as possible. Ex. I am so grateful that today in Math class my teacher called me up to the front because I knew how to work the problems.

5. I SPY: Play this game with your family at any time. Just call out "I SPY" whenever you need a boost, and everyone STOPS what they're doing to look around them (right where they are) and "spy" one thing they're GRATEFUL for. Ex. I am grateful for trees that blow in the wind because it feels good when it's hot.

6. Best part of Today: Play this game either at dinner time, on the ride home from school, or at bedtime and ask your children "What was the BEST part of your day?" Ex. The best part of my day was at recess when I scored 2 goals in soccer.

7. Photo Bomb: Use your cellphones to practice GRATITUDE. Find something that you're GRATEFUL for and take a selfie with it and text it to a member of your family. Ex. Take a picture with your pet and text it to your child saying "I am GRATEFUL that Fuzzy's hugs are almost as good as yours."

8. What Makes You SPECIAL: Pick one member of your family and take a day when everyone else in the house writes them notes, or tells them personally the things that make them special. Attach post-it notes around the house, stick them in lunchboxes, put them on the shower door etc. Ex. Mom, you're so special because you work hard for our family so that we can all go on vacation.

9. Bedtime Build Up: As you tuck your kids in at night, or even with your spouse, take a moment and say one thing you're GRATEFUL for that happened "that day". Ex. I am so GRATEFUL that today you passed your spelling test because the words were very hard.

10. Thank you Letter to your Family: Take a day and write a Thank-You note to the members of your family and actually put them in the mail so the family gets them "the old-fashioned way"... by mail. Ex. "Mom, I am so grateful God picked you to be my mom. You're so loving and you always make sure I have all the things I need. And... you make the best lunches that all my friends wish they had."

11. Favorite Meal: Have everyone in the family write down their favorite meal and at the first of each month or week, pick one and fix it for them expressing GRATITUDE that they are "in your family". Ex. Chicken Spaghetti Friday's for James before his track meets on Saturday saying, "I am so GRATEFUL I am able to fix your favorite food so you will have energy to do your best in tomorrow's track meet."

12. Member of the MONTH: Each month pick a new member of the family and ALL month long make that person feel special by showing and telling them all the reasons you're GRATEFUL for them. Ex. Do some of their favorite things, go to their favorite places, eat their favorite foods, write them notes, listen to their favorite music etc.

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