

TREE OF GRATITUDE

Creativity applied to anxiety (Activity 8/12)

DESCRIPTION

Practicing gratitude can be powerful. It is included in various methods, systems and approaches that are designed or defined to make us happier, to improve our well-being, interpersonal relations and communication, such as positive psychology, mindfulness, non-violent communication. It helps to change automatic thoughts and ruminations, to focus on presence and positive things (even if some other aspects are worse than we wish) and increase acceptance, even feeling of happiness.

OBJECTIVES

1. Focus on positive aspects, small things that matter make us happy; increase mental wellbeing.
2. Reduce anxiety, negative thoughts, ruminations.
3. Create a habit of being grateful / positive thinking.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

- colored sheets of paper
- strings or ribbons
- scissors
- twigs or tree branches
- a vase.

IMPLEMENTATION - INSTRUCTION

1. Prepare some leaf cutouts to use as templates for leaves.
2. Trace leaves on colored paper.



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3. Cut out the leaves, punch a small hole in each one, loop a string or ribbon through each hole.
4. Put the tree branch or twig in the vase. You can use stones or and put them in the vase to make the twigs more stable and placed in the middle.
5. Write on each leaf what you are grateful for.
6. Hang the leaves on the branches.

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

1. The Tree of gratitude may be prepared individually or in groups.
2. The tree may stay in the room to be a nice decoration, remind one of all the things one is grateful for, also to add leaves from time to time.
3. The Tree may have also a form of a poster on the wall to stick leaves to it.

The exercise is very popular, as a simple practice of gratitude, and can also be done by seniors as an activity together with children, other family members or friends in a care home setting.

You can even create a digital tree of gratitude online!

EXPECTED RESULTS

- better mood
- thinking positively more often,
- increased wellbeing and reduced anxiety.