

How to use your Gratitude Bucket

The first 5 years of a child's life are a critical time in shaping their brain and how they will experience life as they grow into adulthood. We need to capitalize on this and start to create habits and thought processes that ensure resilience and overall good mental health from as young as possible. One such habit is practising an attitude of gratitude.

Gratitude is a way for people to appreciate what they have instead of always reaching for something new in the hopes it will make them happier or thinking they can't feel satisfied until every physical and material need is met. Gratitude helps people refocus on what they have instead of what they lack. And, although it may feel contrived at first, this mental state grows stronger with use and practice.

Studies have shown that our brains are wired to hold onto the negative, giving negative experiences and thoughts huge power over how we interpret and navigate life. Luckily our brains are easily rewired through repetitive action and by teaching our children to practice gratitude and constantly look for the good in their lives we can rewire their brains to operate in a way that will make them more resilient.

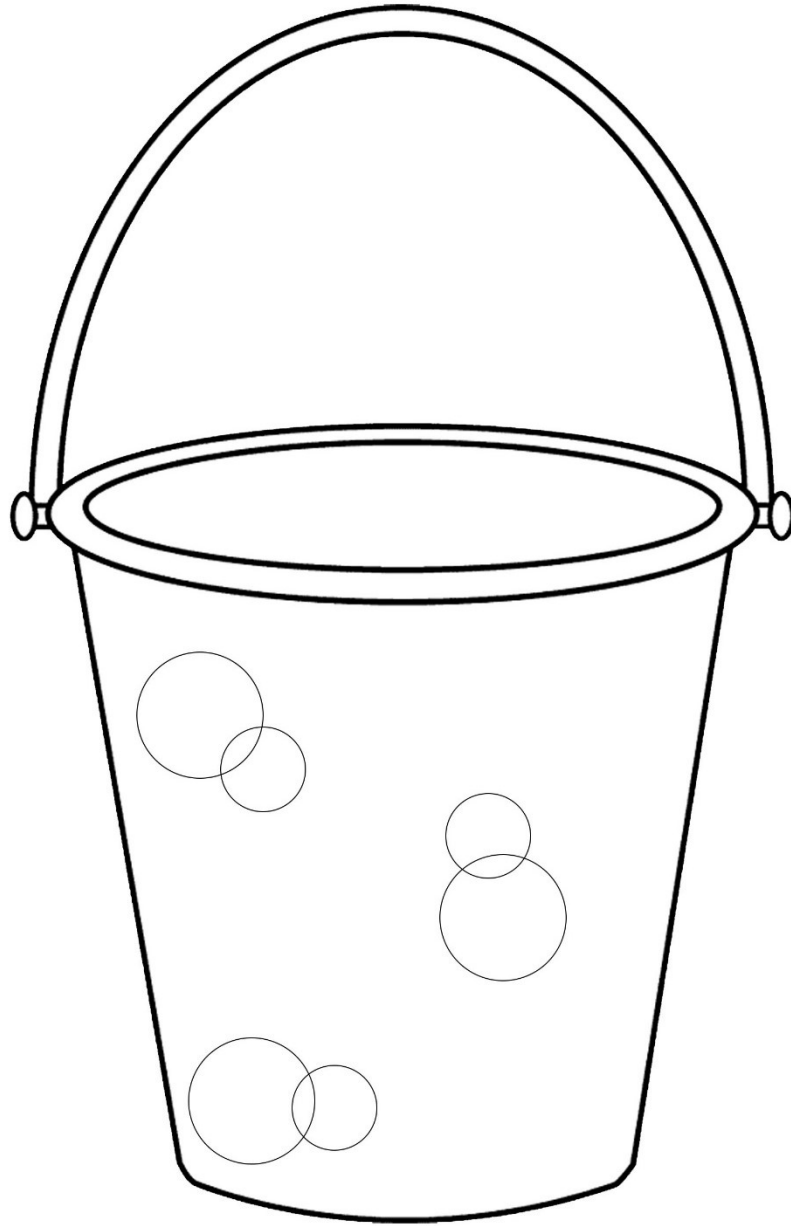
Children learn best when they are relaxed and having fun, so I have created this fun printable for you to use to start planting the idea of gratitude in our child's mind.

1. Print the bucket and gratitude option sheets (3 in total)
2. Using stickers, crayons and any other fun materials, decorate your bucket to make it your own
3. Cut out each of the suggested gratitude items
4. Discuss gratitude with your child and together come up with their own gratitude items and fill them in the blank gratitude blocks. Cut these out
5. Every day before bed discuss what good happened in their day and let them choose which gratitude items to put in their bucket.
6. As your child gets older and able to write down their own thoughts you can give them a gratitude journal to write daily entries in.

Remember what children see their parents do on a daily basis is what they will interpret as important so it is as important for you to do your own daily practice of the attitude of gratitude. You will see just how effective it is in your own life, so it is a win/win situation. Most importantly enjoy these special and formative moments with your child, they are so valuable in creating a secure and open relationship.

If your child is open to it, I would love for you to share your child's own gratitude items with me. Tag me on social media @natashafreemantle or email me on natashaf.freemantle@gmail.com

MY GRATITUDE BUCKET



GRATITUDE OPTIONS

I am grateful for my family



I am grateful for my friends



I am grateful for my home



I am grateful for my healthy
body



I am grateful for my toys



I am grateful for my school



GRATITUDE OPTIONS

I am grateful for _____	
I am grateful for _____	
I am grateful for _____	
I am grateful for _____	
I am grateful for _____	
I am grateful for _____	