



### TBH Focus

Spirit | *Believe in Yourself*

- Studies suggest that when we feel confident that our brains are healthy and our cognitive abilities are up to par, we're better able to meet intellectual challenges, and more likely to engage in brain-boosting activities.
- Confidence in intellectual abilities, especially memory, improves performance.
- Memory training leads to better memory self-efficacy.

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### The TBH Science

Our emotions aren't merely matters of the heart—they're matters of the mind: No matter how deep and intense our feelings—the love we share with a spouse, the joy we derive from our friendships and community, the awe we experience when we observe the world and all its wonders—without our brains we would not be able to recognize, reflect upon, or appreciate them.

Simply put, grey matter is key to gratitude, and so it's vital that we not only do all we can to keep our brains healthy but that we also appreciate all our brains do for us. Research bears this out: In one study, people who took classes on ways to improve memory and brain health not only did better on tests of verbal recall, they also experienced a boost in what experts call "mental self-efficacy"—confidence in the ability to live a brain healthy lifestyle. In addition, research has found that participating in activities that are intellectually engaging—i.e., that challenge our brains to think in new and different ways—may significantly lower the risk for serious memory loss.

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### You Will Need

- A whiteboard or flip chart
- Whiteboard markers or colored markers
- Copies of the "TBH Grateful Thinking" booklets for everyone in the class (see Resources)



- Introduce the activity. Use the TBH Focus and the TBH Science to talk about the brain-health improving benefits of intellectually engaging activities.
- Offer examples of “grateful thinking”:
  - ♦ “I’m grateful to my brain because I’m able to play chess with my grandson.”
  - ♦ “I’m grateful to my brain because it makes it possible for me to read (or knit, or play the piano).”
  - ♦ “I’m grateful to my brain because it has made it possible for me to have a rich and fulfilling career.”
  - ♦ “I’m grateful to my brain for storing wonderful memories of special times with my family.”
- Ask participants to think about and share reasons they’re thankful for their brains. Write each “Grateful Thinking” on a whiteboard or flip chart.
- Give each person a “TBH Grateful Thinking” journal in which to jot down things he or she is grateful for on a regular basis; suggest times to do this so that it becomes routine—before going to bed each night, for example, or on a specific day each week (see Resources).



- Introduce the activity. Use the TBH Focus and the TBH Science to talk about the brain-health improving benefits of intellectually engaging activities.
- Present the science behind the brain-health improving benefits of intellectually engaging activities.
- Ask participants to think about and share reasons they’re thankful for their brains.
- Give each person a Gratitude Journal in which to jot down things he or she is grateful for on a regular basis; suggest times to do this so that it becomes routine—before going to bed each night, for example, or on a specific day each week (see Resources).



Our brains allow us to reflect on and appreciate our relationships, communities, and world. You can help keep the parts of your brain that are responsible for grateful thinking healthy and vibrant by starting a Gratitude Journal: Find a time each day or each week to jot down in a notebook reasons you’re grateful for your brain and the many things it allows you to do.



## Resources

See the Resources section of your online Toolkit for all worksheets, links, and additional materials for this activity.