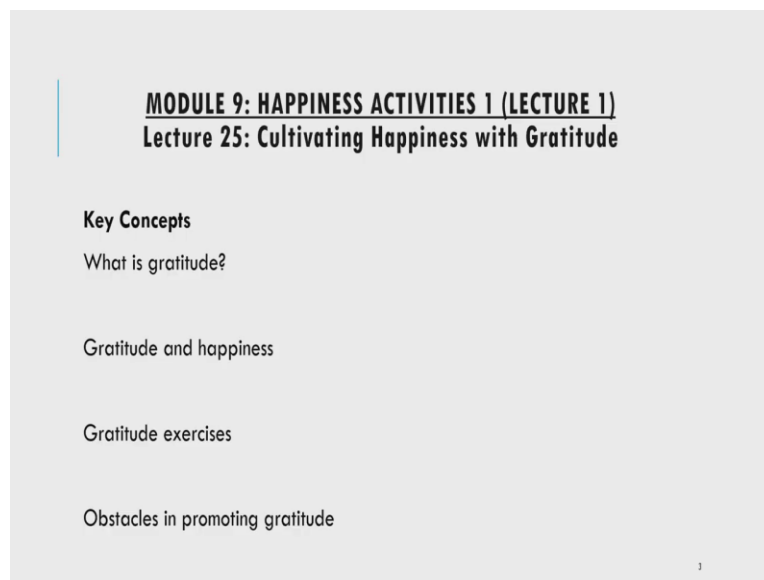


Psychology of Stress, Health, and Well-Being
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Lecture 25
Cultivating Happiness with Gratitude

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Hello friends, I welcome you to the lecture number 25 of the course, Psychology of Stress, Health and Wellbeing. So today we will start module 9, which is about happiness activities, first part. Module 10 will be happiness activities, part two. So, today we will talk about the concept of gratitude, how can we cultivate happiness, by practicing gratitude. So, before we talk about today's lecture, let us have a brief recap of the last lecture or kind of an overview of the last module, because this module is connected to the last module.

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RECAP: LECTURE 24

Intentional activities (IA)

Intentional activities and hedonic adaptation

How to use IA for increasing happiness?

Positive activity interventions

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MODULE 9: HAPPINESS ACTIVITIES 1 (LECTURE 1) **Lecture 25: Cultivating Happiness with Gratitude**

Key Concepts

What is gratitude?

Gratitude and happiness

Gratitude exercises

Obstacles in promoting gratitude

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So, in the last lecture, or module, we attempted to answer one essential question: can we increase our happiness experiences? So, that was a question we addressed in the last module. In that context, we attempted to comprehend whether there are any fundamental limitations to boosting our happiness levels, such as genetic impacts and hedonic adaptation to life circumstances.

So, whatever changes occur, we adapt to them in general and return to our baseline level of happiness. Then we talked about a model called the sustainable happiness model, in which we sought to explain that there are three major determinants of happiness: one is heredity, the second is life circumstances, and the third is intentional activities.

So, in that context, we talked about how genes put certain limits to our experiences, such as happiness and emotions, and it provides a baseline level. Life circumstances are also steady, stable features or realities of our lives that do not contribute significantly to our degree of happiness, mostly because we have been adapted to them. Then we spoke about intentional activities, our third group of components, which gives us a lot of options for enhancing or investigating our happiness or pursuing it.

So, in that context, intentional activities are essentially those activities that we do or that we kind of, or our thought, thought processes, which may include what actions as well as thought processes, in our day-to-day lives and functioning, and they may contribute, certain types of intentional activities can contribute to our happiness. So, according to study, this is the case. Intentional activities, as we've seen, can fall into three categories. It could be behavioral intentional activities, cognitive activities such as thought processes or attitudes, or volitional activities in the sense of goal pursuit and achievement. We've also explored how, because of two major factors, we're less likely to become adapted to intentional, intentional activities. One is that intentional activities are episodic; we do not engage in them on a regular basis. Second, we can change or vary intentional activities since we are the ones who consciously or intentionally engage in them.

As a result of these qualities, we can change, vary, and they are not always engaged in. As a result, we are less likely to adapt to them. So, as it stands, it has a significant advantage over life circumstances. We've also talked about the positive activity model or intervention, in which we talked about positive activities, namely, certain deliberate actions that make us happier.

Certain activities such as practicing gratitude, acts of kindness employing signature strengths, creating one's values, meditation, and mindfulness, according to studies, are some of the positive activities that boost or contribute to our long-term happiness level. The process by which they enhance our well-being and happiness, according to research, is that this positive activity stimulates positive emotions, thoughts, and behaviors, which increases our happiness and well-being.

We've also talked about some of the characteristics that determine the success of positive activities; not all positive activities have the same impact on our happiness and well-being. Certain elements, such as the features of the activity itself, may influence the success or failure of those positive activities. So, how

often do you engage in that activity? So, how many times have you been practicing these, whether you were altering it or doing the same thing over and over? As a result, these elements will have an impact, and we have examined the specifics of all of this.

The characteristics of the person, such as his motivation level, belief systems, personality traits, and efforts, will all determine whether or not this activity will result in an increase in happiness. Then we talked about person-activity fitness, and how certain activities may be more suitable for one type of person but not for another. So, whether or not this activity is appropriate for your mindset will determine whether or not it will be beneficial to you.

So, these are some of the topics we covered in the previous module. In the next lesson, we'll focus on certain intentional activities or positive activities that, according to studies, have a lot of potential for boosting our happiness level over time. So, starting today, we'll discuss specific activities. In the previous module, we talked about intentional activities in general. So, in today's lesson, we'll concentrate on or emphasize cultivating happiness through gratitude or gratitude exercise.

So, in that context, we'll talk about some crucial concepts in today's lesson, such as what gratitude is and how gratitude is linked to happiness. Then we'll talk about some gratitude exercises that we can do. Finally, we'll talk about some of the challenges that come with promoting or practicing gratitude. So, let's take a look at each of these ideas one by one.

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What is Gratitude?

Gratitude is derived from the Latin word "gratia", which means grace or gratefulness.

Gratitude has been conceptualized in many ways depending on the context. It has been conceptualized as a moral virtue, an attitude, an emotion, a habit, a personality trait, and a coping response (Sansone & Sansone, 2010).

Gratitude is an acknowledgment that we have received something of value from others. It arises from a posture of openness to others, where we are able to gladly recognize their benevolence (Emmons & Mishra, 2011).

So, what exactly does gratitude imply? Gratitude is derived from a Latin word called gratia, which meaning grace or gratefulness. So, when we say we're grateful for something, we're really saying we're thankful for something. So there's the concept of gratitude. As a result, the core definition of the word is grace or gratitude. However, depending on the context, gratitude, the idea or concept of gratitude, has been characterized in a variety of ways in the literature.

People have conceived gratitude as a form of moral virtue, and many people look at gratitude as a kind of moral virtue since it is emphasized in various spiritual and religious traditions, and it is a valuable virtue to acquire. As a result, it is seen as a moral virtue. Many people consider it to be an attitude; it is a type of attitude or outlook that you have toward people or life in general; what is your attitude toward the events that occur in your environment? Also, gratitude is a more specific state of mind or a certain attitude that you adopt that includes an aspect of thanks and thankfulness.

Many people regard attitude to be an emotion, especially when it is a positive emotion. As a result, because gratitude and positive emotions are inextricably linked. As a result, many individuals view gratitude to be a type of positive emotion. Many individuals believe it is a habit, which means that certain people are naturally more appreciative than others. As a result, habit is linked to the concept of

personality trait. As a result, when we refer to anything as a personality trait, we are referring to a quality that is deeply embedded in that individual.

So it's a facet of his personality, his uniqueness; it's more like he's most of the time, one person is expressing gratitude. As a result, it could be considered a personality feature by some. Some individuals think about it in terms of coping mechanisms. As a result, gratitude may be employed as a coping mechanism in the face of adversity. So, it has been defined in a variety of ways, but the core idea remains the same: it is a feeling of gratitude or thanks that may be understood in a variety of ways, depending on the circumstances, whether it be a trait, an attitude, a virtue, or a combination of all of these things.

Let us take another definition: gratitude is also regarded as a form of acknowledgment that we have received something of value from others. So, gratitude entails that you acknowledge or will acknowledge or will acknowledge that there is a sense of acknowledgement and openness that comes from within you when you receive something good or essential from another person or from life in general.

As a result, it arises from a position of openness to others, where you can cheerfully recognize their goodness. So, one thing is that, clearly, you accept the importance of what you've gotten, you assign value to it, and there's a sense of openness and recognition that whatever the importance of, whatever you've received is important to you. So, these are some of them, and it's also a different way of putting it.

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A more broader and context free definition is-

Gratitude is the appreciation of what is valuable and meaningful to oneself and represents a general state of thankfulness and/or appreciation (Sansone & Sansone, 2010).

- ① state of thankfulness or appreciation
- ② what is valuable & meaningful to oneself

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A larger, more context-free definition is what we mean when we say context-free definition, because the preceding definition was in the context of someone giving you something. As a result, there was an interaction context. A more context-free definition can also be provided; in fact, several researchers have defined gratitude in this manner. Gratitude, for example, is the awareness of what is valuable and meaningful to oneself, as well as a general state of thankfulness and appreciation.

So, in that sense, gratitude has two significant aspects: one is a state of thankfulness or appreciation. Second, what are you thankful for or appreciate? What makes anything valuable and meaningful? So, in this definition, there are two crucial aspects: one is that you become, and there is a state of mind in which you are thankful and appreciative for what you have received, in terms of and you cherish those whatever gifts that you have received. It is valuable and significant to you.

So, this present or whatever expression of appreciation you're giving could have originated from another individual or from life in general. So, one could be grateful to the existence itself, to the God or some higher force, or to specific individuals because they have contributed or given you vital gifts or anything, or because they have made some contribution to your life for which you are grateful and appreciative.

So, the basic concept of gratitude is that when you are in a state of thankfulness, you thank others, you thank the universe, you thank God, and so on. So, when we say that state is called that, we really mean thankfulness. When we are in a state of gratitude, we basically become thankful. So, this is the fundamental concept of gratitude. So, while there are various definitions, the essential concept remains the same; nevertheless, the context may differ.

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One may feel grateful by many ways such as noticing how fortunate one's life circumstances are (it could have been much worse), by thanking someone who has contributed in one's life, recalling good things in one's life (Lyubomirsky, 2007).

The practice of gratitude involves a focus on the present moment, on appreciating your life as it is today and what has made it so (Lyubomirsky, 2007).

People acknowledge the goodness in their lives by becoming grateful.

People are now able to express gratitude in a variety of ways and for a variety of reasons. As a result, one might be appreciative in a variety of ways. Taking note of how lucky one's life circumstances are, for example. As a result, focusing on your life circumstances can help you become grateful. When you realize how fortunate you are to have the life conditions you do, you realize how fortunate you are to have them. It might have been much worse, and there are individuals in far worse situations than you. As a result, thankfulness may automatically occur. It can come up if you think about your life conditions. Another approach to express appreciation is to thank someone who has made a difference in your life; thankfulness can also be expressed when you are grateful to others, especially those who have made a difference in your life. As a result, you become appreciative and open to their gift, whatever it is that you have received from them. As a result, you express your gratitude or gratitude. Recalling good things in one's life might also help one become grateful. Some simply because you have had a lot of excellent things happen in your life. So, if you recall those wonderful things, you may feel grateful, because there are so many pleasant memories of your life or even certain incidents that have occurred, and by remembering, recalling them, you may feel grateful.

As a result, practicing gratitude involves focusing on the present moment and enjoying your life as it is now, as well as what has contributed to it. So, in general, when you feel grateful, you are in the present moment and enjoying a particular facet of your life or your life in general. And everything else has

contributed to your current living situation. So, in gratitude, people express their appreciation for the wonderful things in their lives by becoming grateful. So, in a nutshell, you could say that people accept whatever goodness is present in their lives by becoming grateful.

As a result, they acknowledge some aspect of goodness in their lives everytime they express gratitude. So, in general, our human minds are more accustomed to situations for which we find reasons to complain. Our mind naturally flows in the complaining aspects of our life. So, when something goes wrong, our mind, our entire attention, and we have seen why, what is the reason for it, bad things attract our attention, and our entire energy and focus goes there. We've already explored all of this for evolutionary reasons. As a result, our minds tend to gravitate toward things about which we might find reasons to complain. As a result, we must cultivate gratitude. Gratitude may not come naturally to most people, which is why it is necessary to cultivate it. As a result, we must alter our focus from a perpetual complaining mentality to a grateful mindset. As a result, there is a requirement for effort, and most intentional activities require some effort. You must adapt your attitude and put up some effort if you want to modify your life experiences for the better. Because the mind naturally flows in the other direction, it's important to direct it back to and intentionally concentrate on the elements of your life that are more positive in that sense, and to be grateful for particular areas of your existence. As a result, it is a deliberate effortful activity.

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Gratitude and Well-being/Happiness *Pro-Social*
Anti-Social

Gratitude is foundational to well-being and mental health throughout the lifespan (Emmons & Mishra, 2011).

Gratitude has been shown to contribute to diverse well-being measures-

- ✓ Increases positive affect and decreases negative affect (Emmons & Mishra, 2011)
- ✓ Negatively associated with depression, anxiety, loneliness, envy, or neuroticism (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002)
- ✓ Positively associated with prosocial traits such as empathy, forgiveness, and willingness to help others (McCullough et al., 2002) and overall social well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).
- ✓ Overall improved well-being, including fewer health complaints and a more positive outlook toward life (Emmons & Mishra, 2011)

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Now, let's look at the link, or rather, the research findings, between gratitude and happiness or well-being. So many studies show that gratitude is essential for happiness and health throughout our lives. As a result, it is one of the most fundamental aspects of our health, happiness, and well-being. Because this is a fundamental attitude that is linked to plenty of beneficial outcomes and can elicit a variety of positive behaviors and thought processes.

As a result, some of these things will be seen. As a result, it is regarded as a foundational aspect of our well-being and health because it is linked to many other characteristics of good thoughts and behavior. Gratitude, according to research, leads to a variety of well-being indicators. As a result, there might be a plethora of indicators of happiness. All of these indicators have already been examined. For example, as a result, everything that naturally boosts positive emotion will also naturally lessen negative emotions. Gratitude has been linked to less melancholy, anxiety, loneliness, envy, and neuroticism, according to study. So, these are the attributes that are most closely linked to negative emotions, and gratitude has a negative relationship with them. As a result, the more the gratitude, the fewer these qualities will be. Gratitude is also linked to prosocial behaviors including empathy, forgiveness, and readiness to serve others, according to our findings. As a result, research shows that those who are more thankful in their personality traits also have pro-social traits. The term "pro social" refers to actions that are beneficial to other people. So, in a nutshell, it implies something that is beneficial to society or others. As a result, we have a term called antisocial, which is the polar opposite of prosocial, that is, any behavior that is harmful to society or others. As a result, all criminal behaviors are antisocial in nature. Because it is harmful to society as a whole and to individuals in particular. As a result, pro social behavior refers to actions that benefit others as well as people or society as a whole. As a result, we'll investigate the various mechanisms. So, let's talk about social well-being in general. According to research, gratitude promotes overall well-being, including fewer health complaints and a more optimistic view on life.

So, it's apparent that gratitude, or the practice of gratitude, or the qualities of gratitude, or the trait of gratitude, can influence or raise your happiness and well-being directly, or indirectly, by boosting certain other characteristics linked to happiness and well-being. In such scenario, research is very clear.

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Why Gratitude Promotes Well-being?

Emmons and Mishra (2011) provided following possible mechanisms-

(1) Gratitude facilitates coping with stress

It promotes healthy and adaptive coping styles and strategies such as seeking social support, positive reframing, approach-oriented problem solving, and active coping (Wood, Joseph, & Linley, 2007).

It also associated with PTG (Peterson et al, 2008)

Let's have a look at the mechanisms. Why does gratitude promote all of these important desired qualities? What could be the mechanisms at work here? So, in 2011, Emmons and Mishra presented some of the key mechanisms, or possible mechanisms, that have been demonstrated in study to enhance wellbeing and happiness. And, in general, factors that are linked to gratitude, which may lead to an increase in happiness or well-being. So, one argument is that gratitude facilitates coping with stress.

So, as we've seen, coping with stress, adversity, or a life crisis is a vital element of your overall well-being. So, if you are unable to cope effectively or in a healthy manner, you may experience a variety of emotional as well as psychological disorders and other issues. So, a lack of coping or an inability to cope successfully is linked to a variety of psychological and emotional disorders, as we've already shown. So, if something may help with adequate healthy coping, it will be, and it will naturally encourage well-being.

So, gratitude is one of those characteristics that can help you cope with stress in a positive way. How can gratitude help you cope with stress? Gratitude, according to the research, encourages healthy and adaptive coping styles and tactics include seeking social support, positive reframing, approach-oriented problem solving, and active coping. In general, research demonstrates that when people express appreciation or have the trait of gratitude, they engage in various adaptive coping methods in the face of disaster or stress. What causes this to happen? They are more prone to seek social help, for example.

They engage in more positive reframing, positive cognitive processes, or good outlooks on life problems, and they are more inclined to actively participate in and address the problem. As a result, this is referred to as active coping. It's simply because it's linked to the trait of gratitude in general. As a result, you will

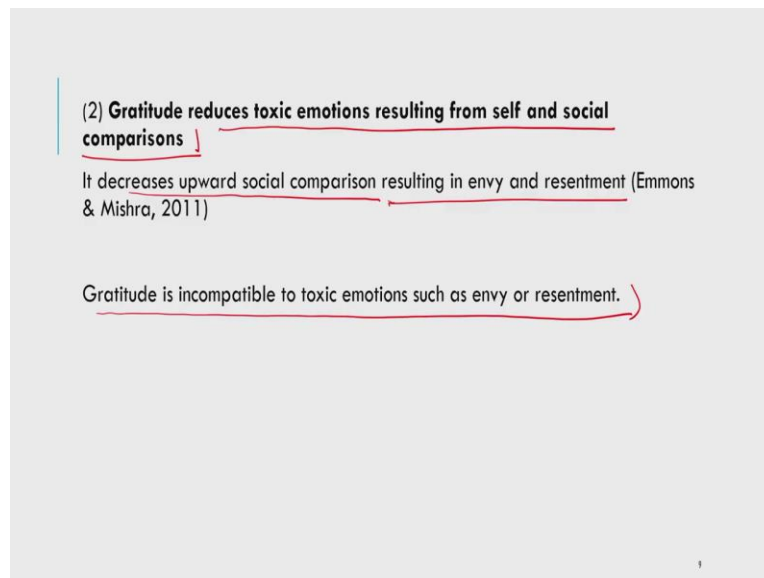
be able to open up and be in a more optimistic condition, where you will be able to perceive the wonderful parts of your life.

Whatever is going on in the midst of a crisis. Obviously, immediately following a stressful or traumatic experience, one can become engrossed in overpowering negative emotions. However, if you gradually build or grow attitude of gratitude, you will begin to notice different areas of your life where you might be kind and grateful. As a result, your mind gets opened up to or shifted to specific positive aspects of your experiences, which aids and supports all of this adaptive coping.

Gratitude is also linked to post-traumatic growth, according to research. Two lectures on post-traumatic growth have already been given. As a result of dealing with a life crisis, many people report positive psychological changes as a result of their traumatic experiences. And gratitude is one of the factors that can help you grow after a painful event. Simply because, in order for post-traumatic growth to occur, while dealing or suffering with life's crises or adversities, you must slowly, gradually emerge from it and adopt in a very constructive manner.

And it is for this reason that gratitude is so vital, since it allows you to perceive the positive aspects of your life, and gratitude helps to promote that mindset. As a result, it has the potential to enhance post-traumatic growth. So, clearly, you gradually detached from older, older crises and situations that were causing a lot of unpleasant emotions, and you began to look at things for which you could still be glad. As a result, shifting attention plays a critical function in supporting post-traumatic growth.

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The second explanation is that gratitude diminishes negative feelings caused by self and social comparison, according to study. So, one thing is obvious: when we are thankful, we are less likely to experience unpleasant feelings. Furthermore, we are less prone to engage in social comparison, particularly upward social comparison. In particular, what happens in upward social comparison, we will discuss social comparison in the third lesson of this subject.

So, in upward social comparison, you compare yourself to someone who is more privileged in various areas. So, it could be in terms of money, it could be in terms of talents, it could be in terms of abilities, someone who is higher than you in some features or characteristics, and when we compare ourselves to them, we normally feel inferior, which may trigger a lot of negative emotions.

We are more prone to experience negative emotions when it is governed by envy, especially when it is governed by envy. So, gratitude has the reverse effect: when you feel grateful, you are less prone to compare, especially upward social comparison. Because we are grateful, it implies that you are appreciative for whatever you have. As a result, you won't cling to things or compare yourself to others as much. As a result, you're less likely to be affected by unpleasant feelings.

And the emotions that go along with it, such as envy and anger. As a result, they will naturally reduce. Envy and resentment are primarily the result of a complaining attitude when you don't see, are dissatisfied with your current circumstances, and are dissatisfied with yourself. In that way, when you compare

yourself to others and perceive someone who is better than you, you may experience feelings of jealousy and anger. As a result, gratitude reduces upward social comparison, which can lead to anger and jealousy.

So, when you have, when you cultivate gratitude, all of these things will lessen. As a result, negative emotions like jealousy and resentment are incompatible with gratitude. You can't be grateful if you're envious and resentful, by definition. Because you are envious of someone, you are unable to be grateful. How can you feel appreciative, be grateful to someone, and be envious at the same time? As a result, these are incompatible with one another. So, at the very least, it encourages this mechanism, which reduces upward social comparison. Envy and resentment are usually the driving forces.

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(3) Gratitude reduces materialistic strivings (excessive concern for money and material possession)

Excessive materialistic strivings may hinder well-being, happiness, and concern for others.

Gratitude is incompatible to excessive materialistic strivings (Polak & McCullough, 2006). Therefore, it promotes well-being by reducing materialistic strivings.

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The third mechanism is that gratitude diminishes excessive or too much materialistic striving. This is also harmful to our health and happiness. Excessive effort might make us unhappy and sad, as well as reduce our happiness. We've seen some of these findings and study. As a result, as you create a sense of gratitude, your obsessive craving for materialism will diminish. So, that's what it is, and it's also regarded a spiritual virtue in that way. Simply put, when you express or try to look at things in order to be more grateful, you do not become overly obsessed with acquiring stuff or pursuing materialistic goals. As a result, that also reduces. As a result, thankfulness is incompatible with excessive materialism striving and hence increases wellbeing by lowering materialistic strivings. As a result, it could be one of the options.

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(4) Gratitude improves self-esteem

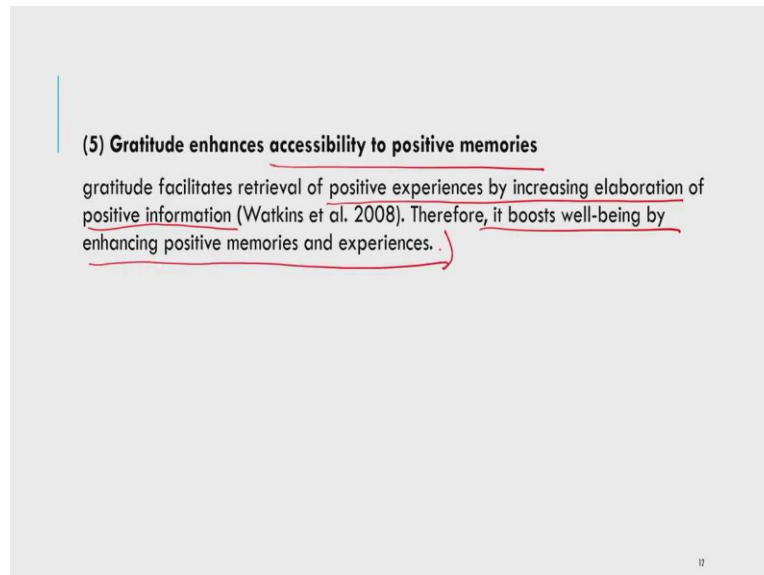
Gratitude has been consistently linked with higher and stable self esteem (Froh, Wajsblat, & Ubertini, 2008). However, the direction of this relationship is not clear.

Fourth, gratitude improves self-esteem. Self-esteem refers to your perception of your own worthy. What criteria do you use to evaluate yourself? So your self-esteem is the result of that evaluation. Some people have a stronger sense of self-worth, whereas others have a lower sense of self-worth. As a result, people with low self-esteem tend to criticize themselves harshly. They continually feel insufficient, and they constantly condemn themselves. So, poor self-esteem can manifest itself in a variety of ways. High self-esteem in the sense that we are talking about more stable, healthy self-esteem, where you have a generally positive feeling of self-worthiness, even if you have a lot of things to work on. You, on the other hand, accept yourself and regard yourself as a positive person. And this is critical for proper functioning and well-being, because if you have low self-esteem, you will experience a lot of negative emotions, you will be very unstable, and you will constantly be full of self-criticism, all of which will result in a variety of negative emotions and emotional disturbances.

So, having a healthy sense of self-esteem is crucial, and gratitude helps with that. Simply because research has consistently connected gratitude to greater and more stable self-esteem. So, persons that have thankfulness traits have a very stable self-esteem, which could be one reason why they don't compare themselves to others. You will do, attempt to improve whatever is needed if you have a very stable self-esteem, but you will not be continuously comparing yourself to others and becoming unstable all the time if you have a very stable self-esteem.

As a result, the relationship's direction is unclear. It's possible that the relationship exists in both directions. People with stable or high self-esteem, for example, may feel greater gratitude, or gratitude may contribute to better self-esteem, or both. As a result, it could be a two-way relationship.

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The fifth mechanism is gratitude enhances accessibility to positive memories. So, gratitude has a direct effect in that it boosts positive emotions and access to positive memories. As a result, you can now see the power of gratitude up close and personal. If you close your eyes and think about some things for which you are grateful, you will be able to achieve this. We'll talk about a few of the exercises. You will immediately feel positive emotions if you close your eyes and think of things for which you are grateful in your life.

You will feel good about yourself, you will experience some pleasant feelings, and you will recall some happy life memories, all of which will be stimulated immediately. Gratitude improves the recall of positive experiences because it requires you to retrieve positive memories by boosting the elaboration of positive information. As a result, it contributes to well-being by strengthening positive memories and experiences.

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(6) Gratitude builds social resources

Gratitude promotes well-being by building social relations and resources

It also strengthens and maintains existing relationships (Algoe, Haidt, & Gable, 2008).

It promotes many other characteristics that further build social resources such as extraversion, agreeableness, empathy, emotional stability, forgiveness, trust, and generosity (McCullough et al., 2002)

Gratitude is a strength of character that is highly desired in romantic partners (Steen, Kachorek, & Peterson, 2003).

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The sixth and most essential function of gratitude is that it builds social resources. Gratitude, according to research, enhances wellbeing through strengthening social ties and resources. People who express gratitude have better interpersonal interactions. It's understandable because we don't want to be around people who are constantly complaining and judging others. We don't because individuals are generally uncomfortable in their presence and company. People who are really grateful, on the other hand, express a great deal of gratitude and positive emotion. People prefer to be in their company because they have better relationships. They will also experience fewer conflicts in their relationships. As a result, existing ties are strengthened and maintained. It encourages traits like extraversion, agreeableness, empathy, social or emotional stability, forgiveness, trust, and generosity, all of which help to build social resources.

As a result, all of these characteristics will be side effects of gratitude, which are critical for maintaining positive relationships. So, according to research, gratitude is a strength of character that is highly desired in romantic partners or in the context of romantic relationships, gratitude plays a critical role in terms of fulfilling relationships, not just romantic partnerships, but all kinds of relationships. So, one thing is certain: there will be less conflicts and more positive emotions. As a result, the relationship will grow and become much stronger. As a result, by extending our social network and reinforcing existing ties, it will enhance or build social resources.

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(7) Gratitude motivates moral/prosocial behavior

Gratitude by promoting social bonding and relations facilitates prosocial behavior.

Gratitude promotes both direct reciprocal altruism and "upstream reciprocity" (Nowak & Roch, 2007). Upstream reciprocity involves passing on a benefit to a person uninvolved in the initial exchange thus promoting prosocial behavior.

Gratitude motivates moral or pro-social behavior, which is the seventh characteristic or process through which it improves well-being. So, morally, we've already talked about the moral dimensions of it. In many religious and spiritual traditions, gratitude is seen as a moral attribute. As a result, it may promote pro social activity, pro social behavior that leads to helping behaviors toward others, as we've already described. As a result, you are more willing to assist others. As a result, it may increase social bonding and prosocial behavior, and it may promote both direct reciprocal altruism and indirect reciprocal altruism. So, for example, when someone helps you, you are usually grateful; if you possess those attributes, you will be grateful to that person if you see the importance of their help. As a result, whenever the opportunity arises in the future, you will naturally strive to repay that assistance to the other person. Naturally, if you recognize the value of a person's help, you will feel compelled to assist the same person who has previously assisted you. As a result, this is referred to as direct reciprocal altruism. As a result, you are directly helping the individual who has helped you in the future. So you were essentially repaying a favor.

It may also encourage some form of upstream reciprocity, which simply means that when you recognize the worth of gifts or assistance from others, or life in general, or if you value and appreciate what you have, you are more likely to help others in general. So, not only those who have directly aided you, but also those who require assistance, and if you are capable of assisting them, you are more likely to do so. Upstream reciprocity entails passing on a benefit since you have received a lot of benefit from others and you value it. As a result, you were more likely to pass on a benefit to someone who was not involved in

the initial transaction, increasing prosocial behavior. Other people, who may or may not have had a direct impact on your life. As a result, it is capable of both direct reciprocal altruism and upstream reciprocity. So, altruism is another phrase that is also employed in the context of helping others without expecting anything in return.

So, in a nutshell, prosocial behavior is a phrase that is used. However, altruism can refer to any type of helping behavior, but it is most commonly used in the sense of helping someone without expecting anything in return. As a result, it is a genuine act of helping.

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(8) **Grateful people are spiritually minded**

Studies have reported positive relationship between gratitude and spirituality (also religiosity) (Emmons & Kneezel, 2005)

The relationship can be bidirectional. Most of the religious and spiritual traditions considers gratitude as a major virtue to be cultivated. Therefore, spirituality or religiosity may promote gratitude.

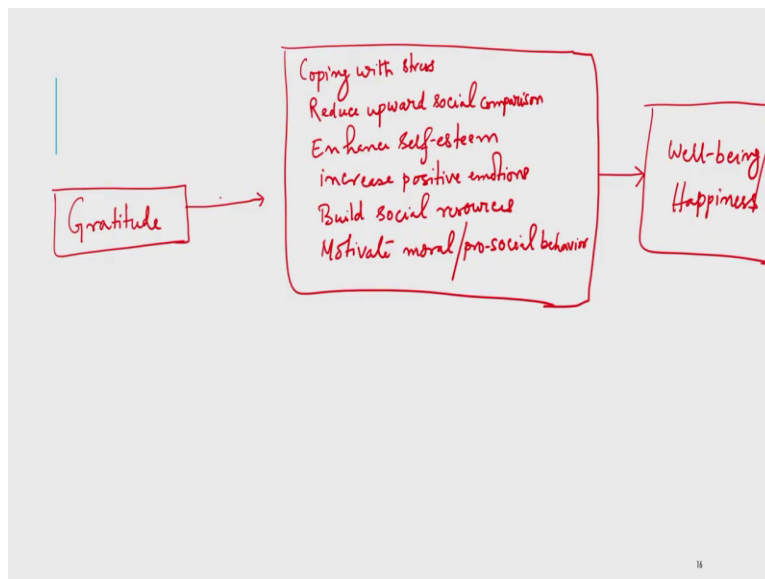
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The eighth characteristic or mechanism is that grateful people are more spiritually minded, according to study. When we discuss spirituality, we are referring to a more subjective search for meaning and a deeper understanding of human life. So, spiritual search can be extremely subjective, and it can be a more personal search for meaning in life, a search for more hidden or inner depths of life, or a search for more higher dimensions of life, in any manner you try to define it. As a result, it is more spiritual, and the spiritual path is more individualistic, subjective, and exploratory.

Religion is a cultural investigation of particular issues that may include rituals and other elements. So, spirituality differs from religion in that religion is more collectivist and organizational, whereas spirituality is more individualistic and subjective. As a result, gratitude or thankfulness may be linked to spirituality. Because many religious and spiritual traditions place a high value on the trait of gratitude and people.

It is a fundamental feature of numerous spiritual and religious traditions to nurture thankfulness, as it is critical for developing a core joyful mentality and focusing on the positive aspects of one's life. So, it's possible that it's directed in the sense that spiritually minded people may be grateful or gratefulness and encourage spirituality, or vice versa. And gratitude is regarded as a major virtue to acquire in most religious and spiritual traditions. As a result, spirituality or religiosity might encourage thankfulness.

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So far, we've covered a variety of mechanisms. So, just to recap what we've spoken about, I'll just draw a diagram for you. So, if you think about it, gratitude can lead to a variety of outcomes, as we've just described. It could, for example, lead to coping with, or coping with stress. It has the potential to encourage or assist in the management of stress, as well as to reduce upward social comparison. It has the potential to boost self-esteem and positive emotions.

It has the potential to increase social resources and to drive moral, pro-social behavior. As a result, it might lead to all of these characteristics, which would lead to a stronger sense of well-being or happiness. As a result, this could be one of the processes by which gratitude increases happiness or well-being. So, these are significant elements that may lead to happiness or well-being.

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Gratitude Exercises

Lyubomirsky (2007) suggested following strategies and pointers for gratitude exercise-

(1) Keep a gratitude journal

With this exercise we remind ourselves of the things for which we are grateful such as gifts, grace, benefits, loved ones etc.

More specifically this can be done by writing about it.

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So, let's see how we can do gratitude exercises; we've already spoken a lot of positive things about gratitude. How do we go about doing it? What is the best way to go about doing this exercise? So, as we previously stated, this is more of a positive, intentional activity that requires some effort. As a result, it's possible that it won't happen automatically. Some people are naturally or spontaneously more prone to express gratitude, although this is not a natural trait for the majority of people. So we'll have to nurture it a little bit. As a result, we must engage in some regular exercise.

So, a Lyubomirsky to those who gave some key pointers or methods for completing this exercise. Keeping a gratitude journal is one method to cultivate gratitude. A journal is essentially a diary or a written record. As a result of this activity, we are reminded of the things for which we are grateful, such as gifts, grace benefits, loved ones, and so on. This can be done more specifically by writing about it. So, you can write about or make some time to write about the things in your life for which you are grateful.

This is the purpose of keeping a gratitude journal, which is similar to keeping a diary, in which you sit down and reflect on the positive aspects of your life for which you are grateful on a regular basis.

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Choose a time in a day when you have some free time and free from distraction. It could be first thing of the day in the morning or the last thing of the day at night or sometime in between such as during commuting.

Reflect on the three to five things for which you are currently grateful, from the mundane (electric appliance got fixed) to the magnificent (spiritual insights, revelation etc.)

You may focus on some skills or abilities you have, opportunities life has given, goals you have achieved. You may reflect on good relationships and caring people in your life who have contributed and sacrificed for you.

This exercise can be done once in a day, once or twice in a week or twice in a month depending on the lifestyle and personal preference.

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One method to accomplish this in a more systematic manner is to pick a time during the day when you have some spare time or are not distracted. Whenever you can find a time when you are in that mood and are not distracted by other things. So, if you have some time, whether it's first thing in the morning or last thing at night, or somewhere in between when commuting or something, you may sit and reflect on the things. As a result, you can think about three to five things for which you are grateful right now. It is usually a good idea to think on your current circumstances, which might be three to five things depending on how comfortable you are. It might be anything as simple as your home's electric appliances being repaired. You can be, experience, or show gratitude for that as well, and it could start with something so insignificant. And it could be something truly magnificent, such as spiritual understanding or a revelation.

So, whatever is in your life, it could vary from the most commonplace to the extremely magnificent. You might focus on some skills or abilities that you have in order to write our journal write, for undertaking this exercise, writing exercise. As a result, you should be grateful for the skills or qualities you possess. It might be your mental capacity, or your ability to think and analyze situations. It could be some abilities, whatever they are; it could be some language stick ability, it could be any ability, ability in sports, music, or anything else. It is a gift that you have received in your home, either by birth or through practice.

As a result, you can concentrate on certain skills and abilities. You can concentrate on the opportunities that life has provided for you; nobody is in a disadvantaged situation all of the time; people, like everyone else, have opportunities in their lives for which they should or can be grateful. As a result, you might ponder the opportunities that life has bestowed upon you. Alternatively, you can concentrate on the numerous aims and targets that you have achieved, for which you should be grateful.

You might also think about the wonderful relationships and loving people in your life who have helped and sacrificed for you. We all have many caring individuals in our lives who make a significant contribution to our lives, whether it is family, friends, or others. You might think on how grateful you are to have such wonderful people in your life who have supported and contributed to your life. So, these are some of the topics that you might think about or reflect on when completing this activity or writing about, or composing this thankfulness notebook.

Depending on your lifestyle and personal inclination, you can do this exercise once a day, twice or once a week, or twice a month. As a result, it is determined by your lifestyle, personal preferences, and mood. As a result, it is occasionally beneficial to reflect on these issues. It assists you in breaking free from our, from the negative cycle of life; at the very least, it shifts your concentration and emotions in a positive direction.

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(2) Express gratitude directly to others

Expressing gratitude is best and most effective when done directly to the concerned person such as by writing letters, by phone or face to face.

Seligman et al. (2005) conducted a study on gratitude visit.

Condition 1: The participants were given one week to write and then hand deliver a letter of gratitude to someone who had been especially kind and caring to them but whom they had never properly thanked.

Condition 2: The participants were given self guided happiness exercises.

The result showed largest boost of happiness by the gratitude visit participants.

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As a result, this is one method of expressing or showing gratitude. The second technique to practice gratitude is to communicate gratitude to others directly. So, rather than writing about it, you might express gratitude openly, especially for persons who have made a significant impact to your life. So, when done directly to the concerned individual, such as writing letters over the phone or in person, expressing gratitude is one of the greatest and most efficient ways to express gratitude.

You can text them, phone them, or meet them in person and express your gratitude for whatever contribution they have made. For example, in 2005, Seligman and colleagues conducted research in this area with two conditions or two sorts of participants, or two groups of participants. In condition one, participants were given one week to write and hand deliver a letter of gratitude to someone who had been very kind and kind to them but had never been adequately thanked.

As a result, they are given a week to write one gratitude letter to persons who have made a positive contribution to their lives but have not been adequately recognized. So, write them a letter and present it to them by hand. As a result, this is one of the conditions in which participants were asked to complete this activity. Participants in a different condition were given a self-guided happiness activity. They discovered that gratitude visit participants experienced the greatest increase in pleasure following the intervention.

Those who actually wrote gratitude notes and delivered them by hand to the recipients experienced a far greater rise in satisfaction than those in the second condition, where they did some other exercises.

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Keep the strategy fresh

Even intentional activities such as expressing gratitude can become boring and come under influence of hedonic adaptation. Therefore, it is necessary to include variety to keep the strategy fresh.

For example, Lyubomirsky (2007) suggested sometime one may vary the gratitude practice in a number of ways-

- express gratitude only after particular triggers (such as after enduring a hardship or when you are most needful of a boost).
- choose to write in a journal some weeks, talk to a friend other weeks, and express gratitude through art (photography, collage, watercolor) during other weeks.

"When the strategy loses its freshness or meaningfulness, don't hesitate to make a change in how, when, and how often you express yourself" (Lyubomirsky, 2007).

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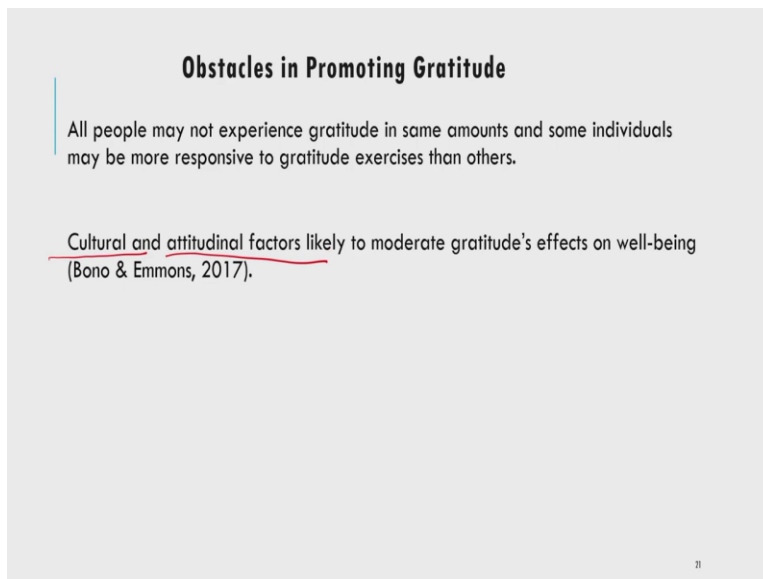
Another crucial aspect of this exercise is that it must be kept fresh, and the aim should be to keep it fresh and diverse in order to keep it interesting and motivated so that you can do it more often. So, if you make it a very monotonous kind of thing, even such activities might become adapted and possibly bored out of it due to hedonic adaptation. So, to keep the method fresh, one might include diversity. For example, Lyubomirsky recommended that one can modify the gratitude practice in a number of ways, expressing gratitude only after a specific trigger. For example, after enduring difficulty, when one is most in

need, especially after challenges in life or sudden stressful life circumstances, one can find time and do a gratitude exercise because that is when you need it the most, because you are preoccupied by negative emotions. So, after overcoming some adversity, and after such triggers, one can engage in a gratitude exercise.

You can change the practice by writing in a journal one week, talking to a friend the next, and expressing gratitude through art or a creative way the following week. If you have particular artistic skills, you can also show gratitude in creative ways such as painting, music, and so on. So many different tactics may be used, which keeps it fresh, motivated, and interesting. So, if you're more inspired to pursue those activities, that's great. So, when your strategy loses its novelty or meaning, don't be afraid to vary how, when, and how often you communicate yourself, according to Lyubormisky.

So, depending on the situation, your lifestyle, your mood, or whatever, all of these things can be adjusted and varied. So, by employing all of these methods and ideas, you can keep the strategy fresh.

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Obstacles in Promoting Gratitude

All people may not experience gratitude in same amounts and some individuals may be more responsive to gratitude exercises than others.

Cultural and attitudinal factors likely to moderate gratitude's effects on well-being (Bono & Emmons, 2017).

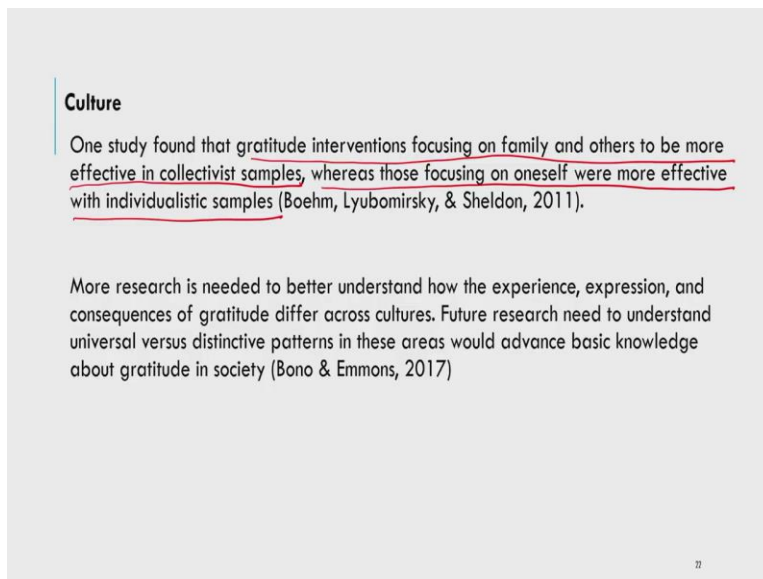
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Research also shows that there can be obstacles in promoting gratitude. There are some obstacles, what are those obstacles? As a result, not everyone feels gratitude in the same way, and some people are more responsive to gratitude exercises than others. As a result, some personal characteristics may determine

whether or not one is able to perform such exercises. Some people are more likely to benefit from it, while others may find it difficult due to certain characteristics.

So, let's see what happens. So, what are these factors? The first is that cultural background may influence the outcome of the gratitude exercise, and the second is that various attitudinal elements or mental factors may create obstacles or influence the outcome of the gratitude exercise. Let's have a look at what these are.

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Culture

One study found that gratitude interventions focusing on family and others to be more effective in collectivist samples, whereas those focusing on oneself were more effective with individualistic samples (Boehm, Lyubomirsky, & Sheldon, 2011).

More research is needed to better understand how the experience, expression, and consequences of gratitude differ across cultures. Future research need to understand universal versus distinctive patterns in these areas would advance basic knowledge about gratitude in society (Bono & Emmons, 2017)

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Gratitude interventions concentrating on family and others were more effective in collectivist samples, but gratitude interventions focusing on one self were more effective in individualistic samples, according to one study. Those who are familiar with studies on cultures or cultural characteristics, mostly cultures are divided into two major categories: individualistic culture and collectivist culture.

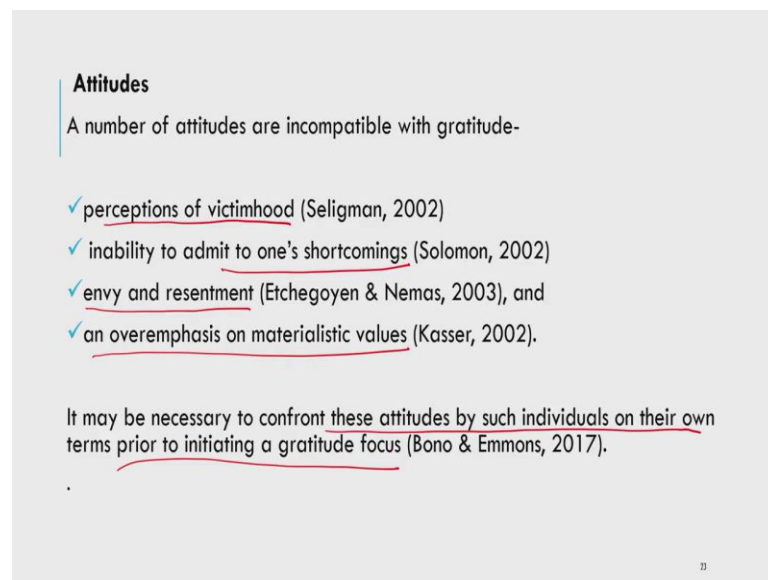
So, in collectivist cultures, people prioritize the needs and aims of groups and communities over their own individual needs. As a result, the emphasis is on groups, group needs, and group goals. People place a higher value on the goals and needs of the group than on their own personal needs. As a result, interactions with others and interconnections with other people are more vital in the collectivist culture. In contrast to individualistic culture, where people are more concerned with their own personal accomplishments and satisfaction, it plays a larger role.

As a result of studies, several countries, such as Japan, China, and Korea, appear to be more collectivist. Some study suggests that India can, and is, moving toward a collectivist society; yet, some findings

suggest that India is not entirely collectivist, and that it possesses traits of both individualistic and collectivist cultures. Some countries, such as the United Nations, Germany, and Australia, are more individualistic; these are some of the research findings; there may be more individualistic traits in such countries, or the people in those countries are more individualistic in their attitude.

So, while cultural factors may play a role, what types of, and what parts should be prioritized in the gratitude exercise? So, while focusing on family and others may be more important in cultivating gratitude in a collectivist culture, focusing on one's own self, own life, and aspirations may be more significant in cultivating gratitude in an individualistic culture. As a result, further research is required in this area, as the evidence is still inconclusive.

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Attitudes

A number of attitudes are incompatible with gratitude-

- ✓ perceptions of victimhood (Seligman, 2002)
- ✓ inability to admit to one's shortcomings (Solomon, 2002)
- ✓ envy and resentment (Etcheegoyen & Nemas, 2003), and
- ✓ an overemphasis on materialistic values (Kasser, 2002).

It may be necessary to confront these attitudes by such individuals on their own terms prior to initiating a gratitude focus (Bono & Emmons, 2017).

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Certain attitudes can make it difficult to cultivate gratitude. For example, certain characteristics, such as the perception of victimhood, are incompatible. For example, some people who are, who have a strong sense of victimhood or who have been victimized frequently or many times in their childhood, for some reason, it could be assault, it could be traumatic events. So, for whatever reason, people who have been victimized a lot, for a lot of terrible things, it may be difficult for them to practice gratitude at times. It is not impossible, but it may be challenging because of their sense of victimhood.

There are some people who are unwilling to admit their flaws, and others who never admit their flaws and constantly portray themselves in a positive light. It is difficult for them to feel grateful since, in order to

feel grateful, you must value other people, and such people are incapable of doing so. So, you're not, since when you say I'm glad, you're recognizing that you've received something from others and are therefore willing to accept certain flaws. As a result, those personality qualities could be a major roadblock.

People who are full of resentment and envy are unable to be grateful. It is really difficult for them to be grateful for others when they are continually envious and angry of others. As a result, they are incompatible with one another. People who place too much focus on material, materialistic value are unable to be grateful, since there is too much attention on individual pursuit and getting things for one's own benefit. It is not impossible, but these are clearly obstacles. As a result, they will obstruct. As a result, it may be necessary for individuals to tackle these attitudes on their own before beginning to focus on gratitude. So, these are some of the things; all of these barriers may exist, but by practicing and gradually confronting them, one can overcome them. This is how we alter our mindset.

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Narcissistic Personality - inflated sense of self-importance,
seek excessive attention & admiration
lack of empathy, troubled relationships.

Personality factors

A major personality variable that is likely to be an obstacle in gratitude is narcissism (Watkins et al., 2003).

In this direction Bono and Emmons (2017) reported-

"People with narcissistic tendencies erroneously believe they are deserving of special rights and privileges without assuming reciprocal responsibilities. The sense of entitlement combined with insensitivity to the needs of others engenders interpersonal exploitation. They might be reluctant to express gratitude in response to benefactors whose generosity or kindness they summarily dismiss as little more than attempts to curry favor..... In short, if one feels entitled to everything, then one is thankful for nothing" (P. 565)

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Personality traits are another major aspect that can prevent you from practicing gratitude or instilling gratitude in yourself. One personality trait in particular is narcissism, often known as narcissistic personality. Some of you may be familiar with the concept of a narcissistic personality. This is sometimes referred to as a narcissistic personality disorder. This, too, has the potential to become a disorder. These persons have particular characteristics. They have an inflated feeling of self-importance, for example, and want excessive attention and admiration. They are lacking in empathy and have a difficult relationship. These are just a few of the qualities. So these are the persons with narcissistic personalities who have a

strong feeling of self-importance. They have a strong feeling of self-importance and always want to be the center of attention; they always seek attention.

As a result, they have a constant sense of self-importance and seek out excessive attention and admiration. So they lack empathy, they don't have it, and they don't care about other people's consent. They just care about their own importance and share of attention, and they constantly pursue it. So, these are some of the traits of persons who are narcissists. As a result, the term narcissism has a fascinating mythical element. So, in Greek mythology, there was a character named Narcissus who was a proud young man. He was sitting by a pool of water when he suddenly saw his own image in the water, and he fell in love with himself as a result of seeing his own picture. So there you have it, Narcissus' story. And as a result, this personality feature was given the name narcissistic personality, with the assumption that persons who have a persistent sense of self-importance and crave attention and adoration are narcissistic. So, these are the people who have a unstable and fragile self-esteem and can't take even a tiny bit of criticism. If they get criticism, they will become emotionally unstable and violent. As a result, they lack a healthy, steady sense of self-esteem. So, these are manifestations of a person's unhealthy and insecure self-esteem and love, as well as a lot of insecurities in their lives. So there's a lot of egoistic concern. So, persons with these kinds of tendencies may not be able to experience gratitude since gratitude requires us to allow others room, realize the importance of, and acknowledge the contributions of others.

You must set yourself aside for a moment and value the treasures that life, existence, and other people have bestowed upon you. Your sense of egoism and egoistic concern must be set aside for this. It's possible that narcissistic people won't be able to do so. People with narcissistic tendencies, for example, believe they are deserving of special rights and advantages without taking on reciprocal duties, according to Bono and Emmons (2017). They believe they are unique individuals who only require adoration from others.

They will never admire other people as a result of this. They merely believe that this is their rightful privilege. Interpersonal exploitation is caused by a sense of entitlement paired with an insensitivity to the needs of others. As a result, these type of individuals experience difficulties and conflicts in their relationship. They will never be able to have a stable relationship since there will always be conflicts. They could be hesitant to express gratitude to benefactors whose generosity or kindness they perceive as nothing. In other words, if you believe you are entitled to everything, you will be grateful for nothing. So, why should I be grateful for anything if they believe they are entitled to everything? Alternatively, if someone contributes, they will dismiss the contributions of others. It's one of the qualities of someone with a lot of ego: they can't think beyond their own self-interest.

As a result, you must set aside your ego and recognize the contributions of others, as well as be open to them. Only then will gratitude be able to develop and flow freely within you. So, there is an inherent personality barrier in narcissistic persons with those characteristics, which might produce, operate as a barrier in terms of fostering gratitude. So there you have it, some gratitude ideas. So, with that, I'd like to conclude today's lecture. Thank you.