

Finding Spiritual Resilience

Session One: Gratitude

Quick summary:

- Gratitude is more than appreciation; it looks beyond the gift to the giver
- Research shows that consciously practicing gratitude improved wellbeing and help reduce anxiety and depression
- When we engage our senses by remembering the particulars of the people and other realities, we impact our nervous systems, brains and memories
- Concrete reminders and clear intentions help us practice gratitude regularly
- Even brief practices make a difference when practiced consistently

Suggested gratitude practices:

- Call to mind people or things you are grateful for. Be present to each as fully as possible. What do they look like? sound like? smell like? etc. Then thank God for their presence in your life.
- Make a phone call or write a letter to express your gratitude to a person who has been important in your life.
- Have a shared moment of gratitude with your household at a meal or before going to bed. Consciously put yourselves in God's presence and then have each person name out loud the focus of their gratitude, perhaps in the form of a prayer.
- Keep a gratitude journal.
- Make gratitude pictures or create symbols and put them around your home. Share them if you can.

Commitment:

Pick an achievable target, which for most of us is *not* every single day. Most of us fall short of our commitments, but do better than we would if we just head out with some vague intention. If you choose to, write below the practice(s) you intend to engage in, and how many times per week you intend to do it. If you have a buddy, state your intention to them. If you fall short, don't waste time berating yourself. Just start each day as a brand new opportunity.

My commitment: