

How can we better understand our brains and emotions to live a healthy life?

Vocabulary: gratitude, anxiety, depression, reframing, perspective, viewpoint



Visitor guide designed by students at Dayton Regional STEM School

**DANIEL'S  
PEACE**  
MEMORIAL PARK

**Tree Stand**



**Visitor Guide**



# Activity 1

## Finding Gratitude

**Step 1:** Visitors approach Daniel's Tree Stand and take in the gratitude list from Daniel. Read aloud a few of the items from his list and ask the group to make sense of the purpose or meaning.

### Script

Even though Daniel struggled during his life, he was thankful for many things. Having gratitude helps your mind and body in many ways. Did you know that showing gratitude helps you to reduce anxiety and depression? Did you know that being thankful helps your heart be healthy, improves your sleep, and makes you feel more confident in your life?

Think about 2-3 things you are grateful for. Pick a partner and share these items with him/her. Explain why these things are important to you.



# Activity 2

## Practice Reframing Thoughts

**Step 1:** Explain that a big part of gratitude is using it to reframe thoughts especially if they are negative.

### Script

Everyone experiences positive and negative thoughts but it's what you do with them that matters. If you have negative thoughts, you can "reframe" them or change them by looking at the situation from a different perspective. Let's practice!

Have visitors spread out and face all different directions so that they have different viewpoints in this space. Have them focus a small section or "frame" from their vantage point. Model using your thumbs and forefingers to make a "frame" for viewing.

Call visitors one at a time. Ask them to describe in detail what they see in their frame. (Various descriptions of your natural surroundings will follow.)

Have visitors move to another spot and then look at the same space from a different perspective.

### Questions:

How has your new viewpoint changed what you're seeing?

Does experiencing this space from various perspective make you feel different about this place than when you just walked through it?

**Step 2:** Focus on examples from visitors' lives to solidify the connection.

### Script

Now that we understand how looking from different perspectives can change your understanding of a situation, let's practice "reframing" negative thoughts.

Share these examples and walk through them as a group:

Student says "I hate gym, it's stupid." - You can "reframe" that to say I will be able to move around, get exercise, and be loud.

Person says "No one likes me, I never get invited."

Make a list of the things you have done with others in the past two months. Include family and school/work connections.

Also consider how often you invite others to do things.



In a journal or note card:

Have students write 2 negative thoughts that they have had in the past week. Then have them explain how they could reframe each thought by focusing on the positive or viewing it from another perspective.

Have the visitors share their personal examples with one or two others.

**Question:** What did you learn from hearing what the other visitors shared? How did this help you better understand yourself and others?