



# Gratitude Cards

**GIVE THESE CARDS TO FRONT LINE WORKERS WHOSE WORK YOU WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE. CONSIDER WHOSE WORK YOU MIGHT OVERLOOK OR TAKE FOR GRANTED BUT THAT IS ESSENTIAL TO YOUR WAY OF LIFE.**

## A STORY ABOUT GRATITUDE:

Ben Zoma, a Jewish scholar from the 2nd century, used to say, "What does a good guest say? 'How much trouble my host goes through for me. How much meat he has offered. How much wine he has set before me. How many cakes he has brought before me. And all of this trouble he went through for me.' But an inconsiderate guest, what does he say? 'What trouble has my host gone through? I have eaten one piece of bread and a single piece of meat. I have had but one cup of wine. All the trouble the host has gone to has been only for his family.'" – Brachot 58a<sup>1</sup>

Ben Zoma points out that the good guest appreciates the hard work that has been put into a meal in which he or she participates, while the inconsiderate guest downplays the work that was done and considers only the direct benefit that he or she received from the portion they consumed.

## DISCUSS

- How does this story apply to the front-line workers to whom you want to express gratitude?
- What professions in our society are under appreciated? Why do you think that is?
- Beyond sending cards, how else can we recognize, share appreciation for and support those whose work is necessary but often overlooked?
- How can we demonstrate our gratitude and appreciation to front-line workers when we interact with them?

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Studies show that practicing gratitude benefits our social and emotional well-being. This means that practicing gratitude makes us happier and strengthens our relationships with others.<sup>2</sup>
- Those who practice gratitude regularly also report feeling lower levels of loneliness, which is especially important when we continue to practice social distancing.<sup>3</sup>

**What are some ways you could practice gratitude more regularly?**

<sup>1</sup> [https://jewishcamp.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/04/Gratitude\\_-\\_Mussar\\_Institute.pdf](https://jewishcamp.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/04/Gratitude_-_Mussar_Institute.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2019.1651888>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301355333\\_Mediating\\_Effects\\_of\\_Loneliness\\_on\\_the\\_Gratitude-Health\\_Link](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301355333_Mediating_Effects_of_Loneliness_on_the_Gratitude-Health_Link)



# Gratitude Cards

**THE CARDS YOU ARE MAKING WILL BE GIVEN TO “FRONT LINE” WORKERS, PEOPLE WHOSE WORK HELPS US ALL LIVE HEALTHY AND SAFE LIVES.**

## A STORY ABOUT GRATITUDE:

Whenever Rabbi Menachem Mendel, a Hassidic rabbi who lived in Poland in the early 1800s, replaced a pair of worn out shoes, he would neatly wrap up the old ones in newspaper before placing them in the trash, and he would declare, “How can I simply toss away such a fine pair of shoes that have served me so well these past years!?”<sup>4</sup>

## DISCUSS

- In this story, the Rabbi wraps his shoes nicely in newspaper before throwing them out to say “thank you” to them for how they have helped him. What are some ways you say “thank you” to the things or people that help you?
- What kinds of workers in our community deserve a special “thank you” and why?

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Expressing gratitude, or saying thank you, regularly is good for us! It can help us feel happier and less lonely.<sup>5</sup>
- After making these cards for essential workers in our community, here are some other ways you can practice gratitude:
  - Every day, make a list of three things you are grateful for—these could be people, things, something that happened, or something you saw, heard, ate, or enjoyed in some other way.
  - Make a practice of saying thank you at least five times a day. When possible, include at least one stranger in this daily gratitude.
  - As a family, make a gratitude collage with pictures of all the things and people you are grateful for. When you are having a difficult day, look at the collage to help make it easier to get through.

<sup>4</sup> [https://jewishcamp.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/04/Gratitude\\_-\\_Mussar\\_Institute.pdf](https://jewishcamp.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/04/Gratitude_-_Mussar_Institute.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2019.1651888>, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301355333\\_Mediating\\_Effects\\_of\\_Loneliness\\_on\\_the\\_Gratitude-Health\\_Link](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301355333_Mediating_Effects_of_Loneliness_on_the_Gratitude-Health_Link)

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