

PATHWAYS TO KINDNESS

There are many ways to cultivate the practice of KINDNESS to both ourselves and others. One very important one is through GRATITUDE. We hope you can adapt some of these for your students and families of any age!

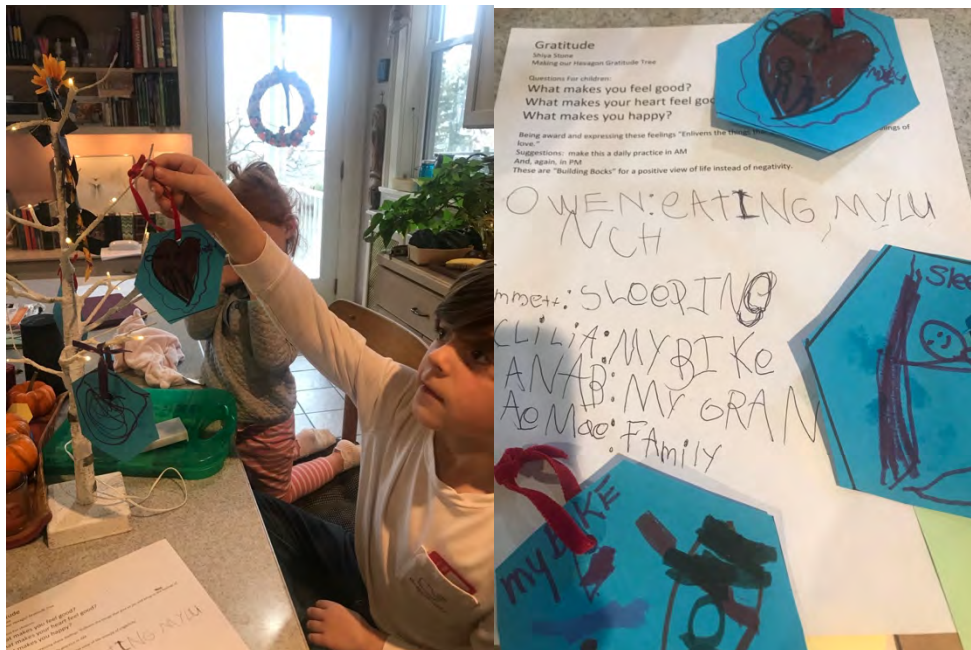
This February sharing contains ready-to-use materials, links and ideas - especially for this heart-filled time of year.

1. Gratitude activities: including
 - a gratitude tree
 - a gratitude box,
 - gratitude poem,
 - gratitude "Heart-Hexagon" ready-made templates for drawing and writing!
 - Video on cultivating feelings of love and gratitude by Shiya Stone
2. Link to the Greater Good Science Center out of Berkeley California including their interactive February Happiness Calendar!

variation of them with my 3 grandchildren ages 3 to 5. I am so grateful to her for this beautifully-crafted inspiration and sharing her talents with us! The following are links to her website for further information:

Making our Hexagon Gratitude Tree

Very simply, I talked to the children about their feelings after I watched Shiya's video. I had precut hexagons and also printed out the paper [see below] with the questions. My 5-year-old wrote down their responses and they drew pictures on the hexagons, punched holes, strung yarn through and hung them on the tree. The tree was a lighted tree-branch but you could use any tree branch and even add a string of lights to it.



You may want to watch this YouTube video about developing feelings of gratitude with young children:
Shiya Stone YouTube Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSIFkQ3Esbk>

Questions For children:

What makes you feel good?

What makes your heart feel good?

What makes you happy?

Being aware and expressing these feelings "Enlivens the things that give us joy and brings us the feelings of love."

Suggestions: make this a daily practice in AM

And, again, in PM

These are "Building Blocks" for a positive view of life instead of negativity.



Inside My Heart GRATITUDE BOX PROJECT By Shiya Stone



“Cultivate the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to you, and to give thanks continuously. And because all things have contributed to your advancement, you should include all things in your gratitude.” ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Materials Included in the kit:

- Wooden Box
- Colored Tissue Paper
- White Glue
- Paintbrush

Materials Needed:

- Small bowl or container
- Water
- Scissors
- Paper towels if needed

Process:

1. Mix glue and water about 1:1ish - mixture should be very watery like milk
2. Select the colored tissue paper for your box - decide on a pattern or random design
3. Separate the box top and bottom
4. Wet the surface of the box - just a portion at a time
5. Lay single pieces of tissue onto the glue
6. Apply a layer of water/glue over top of the tissue paper to seal the paper
7. Paper can be slightly overlaid or side by side
8. Make sure you are not covering the inside areas where the box closes
9. Continue until both the lid and base of the box are covered
10. Use scissors to trim any excess paper
11. Let your Gratitude Box dry

Alternative Activities:

- The wooden boxes can be colored with markers/ painted with watercolors or acrylics
- Add fancy papers that you may have at home (for thicker paper use thicker glue)
- Use stickers alone or on top of dry drawing materials or dried paint
- Add adornment like gems, sequins, small stones and spangle (use drops of white glue)
- Coat your box and adornments with Mod Podge to give is a shiny coat

How to use your box:

As a daily practice, or as an activity to share with groups, family or friends, write on strips of paper the things you are Grateful for and fill your box. Younger children may want to draw little pictures of family, friends or things they like to do. When sharing with a group, once the box is full have each one take turns reading the strips of gratitude. For ourselves or children, use your gratitude box as a reminder of all the good we have on the days when it is more difficult to find things to be grateful for.

“Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very Small Heart,
it could hold a rather large amount of Gratitude.” ~ A.A. Milne

Inside My Heart

A Poem About Gratitude

By Shiya Stone

Inside my heart I keep my treasures.
My love for things that bring me pleasure.
I love mama and papa and people all around.
Loving with hugs and without a sound.

Inside my heart I find my friends.
Jack and Jane and Fred... we blend.
We love to ride and jump and swing.
Searching for hoops, balls and lost things.

Inside my heart I have my crayons,
paper, paint, markers and aprons.
I love to draw and dream of what's to be.
Uncovering the worlds only I can see.

Inside my heart I watch my critters.
Birds and cats and puppy dog litters.
I love the squirrels and watch them play,
Frolicking with friends every day.

Inside my heart I touch the trees,
the ocean, the flowers and bees.
I love the wind, the sky and clouds.
Feeling nature, the earth, all around.

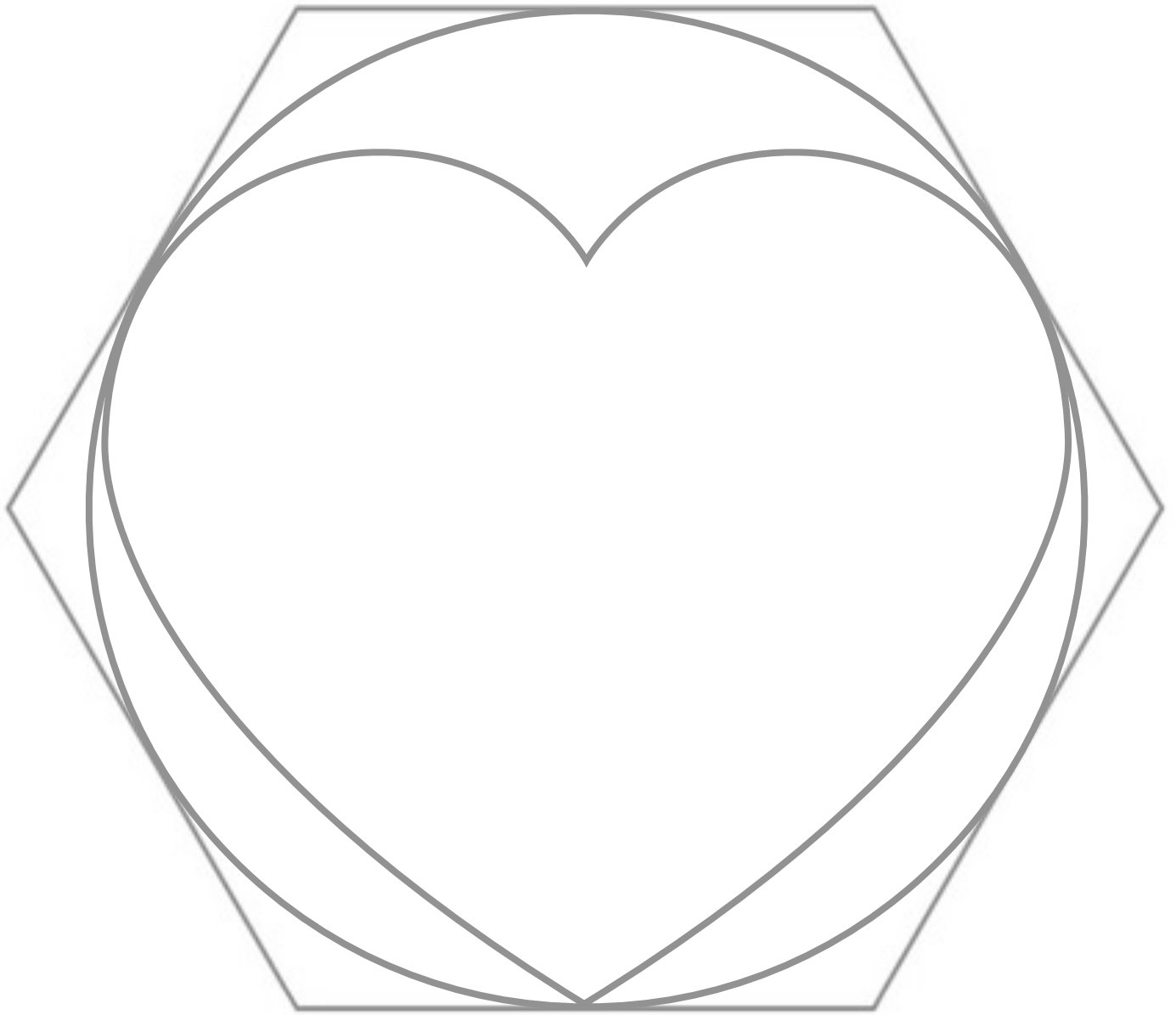
Inside my heart I sing and dance.
I look around for a creative chance.
I love my voice and how my body moves.
Singing my songs, my rhythm, my grooves.

Inside my heart I think of Me.
Of today, tomorrow and everything I will be.
I love the places I will go, the people I will meet.
Knowing I will stand on my own two feet.

Inside my heart I hear the sounds.
Whispers of wisdom and secrets abound.
I love the mystery and watch it unfold.
Revealing the stories of lifetimes of old.

When my days are gloomy and I want to hide,
I open up my heart and I take a peek inside.
I love my treasures, my heart and me
Then, giving thanks, all shines brightly.

I AM Grateful for all that I find



Inside My Heart

I AM Grateful

For...

A large heart shape is centered on the page, enclosed within a hexagonal border. The heart is filled with horizontal lines, providing a space for writing. At the top of the heart, there is a small circle representing a beak. The text "I AM Grateful" is written in a cursive font along the top curve of the heart, and "For..." is written in a simple font on the left side of the heart's upper curve.



Greater Good Science Center

[Magazine](#) | [Happiness Practices](#) | [Take a Quiz](#) | [Podcast](#) | [Events & Classes](#) | [About Us](#) | [Donate](#)

February 2022 Happiness Calendar

This month, find hope and courage.

Keep up with the latest on the science of connection, compassion, and happiness by [subscribing to our newsletters](#).

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 <p>Greater Good Science Center</p> <p>ggsc.berkeley.edu greatergood.berkeley.edu</p>		<p>1 Read books by Black authors for Black History Month.</p>	<p>2 Look for the humor in a challenging situation.</p>	<p>3 Find ways to interact more with your neighbors.</p>	<p>4 Let go of the expectation that you should feel happy all the time.</p>	<p>5 Be gentle with yourself when you feel afraid.</p>
	<p>6 Call an old friend today.</p>	<p>7 Listen to soothing music.</p>	<p>8 Notice all the ways that you're being courageous just by quietly persevering.</p>	<p>9 Try our one-month Pathway to Happiness program.</p>	<p>10 When work is stressful, take a moment to practice gratitude.</p>	<p>11 Nourish yourself with the things that give you a sense of meaning.</p>
<p>13 Practice loving-kindness to generate warm, compassionate feelings for others.</p>	<p>14 Reflect on what you want in your relationships and how you might achieve it.</p>	<p>15 Identify the goals that would help get you where you want to go.</p>	<p>16 Take four long, deep breaths (along with your kids) to help everyone calm down.</p>	<p>17 Find your tribe by seeking out cultural and community groups.</p>	<p>18 Offer everyone patience and kindness as you navigate pandemic-time school together.</p>	<p>19 Identify self-care practices that rejuvenate and restore your energy.</p>
<p>20 To get through hard times, acknowledge the difficulty rather than trying to fight it.</p>	<p>21 What do you think about Greater Good? Take our annual audience survey.</p>	<p>22 Have a heart-to-heart conversation with someone you disagree with.</p>	<p>23 Try to let go of unhelpful self-judgment and self-criticism.</p>	<p>24 Hold on to hope and courage in the face of climate change.</p>	<p>25 Forgive yourself to move on from a lingering regret.</p>	<p>26 Beware of the temptation to avoid other people's suffering and try to stay empathic.</p>
<p>27 Spend more time outdoors in nature this week.</p>	<p>28 Imagine what your best possible life would look like.</p>					