

**Some Actions and Ideas for Today
Demonstrating Gratitude and Giving with Your
Children
Show Your Child the Way to Joyfulness
And don't forget ...
HAVE MASSES OF FUN TOGETHER!**

**Lesson 7 - Expressing Gratitude and Giving with Your
Children**

Here's a tip; when you are feeling a bit 'down' and things aren't going all that well, stop for a minute. Look out of the window, think about your family, and take your mind off your 'down feelings' just for a moment. Now think of ten things you are grateful for. Ten things! By the time you finish this little exercise I guarantee you will feel a whole lot better. It's like magic, it works every time. And even more magical is this; it's a known fact that the more grateful you are, the more things come into your life to be grateful for.

So how can you show this to your kids? When he is 'down', or has hurt himself, or wishes he could have something which he can't have at the moment (for whatever reason); here's your chance. First acknowledge that he has a reason for feeling like that. Don't ignore his feelings or try to brush them away; they are very real to him. Then start to talk with him about the good things that happened today, or some good things that will happen soon. Ask him what are the three best things he has done this week, and expand on them. Pretty soon he is thinking about good things and feeling good.

You don't have to wait for a time when you're feeling down of course. Spending time each day just being grateful can literally change your life. Have you seen [The Secret DVD](#)? The Secret teaches us about the Law of Attraction – how what we give out we get back, and that a MOST POWERFUL way to attract good things in to our lives is to be grateful.

Listen to what some of the teachers in The Secret say about gratitude:

Joe Vitale: *Start making a list of things to be grateful for. Start with that because this shifts your energy. It starts to shift your thinking. Where before this exercise you might be focussing on what you don't have, you might be focussing on your complaints, and you might be focussing on whatever the problems are. When you do this exercise you start to go on a different direction, you start to be grateful for all the things that you feel good about.*

Esther Hicks: *Gratitude is the way to bring more into your life.*

John Gray, PhD, psychologist: *Every man knows that when his wife's appreciating him for the little things he does, what does he want to do? He wants to do more. It's always about appreciation. It pulls things in. It attracts support.*

Dr John F. Demartini: *I've said for many years, whatever we think about and thank about we bring about.*

James Arthur Ray: *Because that's that feeling that you have to have, and so for me, it's been such a powerful exercise. Every morning to get up and say, "Thank you." Every morning when my feet hit the floor, "Thank you." And then I start running through what I'm grateful for as I'm going to brush my teeth and doing the things I do in the morning. And I'm not just thinking about them and doing some rote routine, but I'm putting them out there and I'm feeling the feelings of gratitude.*

Joe Vitale: *Because as soon as you start to feel differently about what you already have, you will start to attract more of the good things, more of the things you can be grateful for. Because you can look around and say, "I don't have the car I want, I don't have the house I want, I don't have the health I want, I don't have the spouse I want..." Back up, back up. Those are all the things you don't want. Focus on what you already have that you're grateful for. And it might be: you have the eyes to watch this. It might be the clothes that you have. Yes you might prefer something else and you might get something else pretty soon, if you start feeling grateful for what you have.*

Children are no different. If your child is very young he doesn't need to know the word 'gratitude'. He can certainly understand being thankful for some lovely things around him, for his parents and grandparents and friends; for the fun he has doing things he loves, for some of his toys and games and for the good time he had today. A quick way to get him in a thankful state, in an attitude of gratitude, is just to ask him what good things happened to him today. Ask him what was the most fun at school today, what does he like best about xxxx, then comment about how lucky he is for that.

In many families a Grace or thank you is said before eating. "*Thank you for the food we eat*" Even if you are not religious, you can still be thankful for the food that is on your table, grateful that you are able to have nourishing and plentiful food. Your kids will understand this too.

A fun family exercise everyday at mealtimes is to have each member of the family say three things they are grateful for, three things they are really happy about. This may seem so simple, and truly it is. But it simply has wonderful outcomes for you all.

Learning to give can be about learning to honor the needs of others; learning to help others be a little happier. Your children don't need to give huge expensive presents, they express their desire to make you happy when they do a special drawing for you, or pick some flowers from the garden. The way we accept these loving gifts teaches them that sharing and giving brings you and them joy.

Now, a Simple Activity Idea to Show Gratitude and Giving with Your Children

There are several quick ideas and some which take a bit more time on [pages 20 - 21 in your book Raising Happy Kids](#).

The more often you focus his mind on things to be grateful for in his life, the more grateful and happy he will be. Rather than thinking grumpily about what

he hasn't got, or what nasty things happened to him, he will begin to see things more and more in a joyful light.

A great opportunity could be when you have visited his grandmother, and she has done something nice for him, or given him a lovely birthday gift. No doubt you encourage your children to send a thank you note, or phone up Grandma to say thank you for the gift; but it could be fun to say something like this:

You really love the present Grandma gave you don't you? She loves you so much. Wouldn't it be nice to do something for Grandma? Would you like to make something for her? Got any ideas? = **yes I am happy with my present, I would like to thank her = I can show my appreciation and gratitude**

Discuss some ideas, like making her a photo of himself in a frame, making her a music CD from music you can download together from the internet, baking her some cookies, drawing her a picture, etc. = **I can think of ideas for things that she would really like = I am good at thinking of ways to make others happy = I feel good about this**

Together get what he needs together and work on his project, and while you are doing it talk about how excited and happy she is going to be. Ask him how he is going to deliver his surprise; suggest he calls her and tells her he has a surprise for her and that he will bring it over (make a time), or post it to her. He will be excited and pleased when he hears how thrilled she is, and how she is looking forward to her surprise. = **thanking people is fun, giving to others is fun = this makes me feel joyful**

Whether it's a small or large project you undertake together to give time and effort to making someone else happy, he will experience the positive emotions of giving. He will become more thoughtful of others and happier as a consequence.

