

say it — now

A How-To Guide

* justsayitnow.org

welcome to **Say It Now**



What I am about to share with you is an evolutionary story, one that has been in the works for more than 7 decades. It's become my passion work, my bigger WHY and an idea that may be the missing ingredient to transforming every important relationship.

A few years ago, a dear friend Denny called my attention to the fact that he wanted a really nice party at his celebration of life after he departed. Denny was one of the happiest, most upbeat people I have ever known. I asked him if he would like to be at the party. He looked at me with a puzzled look on his face exclaiming "that is not how it works!" and I responded "how it works doesn't make much sense."

I proposed to him that he was going to be 75 soon and why don't we invite all the people on his list to the birthday party. If he agreed to that, I would do his celebration of life after he passed. Well, we had a marvelous 75th, people paid tribute in such a touching way and it was such a happy occasion for Denny and his friends.

Looking back, I was grateful for hosting and organizing a living tribute because a year and a half later my friend passed away. I asked myself this question. Why are we so reluctant to tell people how we feel about them and the impact that they have on us?

This experience reinforced the importance of paying tribute while everyone is alive and well. I learned that relationships matter, and close relationships are a treasure.

This new movement has become the birth of *Say It Now*. Don't miss this opportunity to let people know what they've meant to you and live a life without regret.

Say It Now

to people who have impacted and shaped your life.

to give the special gift of acknowledging someone who has made a real difference in your life.

with the likelihood that the person would have never known the influence they had on you.

because your words can change lives, yours and others.

“ **Say It Now before it's too late.** ”

In this *Say It Now* guide you will find tools that allow you to choose your own gratitude expression be it writing a letter, sharing verbally, or arranging a living tribute event.

Join the movement by sharing your *Say It Now* expression using #SAYITNOW on any social media platform, and tag four people you challenge to do the same.

With gratitude,

Walter Green

Founder of the *Say It Now* movement

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**“The only mistake
we make about
expressing gratitude
is never expressing
it at all.”**

Walter Green

Welcome to Say It Now: A How-To Guide



**Let's
get started!**

Your Journey with Gratitude

1. Begin with Your Why

Why Gratitude? – Deepen your understanding of the power of gratitude by exploring reflection questions and thought-provoking videos. Explore to understand why gratitude is a superpower that we all have and can experience with others.

2. Next, Choose Your Gratitude Expression

Written Expression of Gratitude

Use the quiet power of words to express gratitude to someone who matters to you.

Go to page 7.

Verbal Expression of Gratitude

Deepen that connection and spend quality time with someone special by sharing your gratitude with them.

Go to page 9.

Living Tribute Event Expression of Gratitude

Host a celebration of gratitude and gather people to honor someone who has touched many lives.

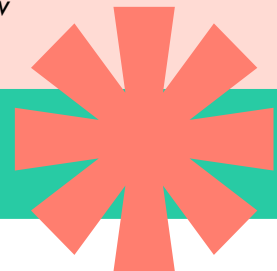
Go to page 12.

3. Share Your Journey

Want to take it a step further?

Share your experience with others in your life so they too can join the *Say It Now* movement by doing their own expression of gratitude.

Use the hashtag **#SAYITNOW** to share your story on social media and tag four friends to do the same.



Why Gratitude

The word gratitude stems from the Latin root word grata or gratia, which means *given gift*. Gratitude can have a few different meanings depending on the context and on the person.

“Gratitude is a positive emotion that comes from something good that happened to you.”

When a positive experience occurs, it can trigger gratitude and we may experience feelings such as warmth, comfort, happiness, admiration, love, and other positive thoughts and emotions. Gratitude can be practiced and expressed in many ways.

Gratitude is a state of being and an expression towards someone who has made a positive impact on your life. Whether it changed you for the better, helped you during tough moments, or gave you the support that you needed, gratitude is more than acknowledging someone.

Explore interesting questions and a few awesome videos to reflect on what gratitude means to you. Go to page 15 to get yourself started.

Gratitude can be experienced as:

Learning

An event that helped you:

- Grow
- Overcome challenges
- Become a better person
- Develop a deeper understanding of yourself and others

Compassion

An event of:

- Kindness
- Forgiveness
- Charity
- Love
- Support
- Generosity
- Receiving something that was unexpected and/or impactful

Safety

An event of:

- Protection
- Overcoming a challenge with the support of others
- Having trust
- Feeling safe to share something
- Being supported during something difficult

Remember, any of these experiences can occur directly or indirectly.

Directly { When someone's action is meant to have a specific impact on you.

Indirectly { When someone's action has a peripheral impact on your life.

Research has shown that gratitude is strongly and consistently connected with greater happiness. It can help people feel more positive emotions, enjoy good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships.¹

When we share our gratitude with others, we appreciate what we have and what others have done for us. We all can experience challenges, doubts, difficulties, and tough days.

**“Remember,
none of us are
self-made.”**

Walter Green

A small gesture, action, words, and support can change how we feel, think, and act. Recognizing those who support us is a way to show real and authentic love, appreciation, and recognition. This can bring joy, gratitude, and a deeper connection between both individuals.

Remember:

Expressing gratitude can be challenging. Some find it difficult to identify their emotions and feelings. Or find it challenging to express and pick the right words. Others may feel uncomfortable, unnatural, or odd. Some can find it hard to reflect and identify someone they are grateful for.

There are many tools available to overcome these challenges, which we have shared in this guide. Bear in mind that dealing with challenges is how we can grow and there is a solution for every challenge! This is also known as having a GROWTH MINDSET.

After completing your gratitude expression, go to page 16 to complete your post reflection.

Reflecting on your expression of gratitude is part of what makes this shared experience so meaningful. Reflect on the journey for wisdom or self-exploration, the joy of the experience, and inspire others to do the same.



¹ Giving thanks can make you happier. Harvard Health. (2021, August 14). <https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier#:~:text=In%20positive%20psychology%20research%2C%20gratitude,adversity%2C%20and%20build%20strong%20relationships>

Gratitude Expression Option

WRITTEN EXPRESSION

“Letter writing can be seen as a gift because someone has taken their time to write and think and express love.”

Soraya Diase Coffelt

Why wait to tell others how much they have impacted your life?

Writing a letter of gratitude is a great way to share with someone on how they have made an impact in your life. It can also help create a stronger relationship. Explore the examples found on pages 20-21.

Action 1.

Identify the person

Think about a person in your life who has had an influence to share your gratitude with. This can be a family member, a friend, a colleague, a mentor.

Action 2.

Reflect on their impact

Now, think about the moments of impact this person has had on your life. What difference have they made?

If you need help getting started, you can find some thought-starters on page 17.

Action 3.

Write your letter

Once you've reflected on the details you appreciate in the person, use your answers to put your thoughts to paper.

Check out the tips on writing your gratitude letter on page 19.

Action 4.

Share your letter

Now that your letter is written, you are ready to take the next step, which is sharing the letter with the recipient.

Remember, you can also drop off the letter in person, send it by mail or email it to them.

Action 5.

Post-reflect

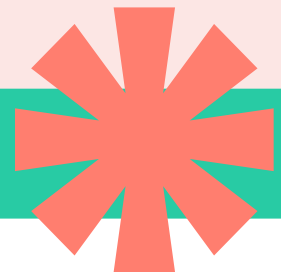
Take a moment to reflect on this experience, your relationship with this person, and how sharing gratitude has enriched your life.

Go to page 18 to explore a few reflection questions on your gratitude experience.

Want to take it a step further?

Share your experience with others in your life so they too can join the *Say It Now* movement by doing their own expression of gratitude.

Use the hashtag #SAYITNOW to share your story on social media and tag four friends to do the same.





Gratitude Expression Option

VERBAL EXPRESSION

“Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.”

Rumi

Why wait? Deepen your relationships through the power of gratitude and quality time.

Reconnect with others and support your overall well-being by spending time with others. Check out some examples found on pages 23-24.

Action 1.

Identify the person

Think about a person in your life who has had an influence to share your gratitude with. This can be a family member, a friend, a colleague, a mentor.

Action 2.

Reflect on their impact

Now, think about the moments of impact this person has had on your life. If you need help getting started, you can find some thought-starters on page 17.

Action 3.

Plan your verbal expression

Once you have thought about what you want to say, you are ready to put it all together. Check out these tips for writing your expression down on page 22.

Action 4.

Meet up

Set a time and day to meet with the special person and your gift of gratitude. Let the magic of gratitude unfold!

Action 5.

Post-reflect

Take a moment to reflect on this experience, your relationship with this person, and how sharing gratitude has enriched your life. Go to page 18 for some reflection questions on your gratitude experience.

Want to take it a step further?

Share your experience with others in your life so they too can join the *Say It Now* movement by doing their own expression of gratitude.

Use the hashtag **#SAYITNOW** to share your story on social media and tag four friends to do the same.



Gratitude Expression Option



LIVING TRIBUTE EVENT

“No one who achieves success does so without acknowledging the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude.”

Alfred North Whitehead

Life is all about celebrations, especially of those who have deeply impacted you.

A living tribute is a way to come together and honor and celebrate a special person by sharing gratitude together. We all can be easily caught up with the stresses of life, so why not pause, take some time, and connect together to *Say It Now*. Check out some examples on page 29.

Action 1.

Identify the person

Think about a person in your life who has had an influence to share your gratitude with. This can be a family member, a friend, a colleague, or a mentor.

Action 2.

Reflect on their impact

Now, think about the moments of impact this person has had on your life. If you need help getting started, you can find some thought-starters on page 17.

Action 3.

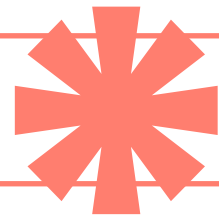
Write your gratitude message

Writing is a powerful process that can place your thoughts into words and sentences that can change everything. Through writing we can share memories, events, stories, and experiences that can give others an understanding of our life.

A well written tribute message can use various elements to captivate listeners and connect everyone to a specific feeling.

Check out pages 25-26 for tips on how to write a gratitude message for the living tribute event.

Remember, expressing feelings can help others know how meaningful their impact is!



Action 4.

Plan the event

Creating a successful event requires planning and execution, problem solving and having fun!

Whether you are planning to host a living tribute event in person or virtually, use the guide on pages 27 and 30 for tips on hosting an incredible event that will be memorable and impactful.

Action 5.

Post-reflect

Take a moment to reflect on this experience, your relationship with this person, and how sharing gratitude has enriched your life.

Go to page 18 to explore a few reflection questions on your gratitude experience.

Want to take it a step further?

Share your experience with others in your life so they too can join the *Say It Now* movement by doing their own expression of gratitude.

Use the hashtag #SAYITNOW to share your story on social media and tag four friends to do the same.



Why Gratitude?

Feel free to answer independently or share in a discussion with others (i.e., family or friends).

Exploring Gratitude

1. What does gratitude mean to you?
What does it look, feel, and sound like?
2. How do you express gratitude to others?
What do you say and do?
3. Why do you think expressing gratitude is important?

The Science Behind Gratitude

Did you know that gratitude supports our relationships and personal well-being?

Watch the following videos to learn more.

“**The Science of Gratitude**”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PueGhNjLwys>

“**A Neuroscientist Take on Gratitude**”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zgLX1bmf3U>

Why Gratitude?

Post-reflection questions

Think about what you learned from your journey. What are you grateful for?

1. What did you learn or what stood out from this experience of expressing gratitude?

2. Is there anyone you want to share this activity with or share your gratitude with next? Write down the why and their name below:

Don't forget to share this resource with anyone in your life who you think may have someone in their life they want to show gratitude to. Challenge others to join!

Let's spread gratitude to every person, and let's

**say it
—now**

Action 2.

Reflect on Their Impact

Let's highlight some big moments of appreciation.
Explore the following thought-starter questions:

- What difference did this person really make in your life?
- What does this relationship mean to you?
- Are there any updates in your life that you wish to share with this person that may be connected with their impact on you? Example: because of their support, you were able to overcome a certain challenge, land your dream job, etc.
- Briefly share a few well wishes to this person. Example: I wish them a lifetime of happiness. I wish them health and love.

Action 5.

Post-reflection Questions

Think about what you learned from this experience.
What stood out and what are you grateful for?

1. How did you feel having shared your gratitude?

2. How do you imagine the recipient of your gratitude felt?

Gratitude Expression Option 1. Action 3.

Write Your Letter

Here are a few tips on writing your gratitude letter.

Be specific

When you write about specific moments or events that left an impression on you, don't forget to share what those specific moments were. How did it make you feel and why was it important to you?

Think about where you were, what they did, why you want to show gratitude, and how they have impacted your life. You want to write the same way you speak, as if you were speaking to them directly. Don't forget, you are sharing a unique perspective on a shared experience!

Use simple and easy to understand language.

Show your gratitude

When you reflect on what you are grateful for, tap into your emotions and memories to create a connection to those involved.

Idea

Share a photo of you and the person you are writing this letter for, or a picture that is meaningful to your gratitude experience.

Don't forget to add the date to the letter. This way the reader can always look back and remember when you wrote the letter for them.

Edit your letter

When you have finished your letter, give yourself a break and then come back to it. This way you can use a clear mind to make any changes you wish to make.

Remember, be heartfelt and sincere throughout your letter.

Handwritten letters are always a great option because it is often viewed as an extension of yourself – a personal touch in a digital world.

Gratitude Expression Option 1

Written Expression Example One



**Dear
Dad**

Thank you for being the greatest dad. Since I was little, I loved how you have always been there for me. All the soccer games you attended, the birthday parties you planned, and the community bbq that you threw for everyone.

I remember the day you said you wouldn't make it to my game, but somehow you made it happen. I admire that you are always honest, sincere, and hard working. Whatever happens, you always find a way to be there for me, as a support and guide.

You have taught me that being kind and generous without expecting anything in return is the key to happiness. You have also helped me be a great friend because you are a great friend to me.

I wish you happiness, health, and more adventures with me and those who you love.

Love,
Adam

[Click here for helpful printable and fillable templates.](#)

Gratitude Expression Option 1

Written Expression Example Two

Honoring you

Dear Mrs. Singh,

You were the best teacher I had in high school. When I started grade 9, you were the first teacher who asked me how I was doing and always checked in to see if I needed any help. I appreciate your kindness, smile, and generosity. Thank you for making my first year in high school so memorable. I was super scared to move to a new city, school, and start all over. Your kindness and time really helped me feel safe and comfortable.

I wanted to share that I have successfully been accepted to the college of my dreams. Thank you for teaching me how to be resilient and work hard through any challenges. Most importantly, how to balance school, family, personal, and friends. You taught me that I am the captain of my life, choosing how I want to sail my boat, even though there are things I cannot control, like the weather or winds, but I should continue sailing forward and be prepared for any storms or sunshines.

Thank you!! I wish you a beautiful year filled with love!

*Sincerely,
Mariana*

[Click here for helpful printable and fillable templates.](#)

Gratitude Expression Option 2. Action 3.

Plan Your Verbal Expression

Write it out

Using your answers from the thought-starter questions and write or type out your gratitude message for the special person you are planning to meet.

Tip

You can begin by sharing a challenging moment you experienced and how you overcame it with their support. Or you can begin with stating your intention for the meeting and why you decided to connect with them.

Remember, there is no right or wrong way of how you want to start and share your gratitude. Pick a flow that feels comfortable and easy.

When you are sharing moments or events that left an impression on you, don't forget to share what those specific moments were, how they made you feel, and why it was important to you.

Think about where you were, what they did, why you want to show gratitude, and how they have impacted your life. You want to write the same way you speak, as if you were speaking to them directly. Use simple and easy to understand language.

Plan a time together

Reach out to set a date and time with the person. You can meet at a coffee shop, restaurant, invite them over, or even connect via a phone call or any digital video platform.

If you wish to keep your gratitude expression a surprise, simply say that you want to reconnect and catch up.

Make it memorable

Cherish the time together by maintaining your attention on the person, using your listening skills, and sharing your gratitude through a hug – with permission of course!

Take a picture of that moment together and discuss how the experience made you both feel.

Gratitude Expression Option 2 Verbal Expression Example One

To Sidra,

“

Gratitude is a moment of appreciating someone who has impacted you. You have been my friend since grade 11 and I am grateful for our friendship. Thank you for helping me with those crazy hard assignments! Thank you for the fun times in the summer you have always motivated me to be more confident and driven and you always listen to my problems and help me find solutions. Thank you for being the sunshine in my life!

”

“

There are so many things I appreciate about you, from your smile, to your kindness and how you can support others so easily. I wrote a small poem to share with you the impact you have made in my life!

You are an amazing friend. Your bestie, Alex

”

Gratitude unlocks sunshine in your life.
The way you have been is so beautiful for my eyes.
Your guidance and smile removes all gloom.
And fills my heart with flowers that forever bloom.
You have supported my world like a ray of light.
Thank you for being kind, loving, and so bright.
I wish you love, happiness, and peace. The way you have given me the same with such ease.

Gratitude Expression Option 2. Verbal Expression Example Two

Thank you!

“ I really appreciate you
Your helpful, giving ways
How your generous heart and
Your unselfishness displays. ”

“ I thank you for your kindness
I will not soon forget
Your one of the nicest people
I have ever met. ”

To a friend, brother, and an amazing human being. Thank you for always having my back, being a positive influence in my life, and sharing your wisdom.

You have helped me learn that challenges in life are growing opportunities. You were there for me during all the tough days. I wish you nothing but success. Hope you like my artwork that represents everything I admire about you!

From: James Robinson

Gratitude Expression Option **3** Action **3**.

Plan Out the Event

The basics

- People who can support
- Online or In-Person Event
- Guest list
- Day and location
- Time
- Invitation
- Other important details

Remember, you can host a Living Tribute Event in person or online!



Building it out

- Create a support team for the planning.
- Assign or pick tasks to be responsible for. For example one person can take care of inviting others, a second can take care of the decor, and a third can take care of food.
- Create an invitation using digital tools like [canva.com](https://www.canva.com) or [evite.com](https://www.evite.com).
- Be open to asking guests to bring those they think would like to join.
- Ask guests to RSVP/confirm by a certain date. Make sure they know how to reach you – phone, text or email!

Guide to Planning an Incredible In-Person Living Tribute Event

The basics

- Use your support team to plan, help, and share tasks or responsibilities. Think of games, food, managing the guest list, location, etc. Make sure everyone is communicating!
- Have the final guest count and confirm everyone knows the details.
- Ensure the location is easily accessible, such as a local park, a favorite restaurant, or venue.
- Ensure the day and time works for most guests.
- Check in with everyone to see if they have their gratitude message ready to be shared. Provide any support or clarification if needed.
- Send out a reminder a few days before.

Event details

- Remember to ask for food preferences or allergies.
- Use decor like balloons, streamers, flowers, or T-shirts, etc.
- Order a cake with the message “*Say It Now*” or another special wish.
- If it’s a surprise, ensure the special person is arriving later, this way the guests can all get there in time.
- Once the guests have arrived, introduce yourself as the host and begin with what *Say It Now* is to get things started.
- Invite others to share their message of gratitude.

Celebrating the event

- Capture memories by taking pictures, videos, and being present. Make sure everyone is comfortable with capturing the moments.
- Introduce guests to each other or introduce yourself to others.
- Invite others to share their message of gratitude.

Guide to Planning an Incredible Virtual Living Tribute Event

The basics

- Decide who you want to celebrate. It can be anyone—a teacher, parent, sibling, friend, mentor, boss, relative.
- Identify all the people you'd like to join the virtual living Tribute—it can be as big or small as you want.
- Think of the preferred video platform you want to use **Zoom, Messenger and Teams** are very popular video conferencing platforms that most people are familiar with.
- If you're using Zoom it's simple, just watch this short video.
- Set a date and time. Send out a calendar invite to everyone you want to include in the Living Tribute (and of course the honoree!).
- Feel free to write your own or use this template for the honoree, and this for the participants.
- Send out an invitation reminder , including the calendar link a few days before the event.

Event details

- If it's a surprise, ensure the special person logs on later, so guests can all arrive on the call on time.
- Once the guests have arrived, introduce yourself as the host and begin with what *Say It Now* is to get things started.
- Ensure to confirm with guests that everyone is comfortable being recorded, so that you can record your Living Tribute and share it with the group afterwards.

Celebrating the event

- Get ready to experience an incredible expression of love, appreciation, and gratitude.
- Invite others to share their message of gratitude.
- Share the recording with everyone who joined, and encourage them to take on their own Living Tribute using the same steps!

Gratitude Expression Option 3 Living Tribute Event Example

Living **tribute**

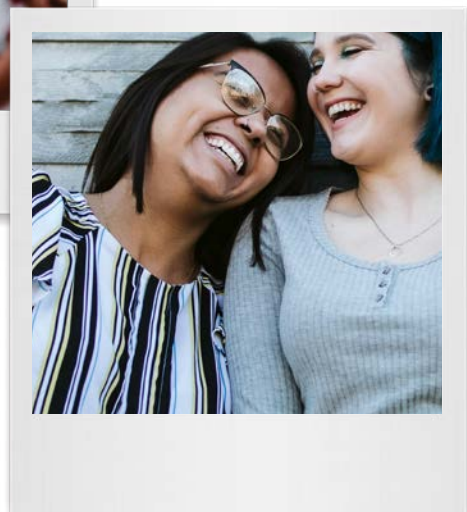
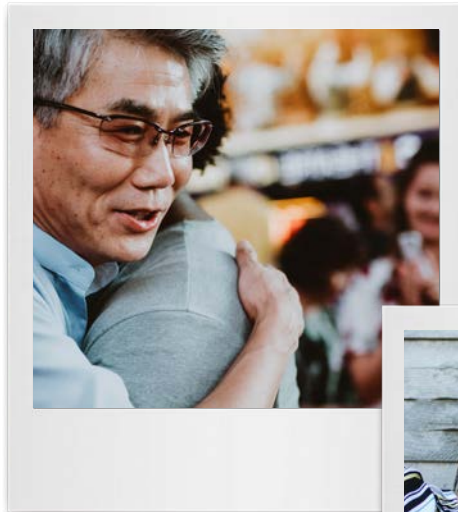
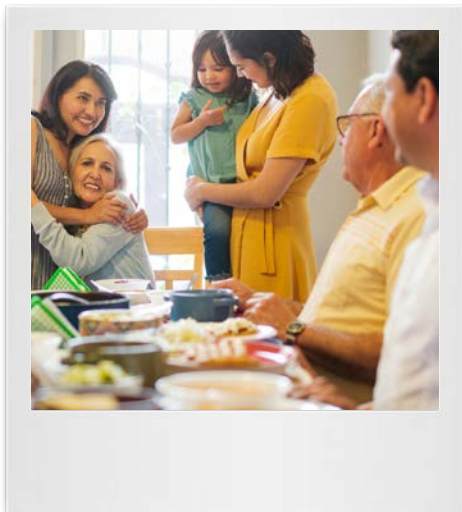
Honoring Mateo Chang

In our life, we're fortunate to know a special person that makes us realize how rich we truly are. Join us to share our gratitude to an incredible person who has given a great deal of love to all!

Date: Saturday, November 14, 2022
Location: 879 Barb Street, City, State, ZIP
Time: 7:00 pm
RSVP: Jane 555-852-9875

 #SAYITNOW

[Click here for helpful fillable and printable templates.](#)



Invitation Template



Hello (name of the guest or leave it blank),

My name is ____ (your name) ____ and I am planning a Living Tribute for ____ (special person's name) ____ . I know ____ (special person's name) ____ through ____ (how do you know the special person) ____ and they have deeply impacted my life in many ways.

It is important to celebrate those who we are grateful for, especially voicing our recognition together on how a person has impacted our lives. I am hosting a Living Tribute by gathering all those who want to celebrate ____ (special person's name) ____ . This is my way of taking part in an incredible initiative on gratitude called Say It Now.

Showing gratitude is such a powerful message and can highlight how a person's actions and words have inspired, influenced, and encouraged someone. It is important to share our gratitude as it deepens connections, relationships, enhances our sense of purpose, and brings happiness in everyone's lives.

Please feel free to extend this invite to anyone else who may want to be part of this experience. You can attend the Living Tribute event by coming prepared with any form of gratitude expression that you are comfortable sharing.

Here are some ideas:

- Write a letter or poem of gratitude
- Sing a rap or song
- Share a story of gratitude
- Create a video thanking the person and what they have done
- Create a poster highlighting the person's strengths and what you admire about them
- Write out a simple thank you statement

To ensure everyone gets time to express their gratitude, each individual has 3-5 minutes to speak. To get yourself started, complete the following worksheet: Reflecting on the Person.

Please RSVP if you are attending the event and have your gratitude expression ready by (due date). Together, we will be sharing our gratitude on (date and time) at (location/web meeting link) where we will be surprising (name of special person).

If you are unable to attend, share your expression with me at (email) and I will make sure to share it on the day.

Thank you kindly,

(Your Name)

(Contact Details (email or phone))



Gratitude Expression Option **3**. Action **4**.

Writing a Gratitude Message for the Living Tribute Event

Writing is a powerful process that puts your thoughts into words and sentences that can change everything. Through writing we can share memories, events, stories, and experiences that give others an understanding of our life.

A well written tribute message can use various elements to captivate listeners and connect everyone to a specific feeling.

Use the following tips to help you.

The basics

- Begin by addressing the person by starting with “Dear” or “To”.
- Remember to keep the message short (3-5 minutes), as most people can’t focus for too long when someone is speaking.
- Depending on how much time you have and how many people are attending, ensure that everyone is aware of how much time they have to speak. This way everyone gets a chance to share their expressions of gratitude.

The beginning

- Start with thanking the guests who have attended and the special person for being there. If you are not the host of the event, don’t forget to thank the host.
- If you are the host, explain what “A Living Tribute” is and why you decided to host one. Briefly explain why sharing our gratitude is important.
- If you are not the host, explain why you decided to attend the living tribute and what gratitude means to you, including why it’s important.

The tribute

- Kick off with how you know the special person, what relationship you share, how long you have known them. You can also start with a funny story, quote, or one memory before you explain how you know the guest and so forth.
- Next, talk about memories you have with the special guest. Don’t forget to share how those memories make you feel and why they are important to you.
- Continue with sharing how the special person has impacted your life. You may share any

challenge(s) you experienced and how the special guest supported you with this, directly or indirectly. You can also share any lessons you have learned from them.

- Don't forget to thank them and share why you are grateful!
- Close with your wishes for the special person. What do you wish they continue to do or have? What do you wish for them now and in the future?

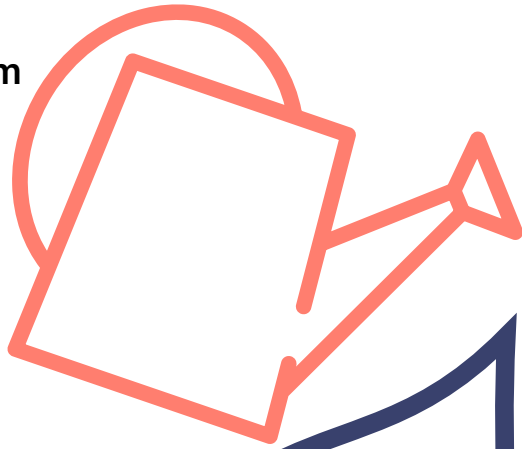
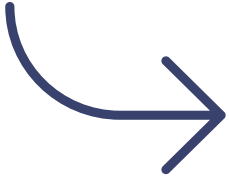
Remember

- Be specific about what actions the person did that you are grateful for. When you share details, it shows how much it meant or impacted you.
- You can always surprise everyone by wrapping up the living tribute message with a creative gesture, such as a song you want to sing, a poem you wrote, pictures you want to share, etc.

**“Relationships
matter. Special
relationships
are a treasure.”**

Walter Green

The person I am grateful for...



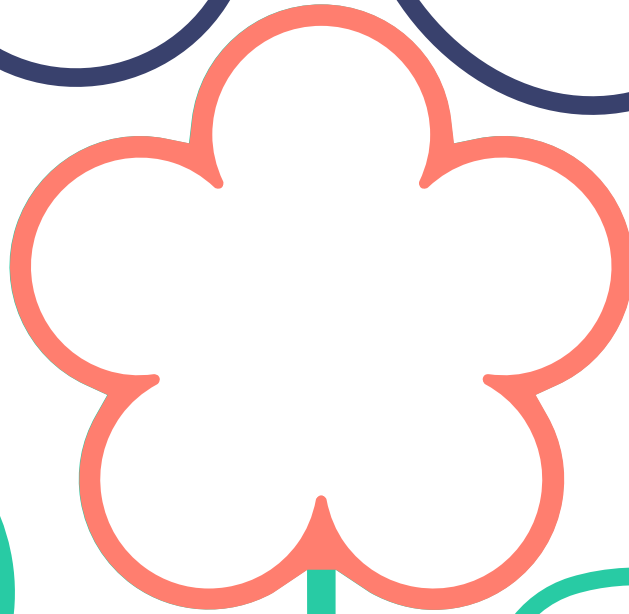
This person has supported my learning, safety and compassion through these actions/gestures/words:



This made me feel...



This made me feel...



This changed my life...





thank
you

“Love
you”

A Living **tribute** 

A Living **tribute** 

 #SAYITNOW

A Living **tribute** 

 #SAYITNOW

A Living **tribute** 

Honoring

In our life, we're fortunate to know a special person
that makes us realize how rich we truly are.
Join us to share our gratitude to an incredible person
who has given a great deal of love to all!

Date:

Location:

Time:

RSVP:



A Living **tribute** 

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