Sources of GRATITUDE Cards Sort – Brief User Guide

Sources of GRATITUDE – Cards Sort (© S. Rochat & K. Oliveira, 2026)
Printable version – Online version – Quizz version

Purpose

Gratitude refers to a feeling of appreciation for a benefit received (Académie française, 2019). Research in positive psychology highlights that cultivating this emotion in everyday life has a significant impact on well-being, cognition, and social relationships.

Background

Sources of GRATITUDE is based on the four domains of optimal functioning described by Ford and Smith (2020), and their subcomponents, to identify 10 domains of sources of gratitude: motivation, skills, biology, natural context, material context, social context, social acts, sociocultural context, positive experiences, and negative experiences. Some of these domains are illustrated by themes identified by Ghosh and Deb (2017).

Rationale

The Sources of GRATITUDE instrument aims to support the career counseling process by helping participants to:

- Identify the resources available in their everyday lives.
- Cultivate gratitude and the resulting physical, psychological, and social benefits.

Using a cards sort to explore this topic encourages dialogue, collaboration, and reflection rather than assessment. However, the quiz version may be more convenient for individual daily use.

Process

With reference to the 5As model of career counseling, Sources of GRATITUDE is particularly relevant during:

- Accompanying action: identifying, articulating, and cultivating the participant's resources while implementing their career plan.
- It can also be used throughout the process, especially during particularly difficult transitions, to help preserve the participant's mental and physical health.

Content

Sources of GRATITUDE contains 60 cards, with six sources of gratitude in each of the 10 domains.

Administration

1. Invite the participant to sort the cards according to how much each one represents a source of gratitude for that day: not at all, somewhat, or very much.
2. Rank the selected sources to identify a "top five" list of things the participant is grateful for that day.
3. Explore together the participant's experience of completing the exercise and whether they could cultivate gratitude in their daily life.

Interpretation

The pictograms on the cards can help identify patterns among sources of gratitude: = motivation; = skills; = biology; = nature; = material context; = social context; = social acts; = socio-cultural; = positive experiences; = negative experiences.

Further Reading

- Mapping career counseling interventions (Chapter 5.6).
- Les 5As du conseil en orientation (Chapters 4.1 and 5.2).

References

Ford, M. E., & Smith, P. R. (2020). *Motivating self and others.* University Press.
Ghosh A. & Deb A. (2017). An exploration of gratitude themes and suggestions for future interventions. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment,* 27(7) 678–693.