

## MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

### Member blog – Mental Health

The following health and wellbeing blog has been prepared by TAL for Mental Health Month. It is available for TAL's superannuation fund partners to use in white-label format for communications and is designed to provide information for members on positive ways to support their mental health.

-BLOG-

#### **The power of gratitude**

When something bad happens, it's easy for it to stick in your mind. You might dwell on it, your stress levels increase and, before you know it, you've spent a lot of time and energy thinking about negative things.

It stands to reason that if you take the opposite approach, it's likely the opposite will happen. That's where gratitude – or the practise of being grateful – comes in. Gratitude is all about noticing the good parts of your life and using those to build a life that's meaningful.

It isn't about ignoring the not-so-great parts of your life; instead, it's about helping you focus on the positives in your life, so you can make the most of them. This can help you get through the harder times, too.

Research has shown people who feel grateful are in a better mood, enjoy their life, are more resilient and even healthier. Gratitude is also used in therapy settings to prevent or improve mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety.

Below are some ideas for practising gratitude:

#### **1. Be aware**

Being mindful can help you look out for things you're grateful for. Think about not just what it is you're grateful for, but why this is something you feel positive about. Then you can devise ways to incorporate those things that make you feel good into every day.

#### **2. Keep a journal**

Gratitude journals are a common way for people to maintain a habit of being grateful. Writing down what you feel grateful for each day can help you look out for the good things and really think about why you're grateful for them. Some people aim for one thing to be grateful for each day, while others write as many as they can think of. If you don't think writing is for you, think about other ways you can journal your gratitude: a photograph each day, a scrapbook, a picture or a blog are some options you could try.

### **3. Think small**

Often, we're told to 'think big' but, when it comes to gratitude, the smaller the better. Noticing the small things in life is key to starting a sustainable gratitude habit. Take a few moments to smile at the small things that bring joy into your life, like a sunny day or a chat over the water cooler with a colleague, or a funny text message from a friend.

### **4. Let others know**

Your gratefulness might often include others around you. You might be grateful for your partner holding your hand when you felt down, or a friend's kind words. Let the people in your life know you're grateful for their kindness or even just their presence. This will help not only you, but also the people around you.

-ENDS-

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