

## Activity: Gratitude Letter

Taking time to reflect on what's gone well in our lives gives us the gift of gratitude. The world will always show us both good and bad. If we take time to be thankful for what we do have, we begin to free ourselves from negative influences and find our true purpose.

This activity was first developed by Dr. Martin Seligman, sometimes called the founding father of positive psychology. It's a letter-writing exercise that he found helped people feel better about their lives. To get the most out of this, once you've written the letter, call the person and tell them you'd like to visit, but be vague about the purpose of the meeting; this activity is much more fun when it's a surprise. When you meet with them, take your time reading your letter to them.

In his book *Flourish*, Dr. Seligman describes the first step this way: "Close your eyes. Call up the face of someone still alive who years ago did something or said something that changed your life for the better. Someone who you never properly thanked; someone you could meet face-to-face next week. Got a face?"

**Who came to mind? Write their name down here:** \_\_\_\_\_

Your task is to write a letter of gratitude to this person. It should explain what they did for you and how it changed your life. In the letter, tell what you are doing now, and that you remember what they did. First, brainstorm what you'll write by answering these questions:

1. What did this person do for you?
2. How did this affect your life?
3. What are you doing now because of this?
4. How does this make you feel?

Now write your letter, using these notes.