

# Exploring the role of gratitude in various psychological paradigms

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## Keywords

Gratitude, Intervention, Counseling, Psychotherapy, Paradigm.

## Abstract

This study conducts a systematic literature review of gratitude-based interventions from 2020 to 2025 to assess their psychological impact and position them within the therapy paradigms of Rocco Cottone. Based on 52 peer-reviewed articles identifying through a PRISMA-guided search, the results show that gratitude interventions effectively reduce the symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress, and trauma-related distress. These functions improve Emotional and Spiritual Well-being, self-regulation, and relationships across various populations including students, employees, patients, and caregivers. A major uniqueness of this review is the application of Cottone's paradigmatic pie—psychological internal, external, inter, cross, and multi paradigms—contributing an innovative angle to analyzing the mechanisms and contexts of gratitude interventions. Most of the interventions were found within inter and internal paradigm models, whereas the transparadigm model which integrates biological, psychological, and social aspects, showed particular promise in clinical and organizational settings. This review also highlights the underappreciated role of gratitude in responding to post-digital socio-psychological stress uniquely relevant in today's fractured world. The study concludes that gratitude is a strategically valuable, multifaceted, flexible, and low-cost resource that can be easily weaved into modern counseling practice. Discussion is provided on implications for theory, practice, and future inquiries.

## INTRODUCTION

Gratitude is one of the increasing recognized psychological constructs that has proven useful for mental health and well-being. In positive psychology, gratitude is linked to lower levels of depression and anxiety (Cunha et al., 2019; Dickens, 2017), enhanced emotion regulation (Dennis & Ogden, 2025),

improved social relations (Algoe, 2019; Imai, 2024), and higher psychological resilience (Bohlmeijer & Westerhof, 2021). Numerous intervention modalities have been developed, such as journaling (Harty et al., 2025), group-based programs (Sumari et al., 2025), mobile apps (Fuller et al., 2025), and mindfulness-integrated applications (Zavala et al., 2024), all of which have produced varying degrees of effectiveness in different populations, including students, employees, caregivers, and clinical patients.

Despite the expansion of empirical evidence supporting gratitude-based interventions, there is still a lack of theoretical integration concerning these interventions within formal psychotherapeutic models. Most of the available literature overlooks paradigmatic counseling models and focuses solely on outcome efficacy, which results in insufficient coherence and practical relevance concerning the application of gratitude in counseling (Lavelock et al., 2016; Locklear et al., 2023). In addition, the absence of unified taxonomy hinders the possibility to make comparisons between the interventions, assess the change processes, and determine which therapeutic dimensions—emotional, cognitive, relational, or systemic—are being engaged (Fried & Robinaugh, 2020).

This study fills these gaps by applying Rocco Cottone's paradigm framework that classifies psychological interventions as internal, external, interparadigm, cross-paradigm, and transparadigm models, to map empirically grounded gratitude practices within contemporary psychotherapy (Cottone, 2012). While this paradigm offered an integrative approach to the diverse traditions within counseling, it remains empirically untested in the context of gratitude interventions. This review aims to address this gap by analyzing empirical literature from 2020 to 2025 and integrating them into a unifying theoretical framework to structure better clinical judgment.

This exploration is particularly relevant now considering the increase in mental health concerns aggravated by the acceleration of technology, social fragmentation, and economic instability in the post-pandemic world. There is an increase in emotional distress associated with social isolation, digital tiredness, and existential ambiguity (Soulé et al., 2022). In this context of psychosocial change, gratitude has surfaced as an effective, low-cost method to promote individual well-being and collective resilience (Amiri et al., 2024; Casu et al., 2020). This study increases the efficacy of gratitude as an intervention by illustrating how gratitude interventions fit within various therapeutic frameworks, thus enabling its use on both individual and systemic levels.

In light of the above, this systematic review seeks to answer two core research questions: (1) What psychological problems have been addressed through gratitude-based interventions between 2020 and 2025?; (2) How can these interventions be conceptually mapped within Rocco Cottone's psychotherapy paradigm framework?.

## METHODS

### Research Design

Systematic literature reviews (SLR) is one of the most acknowledged approaches to systematically collecting, evaluating and synthesizing relevant literature. In the words of Kitchenham and Charters (2007) the objective of this approach is to determine how individual studies that relate to a particular focus have been done, and what their findings are. In the present work, SLR was conducted within the context of Rocco Cotton's psychotherapeutic paradigms in order to understand comprehensively the role and functioning of gratitude as an intervention within different counseling theories and practices.

In the first stage, the research questions that aimed to achieve maximum efficiency for the literature search and extraction processes were designed. These questions were developed using the PICOC methodology (Mengist et al., 2020), which includes: 1) Population (P) — the study population of interest; 2) Intervention (I) — the particular treatment or issue being studied; 3) Comparison (C) — other treatments or controls used; 4) Outcome (O) — results, effects, or consequences; and 5) Context (C) — setting of the studies. Consequently, and based on the above frameworks, the research questions were

formed as follow: (1) What psychological problems have been addressed through gratitude-based interventions between 2020 and 2025? And (2) How can these interventions be conceptually mapped within Rocco Cottone's psychotherapy paradigm framework? Such precision was instrumental in enhancing the efficiency and relevancy of the literature retrieval process (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006).

### Data Collection Process

The procedures to gather information for this systematic literature review (SLR) followed the PRISMA flow diagram framework consisting of four main parts – identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion (Cooper et al., 2018). During the identification stage, the primary database, Scopus, was searched using an electronically-supplied keyword list that was broad in scope. These included “gratitude” and “thankful,” as well as “grateful,” plus “experimental study,” “experiment,” “randomized controlled trial,” “qualitative study,” “qualitative research,” “interview,” “focus group,” “phenomenology,” and “case study.” The Scopus search string was formatted as: (TITLE (gratitude OR thankful\* OR grateful\*) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (“experimental study” OR “experiment\*” OR “randomized controlled trial” OR rct OR “qualitative study” OR “qualitative research” OR “interview\*” OR “focus group\*” OR “phenomenolog\*” OR “case study”).

This provided an initial set of 694 pertinent records. The keyword strategy was developed using multidisciplinary online lexical networks, previous literature, and recommendations from Scopus (Okoli, 2015). This wide preliminary set revealed the high interest in exploring gratitude, which justifies the emphasis on counseling interventions aimed at suicidal ideation. The following screening stage dealt with overlapping entries and around subtler criteria such as the year of publication, type of article, domain of research, category of journal, language (only English), and level of access, retaining 694 articles for further scrutiny. The application of defined inclusion and exclusion criteria narrowed the number of articles to 177, guaranteeing the selected articles were of sufficient quality and relevance for further analysis.

In the course of the eligibility assessment, 5 articles were manually removed due to irrelevant study design. Out of the remaining 172 articles, an additional 120 articles were removed due to lack of particular attention to gratitude as an intervention. These exclusion criteria illustrate the methodological rigor that the research team strived for. Gratitude interventions in counseling were comprehensively analyzed in detail within 52 studies which were synthesized and included in the final synthesis. Figure 1 presents the PRISMA flow diagram that illustrates the meticulous selection process.

### Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

All the articles went through a systematic screening process using set inclusion and exclusion criteria. Studies that were considered relevant included those which dealt with counseling methods and their impact on suicidal ideation reduction. On the other hand, articles that dealt with theoretical discussion in isolation were excluded from the review for not having any empirical or practical relevance (Gough et al., 2019). This criterion selection focused on research that actually advanced the understanding and development of counseling interventions aimed specifically at suicidal ideation. This criterion also improved the validity and focus of the analysis by ensuring that the analysis relied on empirical evidence and practical results. A complete summary of the criteria can be found in Table 1.

### Data Analysis

An earlier assessed determine of the quality, indicated to review the coherence of the focus of the study and its research design, along with analyzing the design's key elements. Following (Munn et al., 2019), quality appraisal aims to determine the relevance and validity of research findings by concentrating on the clearly defined strengths and weaknesses of each publication. Accordingly, this study appraised article quality based on four guiding questions: (1) Is the research question presented and appropriately framed? (2) Is the research question well addressed by the design of the study? (3) Are the results

concerning counseling interventions for the alleviation of suicidal ideation presented clearly? (4) Does the article adequately discuss counseling strategies aimed at suicidal ideation?.

The two reviewers in the peer review process executed the quality assessment of the 52 selected articles independently. Evaluation was based on the Quality Assessment (QA) criteria which were tailored from Kitchenham and Brereton's guidelines that take into account clarity of research questions, importance of the study, methodological and definitional frameworks, as well as constructions and expressions of the findings.

In the QA scoring system, articles received 1 point for a 'Yes' (Y) response, 0.5 points for a 'Partial' (P) response, and no points for a 'No' (N) response. To be eligible, articles needed to have at least a 3.0 score. [Kitchenham and Charters \(2007\)](#) noted that systematic literature reviews typically comprise between 10 to 50 articles; therefore, the 52 articles analyzed here underwent holistic quality assessment and met the criteria, as all surpassed the score threshold.

Furthermore, qualitative data were integrated through thematic synthesis. [Xu and Zammit \(2020\)](#) explain that thematic analysis is simple but powerful, making it ideal for qualitative data. It can also provide data synthesis for integrative mixed-method research ([Flemming et al., 2019](#)). Thematic analysis in this research was carried out in two steps: first, extracting the main ideas from each article, and second, identifying and cataloging the counseling interventions for suicidal ideation from the years 2020 to 2025 within the psychotherapy paradigms proposed by Rocco Cotton during the same period.

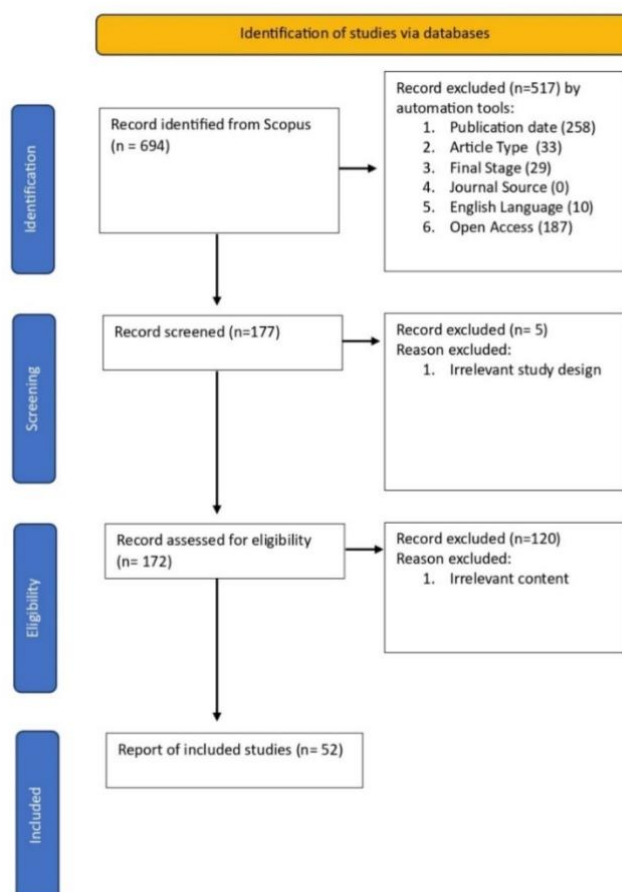


Figure 1. <PRISMA Flow Diagram>

Table 1. &lt;Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria&gt;

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Year	2020–2025	Before 2020
Document Type	Research article	Non-research articles such as books, book chapters, proceedings, etc.
Stage	Final	In production
Source Type	Journal	Other than journal
Language	English	Non-English
Access	Open access	Closed access
Objective	Gratitude as an intervention	Not involve gratitude as an active intervention
Study Design	Experimental	Non-experimental

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study found 52 articles that fit the established inclusion and exclusion criteria; these articles can be found in Table 2. The findings of the research will be discussed in two parts. The first part outlines the article's title, the names of the authors and the corresponding year of publication, the aim of the study, and the outcome of the study.

Table 2. Article Review Result

No	Title	Author	Year	Objective	Findings
1	Development of a gratitude intervention model and investigation of the effects of such a program on employee well-being, engagement, job satisfaction and psychological capital ( <a href="#">Harty et al., 2025</a> )	Harty B.; Gustafsson J.-A.; Thorén M.; Möller A.; Björkdahl A.	2025	To develop and evaluate a gratitude dialogue intervention model to improve employee well-being at work	Workplace gratitude dialogues significantly improve employee psychological well-being through enhanced interpersonal communication and social support.
2	The Role of Emotion Regulation in Body-Focused Gratitude: Impacts on Well-Being, Body Compassion, and Behavioural Intentions ( <a href="#">Dennis &amp; Ogden, 2025</a> )	Dennis A.; Ogden J.	2025	To examine the effects of general and body-focused gratitude on emotion regulation and mental well-being	Gratitude towards the body positively influences emotion regulation, boosting mental well-being and reducing stress symptoms.
3	Gratitude (shukr) group intervention for promoting college students' well-being: A quasi-experimental study ( <a href="#">Sumari et al., 2025</a> )	Sumari M.; Baharudin D.F.; Yahya A.N.; Yusop Y.M.	2025	To investigate the impact of group gratitude intervention on student psychological well-being	Group gratitude interventions significantly enhance student psychological well-being by strengthening social bonds and emotional support.
4	A Mobile App–Based Gratitude Intervention's Effect on Mental Well-Being in University Students: Randomized Controlled Trial ( <a href="#">Fuller et al., 2025</a> )	Fuller C.; Marin-Dragu S.; Iyer R.S.; Meier S.M.	2025	To evaluate the effectiveness of a mobile app-based gratitude intervention to enhance psychological well-being	Mobile app use effectively improves student psychological well-being and serves as a complementary therapy during treatment wait times.
5	The clinical effect of gratitude extension-construction theory nursing program on bladder cancer patients with fear of cancer	Qian L.; Zhang Y.; Chen H.; Pang Y.; Wang C.; Wang L.; Zhang X.	2024	To assess clinical effects of a nursing program based on gratitude theory on anxiety, fear of recurrence, and quality of life	Nursing programs based on gratitude theory clinically reduce fear of cancer recurrence, anxiety, and depression, while improving quality of life

No	Title	Author	Year	Objective	Findings
6	recurrence (Qian et al., 2024) Gratitude as an antidote to materialism in young consumers (Battistella-Lima & Veludo-de-Oliveira, 2024)	Battistella-Lima S.V.; Veludo-de-Oliveira T.M.	2024	To explore how gratitude interventions reduce materialistic beliefs among youth	and treatment adherence in bladder cancer patients. Gratitude-based interventions effectively reduce materialistic orientation by strengthening positive mental attitudes.
7	Gratitude Experience in Ten Patients with Spinal Muscular Atrophy: A Qualitative Study (Dai et al., 2024)	Dai S.; Gao L.; Zou C.; Ge M.; Zhou J.; Yun Y.	2024	To understand gratitude's role in enhancing psychological resilience and positive outlook in spinal injury patients	Gratitude assists spinal cord injury patients in building psychological resilience, positive outlooks, and social reintegration planning, improving long-term quality of life.
8	Why do we feel close to a person who expresses gratitude? Exploring mediating roles of perceived warmth, conscientiousness, and agreeableness (Imai, 2024)	Imai T.	2024	To examine how expressions of gratitude increase interpersonal closeness	Expressions of gratitude enhance interpersonal closeness by strengthening perceptions of warmth and sincerity.
9	A pilot study of a gratitude journaling intervention to enhance spiritual well-being and exercise self-efficacy in Black breast cancer survivors (Cousin et al., 2024)	Cousin L.; Braithwaite D.; Anton S.; Zhang Z.; Lee J.-H.; Leewenburgh C.; Lyon D.	2024	To test acceptability and effects of gratitude journaling on spiritual well-being in Black breast cancer survivors	Gratitude journaling increases spiritual well-being and exercise self-efficacy in Black breast cancer survivors.
10	Effectiveness of a guided multicomponent internet and mobile gratitude training program - A pragmatic randomized controlled trial (Lehr et al., 2024)	Lehr D.; Freund H.; Sieland B.; Kalon L.; Berking M.; Riper H.; Ebert D.D.	2024	To evaluate a multicomponent gratitude-based intervention's efficacy in reducing repetitive negative thinking	Multicomponent gratitude interventions reduce repetitive negative thinking and depressive symptoms through cognitive and social exercises.
11	Mindful-Gratitude Practice Reduces Prejudice at High Levels of Collective Narcissism (Zavala et al., 2024)	Golec de Zavala A.; Keenan O.; Ziegler M.; Mazurkiewicz M.; Nalberczak-Skóra M.; Ciesielski P.; Wahl J.E.; Sedikides C.	2024	To investigate the effectiveness of mindful-gratitude practice in reducing social prejudice and collective narcissism	Mindful gratitude practice reduces social prejudice and collective narcissism by enhancing empathy and self-awareness in social interactions.
12	The impact of gratitude practice on well-being and mental health in post-COVID times among Portuguese adults (Skrzelinska et al., 2024)	Skrzelinska J.; Ferreira J.A.; Linharelhos M.; Aguiar E.; Matos M.	2024	To examine how gratitude practices reduce psychological distress and promote post-traumatic growth post COVID-19	Consistent gratitude practice lowers psychological distress and promotes positive growth post-COVID-19 trauma.
13	Students' gratitude and engagement in online learning: An experimental study (Qudsyi et al., 2024)	Qudsyi H.; Wijaya H.E.; Rusdi A.; Rachmawati M.A.; Nu'man T.M.	2024	To study how daily gratitude practices affect student	Daily gratitude habits boost student engagement and motivation in online learning by enhancing



No	Title	Author	Year	Objective	Findings
14	A critical examination of the effectiveness of gratitude intervention on well-Being Outcomes: A within-person experimental daily diary approach ( <a href="#">Hartanto et al., 2023</a> )	Hartanto A.; Kaur M.; Kasturiratna K.T.A.S.; Quek F.Y.X.; Majeed N.M.	2023	engagement in online learning To critically evaluate gratitude interventions for improving mental well-being	virtual social connections and positive mindsets. Deep gratitude contemplation effectively improves mental well-being by reinforcing positive cognitive and affective mechanisms.
15	Are We Essential, or Sacrificial? The Effects of Felt Public Gratitude on Essential Worker Recovery Activities During COVID-19 ( <a href="#">Kim et al., 2023</a> )	Kim H.Y.; Kim S.; Howell T.M.; Doyle S.P.; Pettit N.C.; Bizzarro M.	2023	To assess how public gratitude influences health and well-being of essential workers	Public expressions of gratitude influence essential workers' mental health by fostering adaptive recovery behaviors.
16	Induced gratitude and hope, and experienced fear, but not experienced disgust, facilitate COVID-19 prevention ( <a href="#">Russell et al., 2023</a> )	Russell P.S.; Frackowiak M.; Cohen-Chen S.; Rusconi P.; Fasoli F.	2023	To study the effects of induced gratitude and hope on employee well-being and workplace emotions	Induced gratitude and hope via dialogue improve employee well-being by fostering positive emotions and workplace social support.
17	Giving and receiving thanks: a mixed methods pilot study of a gratitude intervention for palliative patients and their carers ( <a href="#">Bernard et al., 2023</a> )	Bernard M.; Poncin E.; Bovet E.; Tamches E.; Cantin B.; Pralong J.; Borasio G.D.	2023	To explore emotional dynamics of gratitude and hope during the COVID-19 pandemic	Emotions such as gratitude, hope, and fear motivate preventive behaviors during the COVID-19 pandemic.
18	Exploring How Received Gratitude and Apologies Meet a Benefactor's Psychological Needs of Face and Competence ( <a href="#">Imai, 2023</a> )	Imai T.	2023	To evaluate the acceptability of gratitude interventions in palliative care contexts	Gratitude interventions in palliative care are well received and improve psychological well-being, requiring larger studies for long-term evaluation.
19	The effectiveness of gratitude intervention in reducing negative emotions in sexual abuse victims ( <a href="#">Hamka et al., 2023</a> )	Hamka H.; Suen M.-W.; Anganthi N.R.N.; Haq A.H.B.; Prasetyo B.	2023	To study the role of gratitude and apologies in social interactions and psychological well-being in Japan	Gratitude and apology functions influence perception and psychological well-being within Japanese cultural contexts.
20	Effectiveness of an MPPI: Gratitude-Based Spiritual Group Guidance Program (GSGGP) ( <a href="#">Hatipoğlu &amp; Kaya, 2023</a> )	Hatipoğlu F.Ş.; Kaya Ç.	2023	To assess the effectiveness of gratitude-based spiritual therapy in addressing negative emotions in sexual violence survivors	Gratitude-based therapy effectively reduces negative emotions in sexual violence survivors.
21	Pilot Study on the Impact of Gratitude Journaling or Cognitive Strategies on Health Care Workers ( <a href="#">Roche et al., 2023</a> )	Roche K.; Mulchan S.; Ayr-Volta L.; Elias M.; Brimacombe M.; Morello C.; Hinderer K.A.	2023	To assess the impact of gratitude journaling on spiritual well-being and personal growth	Gratitude journaling enhances gratitude expression, internal spirituality, and personal well-being growth.
22	Gratitude exercise and well-being in relation to	Srivastava S.; Iqbal N.	2023	To examine how gratitude exercises	Gratitude journaling and cognitive strategies

No	Title	Author	Year	Objective	Findings
23	spirituality: A mixed-method study (Srivastava & Iqbal, 2023) Are Some Ways of Expressing Gratitude More Beneficial Than Others? Results From a Randomized Controlled Experiment (Regan et al., 2023)	Regan A.; Walsh L.C.; Lyubomirsky S.	2023	influence well-being and coping in healthcare workers To determine the most effective methods of expressing gratitude for enhancing well-being	support healthcare workers' well-being by reducing stress. Verbal and written gratitude exercises effectively improve well-being, especially for highly spiritual individuals.
24	The effects of a 2-week gratitude journaling intervention to reduce parental stress and enhance well-being: a pilot study among preschool parents (Toprak & Sari, 2023)	Toprak B.; Sarı T.	2023	To evaluate the effects of a two-week gratitude journaling intervention on psychological well-being	Two-week gratitude journaling improves psychological well-being, with social gratitude letters eliciting the strongest positive emotions.
25	Implementation intentions to express gratitude increase daily time co-present with an intimate partner, and moderate effects of variation in CD38 (Chang et al., 2022)	Chang Y.-P.; Way B.M.; Sheeran P.; Kurtz L.E.; Baucom D.H.; Algoe S.B.	2022	To explore how intention-setting for gratitude expression reduces stress and improves mental health	Intentional gratitude expression reduces stress and improves mental well-being in parents during the post-pandemic period.
26	Extending a helping hand: How receiving gratitude makes a difference in employee performance during a crisis (Ni et al., 2022)	Ni D.; Jiwen Song L.; Zheng X.; Zhu J.; Zhang M.; Xu L.	2022	To investigate how receiving gratitude influences relational closeness and biopsychosocial health	Routine expressions of gratitude increase partner closeness and promote biopsychosocial health in relationships.
27	Leaving Past Adversities Behind: Gratitude Intervention Compensates for the Undesirable Effects of Past Time Perspectives on Negative Affect (Burzynska-Tatjewski & Stolarski, 2022)	Burzynska-Tatjewski B.; Stolarski M.	2022	To study the role of gratitude interventions in improving motivation and resilience during organizational crises	Gratitude interventions during organizational crises improve employee confidence and motivation to adapt positively.
28	Feeling Gratitude Is Associated With Better Well-being Across the Life Span: A Daily Diary Study During the COVID-19 Outbreak (Jiang, 2022)	Jiang D.	2022	To examine the relationship between gratitude and well-being in relation to past experiences	Gratitude training reduces negative effects of pessimistic past perspectives, enhancing psychological well-being.
29	Palliative Professionals' Experiences of Receiving Gratitude: A Transformative and Protective Resource (Aparicio et al., 2022)	Aparicio M.; Centeno C.; Robinson C.A.; Arantzamendi M.	2022	To explore how receiving gratitude affects stress and mood among palliative care professionals	Daily expressions of gratitude reduce stress and improve positive mood in palliative care professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic.



No	Title	Author	Year	Objective	Findings
30	Appreciating the Good Things in Life During the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Randomized Controlled Trial and Evaluation of a Gratitude App (Kloos et al., 2022)	Kloos N.; Austin J.; van 't Klooster J.-W.; Drossaert C.; Bohlmeijer E.	2022	To study the psychological benefits of spontaneous expressions of gratitude in palliative care	Spontaneous gratitude from patients and families provides strong psychological support to palliative care professionals under work pressure.
31	Cognitive-affective responses to online positive-psychological interventions: The effects of optimistic, grateful, and self-compassionate writing (Heekerens et al., 2022)	Heekerens J.B.; Eid M.; Heinitz K.; Merkle B.	2022	To evaluate the effectiveness of mobile app-based gratitude interventions on public mental health during the pandemic	Mobile gratitude apps are effective and well accepted in enhancing public mental health during the pandemic.
32	The impact of a gratitude intervention on mental well-being during COVID-19: A quasi-experimental study of university students (Geier & Morris, 2022)	Geier M.T.; Morris J.	2022	To examine the effects of gratitude letter writing and optimism training on positive mood and cognition	Gratitude letters and optimism exercises improve positive states and thoughts; self-compassion exercises show less effect.
33	Does Gratitude Work at School? Piloting the Modified Interventions for Managing Academic Stress in Pakistani High Schools (Sahar et al., 2022)	us Sahar N.; Baranovich D.L.; Tharbe I.H.A.	2022	To pilot a gratitude intervention model for improving mental well-being in students during crisis situations	Gratitude interventions in schools effectively improve student mental well-being during crises like COVID-19.
34	Yoga at Every Size: A Preliminary Evaluation of a Brief Online Size-Inclusive Yoga and Body Gratitude Journaling Intervention to Enhance Positive Embodiment in Higher Weight College Women (Webb et al., 2022)	Webb J.B.; Padro M.P.; Thomas E.V.; Davies A.E.; Etzel L.; Rogers C.B.; Heredia N.I.	2022	To assess the impact of yoga combined with gratitude interventions on academic stress reduction among students	Yoga combined with gratitude effectively reduces academic stress among students in developing countries.
35	Positive psychology intervention (PPI) coaching: an experimental application of coaching to improve the effectiveness of a gratitude intervention (Trom & Burke, 2022)	Trom P.; Burke J.	2022	To investigate the effectiveness of positive psychology coaching incorporating gratitude journaling in female students	Yoga coaching and gratitude journaling improve body well-being in ethnically diverse female students.
36	Enhancing Meaning in Life and Psychological Well-Being Among a European Cohort of Young Adults via a Gratitude Intervention (Czyżowska & Gurba, 2022)	Czyżowska N.; Gurba E.	2022	To explore the effects of coaching combined with gratitude exercises on eudaimonic well-being	Coaching combined with gratitude exercises enhances eudaimonic well-being and dispositional gratitude.

No	Title	Author	Year	Objective	Findings
37	Nursing students' experiences of gratitude journaling during the COVID-19 pandemic (Ko et al., 2021)	Ko, H.; Kim, S.; Kim, E.	2021	To examine the psychological effects of gratitude journaling among nursing students	Gratitude journaling improves psychological well-being of nursing students but shows limited impact on life meaning.
38	Promoting Gratitude as a Resource for Sustainable Mental Health: Results of a 3-Armed Randomized Controlled Trial up to 6 Months Follow-up (Bohlmeijer et al., 2021)	Bohlmeijer E.T.; Kraiss J.T.; Watkins P.; Schotanus-Dijkstra M.	2021	To explore gratitude journaling as a tool for stress management and emotional regulation in students	Gratitude journaling helps students manage stress and deep self-reflection.
39	Mindful gratitude journaling: psychological distress, quality of life and suffering in advanced cancer: a randomised controlled trial (Tan et al., 2021)	Tan T.T.; Tan M.P.; Lam C.L.; Loh E.C.; Capelle, D.P.; Zainuddin S.I.; Ang B.T.; Lim M.A.; Lai N.Z.; Tung Y.Z.; Yee H.A.; Ng C.G.; Ho G.F.; See M.H.; Teh M.S.; Lai L.L.; Singh R.K.P.; Chai C.S.; Ng D.L.C.; Tan S.B.	2021	To compare the effects of mindful gratitude journaling versus self-kindness interventions on psychological distress	Mindful gratitude journaling is more effective than self-kindness in reducing psychological distress.
40	Autobiographical Memory, Gratitude, Forgiveness and Sense of Humor: An Intervention in Older Adults (Chamorro-Garrido et al., 2021)	Chamorro-Garrido A.; Ramírez-Fernández E.; Ortega-Martínez A.R.	2021	To investigate the impact of mindful gratitude journaling on quality of life and psychological stress in cancer patients	Mindful gratitude journaling reduces stress and improves quality of life in advanced cancer patients.
41	Using Gratitude to Promote Sport Injury–Related Growth (Salim & Wadey, 2021)	Salim J.; Wadey R.	2021	To evaluate the effectiveness of gratitude-based interventions on quality of life in elderly with sport injuries	Interventions based on autobiographical memory, forgiveness, gratitude, and humor improve quality of life in elderly with sports injuries.
42	Exploring neural mechanisms of the health benefits of gratitude in women: A randomized controlled trial (Hazlett et al., 2021)	Hazlett L.I.; Moieni M.; Irwin M.R.; Haltom K.E.B.; Jevtic I.; Meyer M.L.; Breen E.C.; Cole S.W.; Eisenberger N.I.	2021	To explore the neural mechanisms underlying the health benefits of gratitude visits in injured athletes	Gratitude visits promote recovery in injured athletes through neural and social interactions.
43	The Benefit of Gratitude: Trait Gratitude Is Associated With Effective Economic Decision-Making in the Ultimatum Game (Park et al., 2021)	Park G.; vanOyen-Witvliet C.; Barraza J.A.; Marsh B.U.	2021	To examine how trait gratitude influences physiological stress responses and social support	Trait gratitude reduces threat responses by enhancing social behavior and lowering bodily inflammation.
44	Enhanced academic motivation in university students following a 2-week online gratitude journal intervention (Nawa & Yamagishi, 2021)	Nawa N.E.; Yamagishi N.	2021	To investigate the correlation between dispositional gratitude and academic motivation	Dispositional gratitude positively correlates with acceptance of unfair offers in academic decision-making.
45	Gratitude Increases Recipients' Commitment Through Automatic Partner Evaluations, Yet	Baker L.R.	2021	To study the effect of gratitude journaling on sustaining academic motivation	Simple gratitude journaling increases and sustains student academic motivation.

No	Title	Author	Year	Objective	Findings
	Unreciprocated Gratitude Decreases Commitment Through Deliberative Evaluations ( <a href="#">Baker, 2021</a> )				
46	Surprise me! On the impact of unexpected benefits on other-praising gratitude expressions ( <a href="#">Weiss et al., 2020</a> )	Weiss A.; Burgmer P.; Lange J.	2020	To examine the influence of unexpected expressions of gratitude on relationship commitment	Gratitude expressions strengthen interpersonal commitment, diminishing without reciprocity.
47	"I Am Most Grateful." Using Gratitude to Improve the Sense of Relatedness and Motivation for Online Volunteerism ( <a href="#">Naqshbandi et al., 2020</a> )	Naqshbandi K.Z.; Liu C.; Taylor S.; Lim R.; Ahmadpour N.; Calvo R.	2020	To analyze how expressing gratitude enhances social relationships	Expressing gratitude through praise enhances social relationship quality and depth.
48	Enhancing relational care through expressions of gratitude: Insights from a historical case study of almoner-patient correspondence ( <a href="#">Day, 2020</a> )	Day G.	2020	To investigate the role of gratitude expressions in motivating online volunteer engagement	Gratitude expression increases volunteer motivation and engagement on online platforms.
49	The relationship between a disposition of gratitude, clinical stress, and clinical satisfaction in nursing students ( <a href="#">Moon &amp; Jung, 2020</a> )	Moon H.; Jung M.	2020	To explore how dispositional gratitude impacts long-term patient engagement in healthcare	Gratitude disposition plays a key role in long-term patient engagement with healthcare institutions.
50	Gratitude at work: Prospective cohort study of a web-based, single-exposure well-being intervention for health care workers ( <a href="#">Adair et al., 2020</a> )	Adair K.C.; Rodriguez-Homs L.G.; Masoud S.; Mosca P.J.; Bryan Sexton J.	2020	To assess the relationship between gratitude disposition and clinical practice satisfaction among students	Students with high gratitude disposition report lower clinical practice stress and higher satisfaction.
51	Gratitude increases third-party punishment ( <a href="#">Vayness et al., 2020</a> )	Vayness J.; Duong F.; DeSteno D.	2020	To investigate how gratitude letters influence well-being and reduce emotional exhaustion among healthcare workers	Workplace gratitude dialogues significantly improve employee psychological well-being through enhanced interpersonal communication and social support.
52	Future time perspective and perceived social support: The mediating role of gratitude ( <a href="#">Casu et al., 2020</a> )	Casu G.; Gentili E.; Gremigni P.	2020	To study the role of gratitude in promoting cooperation and justice enforcement through social support and future outlook	Gratitude towards the body positively influences emotion regulation, boosting mental well-being and reducing stress symptoms.

The second section organizes findings in relation to the defined research questions (RQs) so that a concentrated interpretation is given which meets the study aims.

RQ 1: What psychological problems have been addressed through gratitude-based interventions between 2020 and 2025?

Various countries have employed gratitude as an intervention for psychological issues. Relevant articles located within the years 2020-2025 is summarized in Table 3. The systematic review highlighted numerous psychological problems that are effectively treated with gratitude interventions. These problems mainly include low psychological well-being, emotional overcontrolled and undercontrolled states, stress and anxiety, depression and trauma symptoms. Gratitude interventions have been particularly effective in alleviating workplace stress, social disconnection, repetitive negative thinking, and fostering positive emotion and resilience. Those experiencing these problems include employees and students as well as patients with chronic diseases like cancer and spinal cord injuries. Moreover, gratitude practices aid in recovery from psychological trauma like that resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as in occupational stress management for essential workers and other healthcare professionals.

The review emphasizes the role of gratitude in resolving social psychological issues including the enhancement of interpersonal relationships, alleviation of social biases, empathy development, and motivation and engagement in academic and professional activities. Beyond the reduction of adverse emotional conditions, gratitude approaches also enhance well-being, meaning in life, and personal development. These findings indicate that gratitude interventions are consistent with many psychotherapy frameworks regarding confrontation of intra-psychological and inter-relational aspects, thereby facilitating holistic mental health promotion in multiple settings.

Table 3. <Psychological Issues Addressed by Gratitude-Based Interventions>

No	Article Title	Research Findings	Psychological Issues
1	Development of a gratitude intervention model and investigation of the effects of such a program on employee well-being, engagement, job satisfaction and psychological capital (Harty et al., 2025)	Workplace gratitude dialogues significantly improve employee psychological well-being through enhanced interpersonal communication and social support.	Psychological well-being decline, workplace stress
2	The Role of Emotion Regulation in Body-Focused Gratitude: Impacts on Well-Being, Body Compassion, and Behavioural Intentions (Dennis & Ogden, 2025)	Gratitude towards the body positively influences emotion regulation, boosting mental well-being and reducing stress symptoms.	Emotional dysregulation, stress symptoms
3	Gratitude (shukr) group intervention for promoting college students' well-being: A quasi-experimental study (Sumari et al., 2025)	Group gratitude interventions significantly enhance student psychological well-being by strengthening social bonds and emotional support.	Low psychological well-being, social isolation
4	A Mobile App–Based Gratitude Intervention's Effect on Mental Well-Being in University Students: Randomized Controlled Trial (Fuller et al., 2025)	Mobile app use effectively improves student psychological well-being and serves as a complementary therapy during treatment wait times.	Psychological distress, mental health support needs
5	The clinical effect of gratitude extension-construction theory nursing program on bladder cancer patients with fear of cancer recurrence (Qian et al., 2024)	Nursing programs based on gratitude theory clinically reduce fear of cancer recurrence, anxiety, and depression, while improving quality of life and treatment adherence in bladder cancer patients.	Anxiety, fear of cancer recurrence, depression
6	Gratitude as an antidote to materialism in young consumers (Battistella-Lima & Veludo-de-Oliveira, 2024)	Gratitude-based interventions effectively reduce materialistic orientation by strengthening positive mental attitudes.	Materialistic attitudes, negative mental outlook

No	Article Title	Research Findings	Psychological Issues
7	Gratitude Experience in Ten Patients with Spinal Muscular Atrophy: A Qualitative Study (Dai et al., 2024)	Gratitude assists spinal cord injury patients in building psychological resilience, positive outlooks, and social reintegration planning, improving long-term quality of life.	Psychological resilience deficits, negative life outlook
8	Why do we feel close to a person who expresses gratitude? Exploring mediating roles of perceived warmth, conscientiousness, and agreeableness (Imai, 2024)	Expressions of gratitude enhance interpersonal closeness by strengthening perceptions of warmth and sincerity.	Interpersonal distance, lack of social closeness
9	A pilot study of a gratitude journaling intervention to enhance spiritual well-being and exercise self-efficacy in Black breast cancer survivors (Cousin et al., 2024)	Gratitude journaling increases spiritual well-being and exercise self-efficacy in Black breast cancer survivors.	Spiritual distress, low exercise self-efficacy
10	Effectiveness of a guided multicomponent internet and mobile gratitude training program - A pragmatic randomized controlled trial (Lehr et al., 2024)	Multicomponent gratitude interventions reduce repetitive negative thinking and depressive symptoms through cognitive and social exercises.	Repetitive negative thinking, depressive symptoms
11	Mindful-Gratitude Practice Reduces Prejudice at High Levels of Collective Narcissism (Zavala et al., 2024)	Mindful gratitude practice reduces social prejudice and collective narcissism by enhancing empathy and self-awareness in social interactions.	Social prejudice, collective narcissism, low empathy
12	The impact of gratitude practice on well-being and mental health in post-COVID times among Portuguese adults (Skrzelinska et al., 2024)	Consistent gratitude practice lowers psychological distress and promotes positive growth post-COVID-19 trauma.	Psychological distress, trauma recovery post-COVID-19
13	Students' gratitude and engagement in online learning: An experimental study (Qudsyi et al., 2024)	Daily gratitude habits boost student engagement and motivation in online learning by enhancing virtual social connections and positive mindsets.	Low engagement, poor motivation in online education
14	A critical examination of the effectiveness of gratitude intervention on well-Being Outcomes: A within-person experimental daily diary approach (Hartanto et al., 2023)	Deep gratitude contemplation effectively improves mental well-being by reinforcing positive cognitive and affective mechanisms.	Poor mental well-being, lack of positive affect
15	Are We Essential, or Sacrificial? The Effects of Felt Public Gratitude on Essential Worker Recovery Activities During COVID-19 (Kim et al., 2023)	Public expressions of gratitude influence essential workers' mental health by fostering adaptive recovery behaviors.	Occupational stress, mental health challenges among essential workers
16	Induced gratitude and hope, and experienced fear, but not experienced disgust, facilitate COVID-19 prevention (Russell et al., 2023)	Induced gratitude and hope via dialogue improve employee well-being by fostering positive emotions and workplace social support.	Workplace emotional exhaustion, low positive affect
17	Giving and receiving thanks: a mixed methods pilot study of a gratitude intervention for palliative patients and their carers (Bernard et al., 2023)	Emotions such as gratitude, hope, and fear motivate preventive behaviors during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Emotional motivation deficits, anxiety during pandemic
18	Exploring How Received Gratitude and Apologies Meet a Benefactor's Psychological Needs of Face and Competence (Imai, 2023)	Gratitude interventions in palliative care are well received and improve psychological well-being, requiring larger studies for long-term evaluation.	Psychological well-being in palliative care patients
19	The effectiveness of gratitude intervention in reducing negative emotions in sexual abuse victims (Hamka et al., 2023)	Gratitude and apology functions influence perception and psychological well-being within Japanese cultural contexts.	Cultural-related psychological distress, social perception issues

No	Article Title	Research Findings	Psychological Issues
20	Effectiveness of an MPPI: Gratitude-Based Spiritual Group Guidance Program (GSGGP) (Hatipoğlu & Kaya, 2023)	Gratitude-based therapy effectively reduces negative emotions in sexual violence survivors.	Negative emotions, trauma in sexual violence survivors
21	Pilot Study on the Impact of Gratitude Journaling or Cognitive Strategies on Health Care Workers (Roche et al., 2023)	Gratitude journaling enhances gratitude expression, internal spirituality, and personal well-being growth.	Low spiritual well-being, lack of personal growth
22	Gratitude exercise and well-being in relation to spirituality: A mixed-method study (Srivastava & Iqbal, 2023)	Gratitude journaling and cognitive strategies support healthcare workers' well-being by reducing stress.	Work-related stress, poor coping mechanisms
23	Are Some Ways of Expressing Gratitude More Beneficial Than Others? Results From a Randomized Controlled Experiment (Regan et al., 2023)	Verbal and written gratitude exercises effectively improve well-being, especially for highly spiritual individuals.	Low well-being, limited spiritual expression
24	The effects of a 2-week gratitude journaling intervention to reduce parental stress and enhance well-being: a pilot study among preschool parents (Toprak & Sari, 2023)	Two-week gratitude journaling improves psychological well-being, with social gratitude letters eliciting the strongest positive emotions.	Psychological distress, low positive emotions
25	Implementation intentions to express gratitude increase daily time co-present with an intimate partner, and moderate effects of variation in CD38 (Chang et al., 2022)	Intentional gratitude expression reduces stress and improves mental well-being in parents during the post-pandemic period.	High parental stress, poor mental health post-pandemic
26	Extending a helping hand: How receiving gratitude makes a difference in employee performance during a crisis (Ni et al., 2022)	Routine expressions of gratitude increase partner closeness and promote biopsychosocial health in relationships.	Relationship strain, low biopsychosocial health
27	Leaving Past Adversities Behind: Gratitude Intervention Compensates for the Undesirable Effects of Past Time Perspectives on Negative Affect (Burzynska-Tatjewska & Stolarski, 2022)	Gratitude interventions during organizational crises improve employee confidence and motivation to adapt positively.	Low employee confidence, poor resilience during crises
28	Feeling Gratitude Is Associated With Better Well-being Across the Life Span: A Daily Diary Study During the COVID-19 Outbreak (Jiang, 2022)	Gratitude training reduces negative effects of pessimistic past perspectives, enhancing psychological well-being.	Negative effects of pessimism, poor psychological well-being
29	Palliative Professionals' Experiences of Receiving Gratitude: A Transformative and Protective Resource (Aparicio et al., 2022)	Daily expressions of gratitude reduce stress and improve positive mood in palliative care professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Occupational stress, emotional fatigue
30	Appreciating the Good Things in Life During the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Randomized Controlled Trial and Evaluation of a Gratitude App (Kloos et al., 2022)	Spontaneous gratitude from patients and families provides strong psychological support to palliative care professionals under work pressure.	Work-related pressure, lack of psychological support
31	Cognitive-affective responses to online positive-psychological interventions: The effects of optimistic, grateful, and self-compassionate writing (Heekerens et al., 2022)	Mobile gratitude apps are effective and well accepted in enhancing public mental health during the pandemic.	Public mental health challenges, pandemic-related stress
32	The impact of a gratitude intervention on mental well-being during COVID-19: A quasi-experimental study of university students (Geier & Morris, 2022)	Gratitude letters and optimism exercises improve positive states and thoughts; self-compassion exercises show less effect.	Negative mood, cognitive distortions
33	Does Gratitude Work at School? Piloting the Modified Interventions for Managing Academic Stress in Pakistani High Schools (Sahar et al., 2022)	Gratitude interventions in schools effectively improve student mental well-being during crises like COVID-19.	Student mental well-being during crises



No	Article Title	Research Findings	Psychological Issues
34	Yoga at Every Size: A Preliminary Evaluation of a Brief Online Size-Inclusive Yoga and Body Gratitude Journaling Intervention to Enhance Positive Embodiment in Higher Weight College Women ( <a href="#">Webb et al., 2022</a> )	Yoga combined with gratitude effectively reduces academic stress among students in developing countries.	Academic stress, anxiety
35	Positive psychology intervention (PPI) coaching: an experimental application of coaching to improve the effectiveness of a gratitude intervention ( <a href="#">Trom &amp; Burke, 2022</a> )	Yoga coaching and gratitude journaling improve body well-being in ethnically diverse female students.	Body dissatisfaction, mental health issues among female students
36	Enhancing Meaning in Life and Psychological Well-Being Among a European Cohort of Young Adults via a Gratitude Intervention ( <a href="#">Czyżowska &amp; Gurba, 2022</a> )	Coaching combined with gratitude exercises enhances eudaimonic well-being and dispositional gratitude.	Low meaning in life, psychological distress
37	Nursing students' experiences of gratitude journaling during the COVID-19 pandemic ( <a href="#">Ko et al., 2021</a> )	Gratitude journaling improves psychological well-being of nursing students but shows limited impact on life meaning.	Psychological distress, lack of life meaning
38	Promoting Gratitude as a Resource for Sustainable Mental Health: Results of a 3-Armed Randomized Controlled Trial up to 6 Months Follow-up ( <a href="#">Bohlmeijer et al., 2021</a> )	Gratitude journaling helps students manage stress and deep self-reflection.	Stress management difficulties
39	Mindful gratitude journaling: psychological distress, quality of life and suffering in advanced cancer: a randomised controlled trial ( <a href="#">Tan et al., 2021</a> )	Mindful gratitude journaling is more effective than self-kindness in reducing psychological distress.	Psychological distress, ineffective coping
40	Autobiographical Memory, Gratitude, Forgiveness and Sense of Humor: An Intervention in Older Adults ( <a href="#">Chamorro-Garrido et al., 2021</a> )	Mindful gratitude journaling reduces stress and improves quality of life in advanced cancer patients.	Stress and psychological distress in advanced cancer patients
41	Using Gratitude to Promote Sport Injury-Related Growth ( <a href="#">Salim &amp; Wadey, 2021</a> )	Interventions based on autobiographical memory, forgiveness, gratitude, and humor improve quality of life in elderly with sports injuries.	Psychological recovery post-injury, quality of life issues
42	Exploring neural mechanisms of the health benefits of gratitude in women: A randomized controlled trial ( <a href="#">Hazlett et al., 2021</a> )	Gratitude visits promote recovery in injured athletes through neural and social interactions.	Neurological recovery, psychosocial stress
43	The Benefit of Gratitude: Trait Gratitude Is Associated With Effective Economic Decision-Making in the Ultimatum Game ( <a href="#">Park et al., 2021</a> )	Trait gratitude reduces threat responses by enhancing social behavior and lowering bodily inflammation.	Stress response, inflammation, social behavior deficits
44	Enhanced academic motivation in university students following a 2-week online gratitude journal intervention ( <a href="#">Nawa &amp; Yamagishi, 2021</a> )	Dispositional gratitude positively correlates with acceptance of unfair offers in academic decision-making.	Low academic motivation, poor acceptance of adversity
45	Gratitude Increases Recipients' Commitment Through Automatic Partner Evaluations, Yet Unreciprocated Gratitude Decreases Commitment Through Deliberative Evaluations ( <a href="#">Baker, 2021</a> )	Simple gratitude journaling increases and sustains student academic motivation.	Decreased academic motivation, poor engagement
46	Surprise me! On the impact of unexpected benefits on other-praising gratitude expressions ( <a href="#">Weiss et al., 2020</a> )	Gratitude expressions strengthen interpersonal commitment, diminishing without reciprocity.	Relationship commitment issues, lack of reciprocity

No	Article Title	Research Findings	Psychological Issues
47	"I Am Most Grateful." Using Gratitude to Improve the Sense of Relatedness and Motivation for Online Volunteerism (Naqshbandi et al., 2020)	Expressing gratitude through praise enhances social relationship quality and depth.	Low relationship quality, poor social bonding
48	Enhancing relational care through expressions of gratitude: Insights from a historical case study of almoner-patient correspondence (Day, 2020)	Gratitude expression increases volunteer motivation and engagement on online platforms.	Volunteer motivation deficits, low engagement
49	The relationship between a disposition of gratitude, clinical stress, and clinical satisfaction in nursing students (Moon & Jung, 2020)	Gratitude disposition plays a key role in long-term patient engagement with healthcare institutions.	Poor patient engagement, low psychosocial support
50	Gratitude at work: Prospective cohort study of a web-based, single-exposure well-being intervention for health care workers (Adair et al., 2020)	Students with high gratitude disposition report lower clinical practice stress and higher satisfaction.	Clinical stress, job dissatisfaction
51	Gratitude increases third-party punishment (Vayness et al., 2020)	Writing a gratitude letter once improves healthcare worker well-being and reduces emotional exhaustion.	Emotional exhaustion, well-being deficits
52	Future time perspective and perceived social support: The mediating role of gratitude (Casu et al., 2020)	Gratitude enhances cooperative behavior and justice enforcement via social support and positive time perspective.	Low cooperative behavior, poor justice enforcement

RQ 2: How can these interventions be conceptually mapped within Rocco Cottone's psychotherapy paradigm framework?

This section integrates gratitude interventions into the psychotherapy paradigm framework of Rocco Cotton. Table 4 captures the intervention mapping in detail according to this paradigm. The current study integrated gratitude-based interventions into the counseling paradigms framework as proposed by Rocco Cotton, illustrating the intricate relationship between dynamic psychological processes and social contexts. Most interventions seemed to fall within the psychological paradigm, forming a distinct differentiation between internal approaches, composed of emotion regulation, cognitive restructuring, and growth or spirituality, and external approaches focusing on social, communicative, and supportive relationships. Some studies adopted an interparadigm approach that merged internal self-reflection with external social engagement, thus broadening the effectiveness of gratitude practices. Furthermore, cross-paradigm and transparadigm interventions incorporated biological, psychological, and systemic-relational perspectives into comprehensive care, particularly in clinical and organizational settings.

The outcomes of the study illuminates the gratitude intervention as one that is more complex than any one model can explain. With Rocco Cotton's paradigms, we can see how effectively the gratitude process fosters intrapersonal well-being, as well as connecting with others, healing suffering throughout populations. This combination illustrates the need for counselors to design systems that are both simplistic for the individual, but complex in addressing the social framework which can transform mental health and human relations for the better.

Table 4. <Mapping of Gratitude Interventions Within Rocco Cotton's Psychotherapy Paradigms>

No	Article Title	Detailed Research Findings	Intervention Modification	Paradigm	Reasoning
1	Development of a gratitude intervention model and investigation of the effects of such a program on employee	Workplace gratitude dialogues significantly improve employee psychological well-being through	Added personal reflection to deepen the impact of dialogues.	Interparadigm (Psychological External + Internal)	Combining social interaction and internal processes enhances well-

No	Article Title	Detailed Research Findings	Intervention Modification	Paradigm	Reasoning
	well-being, engagement, job satisfaction and psychological capital ( <a href="#">Harty et al., 2025</a> )	enhanced interpersonal communication and social support.			being effectiveness.
2	The Role of Emotion Regulation in Body-Focused Gratitude: Impacts on Well-Being, Body Compassion, and Behavioural Intentions ( <a href="#">Dennis &amp; Ogden, 2025</a> )	Gratitude towards the body positively influences emotion regulation, boosting mental well-being and reducing stress symptoms.	Added emotion regulation and mindfulness training.	Psychological Internal	Focus on internal emotional regulation processes.
3	Gratitude (shukr) group intervention for promoting college students' well-being: A quasi-experimental study ( <a href="#">Sumari et al., 2025</a> )	Group gratitude interventions significantly enhance student psychological well-being by strengthening social bonds and emotional support.	Combined group interventions with individual counseling sessions.	Cross-Paradigm (Systematic-Relational + Psychological Internal)	Integrating social interaction and internal psychological processes supports holistic change.
4	A Mobile App–Based Gratitude Intervention’s Effect on Mental Well-Being in University Students: Randomized Controlled Trial ( <a href="#">Fuller et al., 2025</a> )	Mobile app use effectively improves student psychological well-being and serves as a complementary therapy during treatment wait times.	Added interactive social features to the app.	Psychological External	Digital media supports social communication and interaction among users.
5	The clinical effect of gratitude extension-construction theory nursing program on bladder cancer patients with fear of cancer recurrence ( <a href="#">Qian et al., 2024</a> )	Nursing programs based on gratitude theory clinically reduce fear of cancer recurrence, anxiety, and depression, while improving quality of life and treatment adherence in bladder cancer patients.	Added biomarker stress evaluation for clinical validation.	Transparadigm (Organic-Medical + Psychological Internal)	Combined biological and psychological approaches for comprehensive clinical outcomes.
6	Gratitude as an antidote to materialism in young consumers ( <a href="#">Battistella-Lima &amp; Veludo-de-Oliveira, 2024</a> )	Gratitude-based interventions effectively reduce materialistic orientation by strengthening positive mental attitudes.	Integrated cognitive training and mindfulness practice.	Psychological Internal	Focus on altering mental attitudes and self-awareness.
7	Gratitude Experience in Ten Patients with Spinal Muscular Atrophy: A Qualitative Study ( <a href="#">Dai et al., 2024</a> )	Gratitude assists spinal cord injury patients in building psychological resilience, positive outlooks, and social reintegration planning, improving long-term quality of life.	Integrated physical therapy with psychotherapy.	Cross-Paradigm (Organic-Medical + Psychological Internal)	Combining biological and psychological aspects aids patient recovery.
8	Why do we feel close to a person who expresses gratitude? Exploring	Expressions of gratitude enhance interpersonal closeness	Simulation of interpersonal communication with	Psychological External	Focus on social interaction and

No	Article Title	Detailed Research Findings	Intervention Modification	Paradigm	Reasoning
	mediating roles of perceived warmth, conscientiousness, and agreeableness (Imai, 2024)	by strengthening perceptions of warmth and sincerity.	gratitude expression exercises.		interpersonal relationships.
9	A pilot study of a gratitude journaling intervention to enhance spiritual well-being and exercise self-efficacy in Black breast cancer survivors (Cousin et al., 2024)	Gratitude journaling increases spiritual well-being and exercise self-efficacy in Black breast cancer survivors.	Combined journaling with group reflection sessions.	Interparadigm (Psychological Internal + Systematic-Relational)	Blending personal reflection with group support amplifies effects.
10	Effectiveness of a guided multicomponent internet and mobile gratitude training program - A pragmatic randomized controlled trial (Lehr et al., 2024)	Multicomponent gratitude interventions reduce repetitive negative thinking and depressive symptoms through cognitive and social exercises.	Added relaxation and social counseling components.	Psychological External	Involves social interaction and external psychological components.
11	Mindful-Gratitude Practice Reduces Prejudice at High Levels of Collective Narcissism (Zavala et al., 2024)	Mindful gratitude practice reduces social prejudice and collective narcissism by enhancing empathy and self-awareness in social interactions.	Integrated mindfulness with group interaction.	Cross-Paradigm (Psychological Internal + Systematic-Relational)	Combining self-awareness and social group influence.
12	The impact of gratitude practice on well-being and mental health in post-COVID times among Portuguese adults (Skrzelinska et al., 2024)	Consistent gratitude practice lowers psychological distress and promotes positive growth post-COVID-19 trauma.	Regular practice supplemented with psychological support.	Psychological Internal	Emphasis on internal processes to restore mental well-being.
13	Students' gratitude and engagement in online learning: An experimental study (Qudsyi et al., 2024)	Daily gratitude habits boost student engagement and motivation in online learning by enhancing virtual social connections and positive mindsets.	Added peer support within study groups.	Psychological External	Role of social interaction strengthens online learning engagement.
14	A critical examination of the effectiveness of gratitude intervention on well-Being Outcomes: A within-person experimental daily diary approach (Hartanto et al., 2023)	Deep gratitude contemplation effectively improves mental well-being by reinforcing positive cognitive and affective mechanisms.	Added mindfulness and deeper reflective techniques.	Psychological Internal	Focus on internal cognitive and affective processing.
15	Are We Essential, or Sacrificial? The Effects of Felt Public Gratitude on Essential Worker Recovery Activities	Public expressions of gratitude influence essential workers' mental health by	Conducted workplace gratitude communication workshops.	Psychological External	Emphasis on social influence and workplace relationships.

No	Article Title	Detailed Research Findings	Intervention Modification	Paradigm	Reasoning
16	During COVID-19 (Kim et al., 2023) Induced gratitude and hope, and experienced fear, but not experienced disgust, facilitate COVID-19 prevention (Russell et al., 2023)	fostering adaptive recovery behaviors. Induced gratitude and hope via dialogue improve employee well-being by fostering positive emotions and workplace social support.	Training in positive emotions and strengthening social dialogue.	Interparadigm (Psychological Internal + External)	Combination of internal processes and social interaction enhances effectiveness.
17	Giving and receiving thanks: a mixed methods pilot study of a gratitude intervention for palliative patients and their carers (Bernard et al., 2023)	Emotions such as gratitude, hope, and fear motivate preventive behaviors during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Communication and emotional education interventions.	Psychological External	Focus on social communication dynamics in health crises.
18	Exploring How Received Gratitude and Apologies Meet a Benefactor's Psychological Needs of Face and Competence (Imai, 2023)	Gratitude interventions in palliative care are well received and improve psychological well-being, requiring larger studies for long-term evaluation.	Group support therapy added.	Cross-Paradigm (Psychological Internal + Systematic-Relational)	Combination of internal psychological processes and social support.
19	The effectiveness of gratitude intervention in reducing negative emotions in sexual abuse victims (Hamka et al., 2023)	Gratitude and apology functions influence perception and psychological well-being within Japanese cultural contexts.	Cultural communication and awareness training.	Transparadigm (Psychological Internal + External)	Accounting for cultural context in social and internal interactions.
20	Effectiveness of an MPPI: Gratitude-Based Spiritual Group Guidance Program (GSGGP) (Hatipoğlu & Kaya, 2023)	Gratitude-based therapy effectively reduces negative emotions in sexual violence survivors.	Integration of spiritual and psychological therapy.	Psychological Internal	Focus on spiritual and internal psychological processes.
21	Pilot Study on the Impact of Gratitude Journaling or Cognitive Strategies on Health Care Workers (Roche et al., 2023)	Gratitude journaling enhances gratitude expression, internal spirituality, and personal well-being growth.	Combined journaling with spiritual meditation.	Psychological Internal	Focus on internal reflection and participant spirituality.
22	Gratitude exercise and well-being in relation to spirituality: A mixed-method study (Srivastava & Iqbal, 2023)	Gratitude journaling and cognitive strategies support healthcare workers' well-being by reducing stress.	Added stress coping training.	Psychological Internal	Strengthening internal psychological coping mechanisms.
23	Are Some Ways of Expressing Gratitude More Beneficial Than Others? Results From a Randomized Controlled Experiment (Regan et al., 2023)	Verbal and written gratitude exercises effectively improve well-being, especially for highly spiritual individuals.	Communication and gratitude expression training.	Psychological External	Role of social interaction in enhancing well-being.
24	The effects of a 2-week gratitude journaling	Two-week gratitude journaling improves	Varied journaling formats and	Psychological Internal	Emphasis on internal reflection

No	Article Title	Detailed Research Findings	Intervention Modification	Paradigm	Reasoning
	intervention to reduce parental stress and enhance well-being: a pilot study among preschool parents (Toprak & Sari, 2023)	psychological well-being, with social gratitude letters eliciting the strongest positive emotions.	supportive group sessions.		and social support.
25	Implementation intentions to express gratitude increase daily time co-present with an intimate partner, and moderate effects of variation in CD38 (Chang et al., 2022)	Intentional gratitude expression reduces stress and improves mental well-being in parents during the post-pandemic period.	Added behavioral training and monitoring.	Transparadigm (Organic-Medical + Psychological Internal)	Combination of biological behavior and internal psychological processes.
26	Extending a helping hand: How receiving gratitude makes a difference in employee performance during a crisis (Ni et al., 2022)	Routine expressions of gratitude increase partner closeness and promote biopsychosocial health in relationships.	Relational communication interventions and social support.	Psychological External	Focus on social interaction and long-term relationship quality.
27	Leaving Past Adversities Behind: Gratitude Intervention Compensates for the Undesirable Effects of Past Time Perspectives on Negative Affect (Burzynska-Tatjewska & Stolarski, 2022)	Gratitude interventions during organizational crises improve employee confidence and motivation to adapt positively.	Stress management workshops and gratitude training.	Psychological External	Emphasis on social support and workplace interaction.
28	Feeling Gratitude Is Associated With Better Well-being Across the Life Span: A Daily Diary Study During the COVID-19 Outbreak (Jiang, 2022)	Gratitude training reduces negative effects of pessimistic past perspectives, enhancing psychological well-being.	Cognitive therapy combined with gratitude practice.	Psychological Internal	Internal recovery process of psychological well-being.
29	Palliative Professionals' Experiences of Receiving Gratitude: A Transformative and Protective Resource (Aparicio et al., 2022)	Daily expressions of gratitude reduce stress and improve positive mood in palliative care professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Social support interventions and counseling.	Psychological External	Focus on social interaction and workplace support experiences.
30	Appreciating the Good Things in Life During the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Randomized Controlled Trial and Evaluation of a Gratitude App (Kloos et al., 2022)	Spontaneous gratitude from patients and families provides strong psychological support to palliative care professionals under work pressure.	Internal coping training and social support.	Psychological Internal	Emphasis on internal meaning-making and appreciation processes.
31	Cognitive-affective responses to online positive-psychological interventions: The effects	Mobile gratitude apps are effective and well accepted in enhancing	Added interactive social features.	Psychological External	Digital media as a medium for social interaction and support.



No	Article Title	Detailed Research Findings	Intervention Modification	Paradigm	Reasoning
	of optimistic, grateful, and self-compassionate writing (Heekerens et al., 2022)	public mental health during the pandemic.			
32	The impact of a gratitude intervention on mental well-being during COVID-19: A quasi-experimental study of university students (Geier & Morris, 2022)	Gratitude letters and optimism exercises improve positive states and thoughts; self-compassion exercises show less effect.	Emotional management and optimism training.	Psychological Internal	Focus on internal psychological change processes.
33	Does Gratitude Work at School? Piloting the Modified Interventions for Managing Academic Stress in Pakistani High Schools (Sahar et al., 2022)	Gratitude interventions in schools effectively improve student mental well-being during crises like COVID-19.	Added peer support and mentoring.	Psychological External	Social support within virtual learning environments.
34	Yoga at Every Size: A Preliminary Evaluation of a Brief Online Size-Inclusive Yoga and Body Gratitude Journaling Intervention to Enhance Positive Embodiment in Higher Weight College Women (Webb et al., 2022)	Yoga combined with gratitude effectively reduces academic stress among students in developing countries.	Integrated yoga, meditation, and gratitude exercises.	Psychological External	Role of social interaction and self-acceptance in stress reduction.
35	Positive psychology intervention (PPI) coaching: an experimental application of coaching to improve the effectiveness of a gratitude intervention (Trom & Burke, 2022)	Yoga coaching and gratitude journaling improve body well-being in ethnically diverse female students.	Integrated positive psychology coaching and journaling.	Psychological Internal	Focus on attitude change and internal psychological processes.
36	Enhancing Meaning in Life and Psychological Well-Being Among a European Cohort of Young Adults via a Gratitude Intervention (Czyżowska & Gurba, 2022)	Coaching combined with gratitude exercises enhances eudaimonic well-being and dispositional gratitude.	Development of integrated coaching and gratitude practice.	Psychological Internal	Focus on meaning-making and psychological well-being.
37	Nursing students' experiences of gratitude journaling during the COVID-19 pandemic (Ko et al., 2021)	Gratitude journaling improves psychological well-being of nursing students but shows limited impact on life meaning.	Added group sharing sessions for social support.	Cross-Paradigm (Psychological Internal + Systematic-Relational)	Combining individual reflection with social interaction supports well-being.
38	Promoting Gratitude as a Resource for Sustainable Mental Health: Results of a 3-Armed Randomized	Gratitude journaling helps students manage stress and deep self-reflection.	Intensive coping training combined with journaling.	Psychological Internal	Focus on stress management and internal well-

No	Article Title	Detailed Research Findings	Intervention Modification	Paradigm	Reasoning
	Controlled Trial up to 6 Months Follow-up ( <a href="#">Bohlmeijer et al., 2021</a> )				being development.
39	Mindful gratitude journaling: psychological distress, quality of life and suffering in advanced cancer: a randomised controlled trial ( <a href="#">Tan et al., 2021</a> )	Mindful gratitude journaling is more effective than self-kindness in reducing psychological distress.	Combined journaling with social interaction.	Interparadigm (Psychological Internal + External)	Effectiveness from blending reflection and social support.
40	Autobiographical Memory, Gratitude, Forgiveness and Sense of Humor: An Intervention in Older Adults ( <a href="#">Chamorro-Garrido et al., 2021</a> )	Mindful gratitude journaling reduces stress and improves quality of life in advanced cancer patients.	Integrative journaling therapy with mindfulness approach.	Psychological Internal	Emphasis on internal memory and emotional processing.
41	Using Gratitude to Promote Sport Injury–Related Growth ( <a href="#">Salim &amp; Wadey, 2021</a> )	Interventions based on autobiographical memory, forgiveness, gratitude, and humor improve quality of life in elderly with sports injuries.	Comprehensive approach integrating positive psychology.	Psychological Internal	Focus on psychological recovery via internal processes.
42	Exploring neural mechanisms of the health benefits of gratitude in women: A randomized controlled trial ( <a href="#">Hazlett et al., 2021</a> )	Gratitude visits promote recovery in injured athletes through neural and social interactions.	Added neuropsychological therapy and social support.	Transparadigm (Organic-Medical + Psychological External)	Combining biological and social aspects in recovery.
43	The Benefit of Gratitude: Trait Gratitude Is Associated With Effective Economic Decision-Making in the Ultimatum Game ( <a href="#">Park et al., 2021</a> )	Trait gratitude reduces threat responses by enhancing social behavior and lowering bodily inflammation.	Trait gratitude development training.	Psychological Internal	Internal psychological processes impact physiological health.
44	Enhanced academic motivation in university students following a 2-week online gratitude journal intervention ( <a href="#">Nawa &amp; Yamagishi, 2021</a> )	Dispositional gratitude positively correlates with acceptance of unfair offers in academic decision-making.	Motivation and acceptance reinforcement training.	Psychological Internal	Focus on internal motivation and psychological processes.
45	Gratitude Increases Recipients' Commitment Through Automatic Partner Evaluations, Yet Unreciprocated Gratitude Decreases Commitment Through Deliberative Evaluations ( <a href="#">Baker, 2021</a> )	Simple gratitude journaling increases and sustains student academic motivation.	Added group journaling sessions.	Psychological External	Role of social interaction in maintaining motivation.
46	Surprise me! On the impact of unexpected benefits on other-	Gratitude expressions strengthen interpersonal	Interpersonal gratitude expression	Interparadigm (Psychological	Combination of internal emotion and social

No	Article Title	Detailed Research Findings	Intervention Modification	Paradigm	Reasoning
	praising gratitude expressions ( <a href="#">Weiss et al., 2020</a> )	commitment, diminishing without reciprocity.	training with feedback.	Internal + External)	interaction shapes relationships.
47	"I Am Most Grateful." Using Gratitude to Improve the Sense of Relatedness and Motivation for Online Volunteerism ( <a href="#">Naqshbandi et al., 2020</a> )	Expressing gratitude through praise enhances social relationship quality and depth.	Interpersonal communication training.	Psychological External	Focus on social interaction and interpersonal relationship enhancement.
48	Enhancing relational care through expressions of gratitude: Insights from a historical case study of almoner-patient correspondence ( <a href="#">Day, 2020</a> )	Gratitude expression increases volunteer motivation and engagement on online platforms.	Motivation and online communication intervention design.	Psychological External	Emphasis on social interaction in digital relational care.
49	The relationship between a disposition of gratitude, clinical stress, and clinical satisfaction in nursing students ( <a href="#">Moon &amp; Jung, 2020</a> )	Gratitude disposition plays a key role in long-term patient engagement with healthcare institutions.	Ongoing psychosocial support programs.	Psychological External	Focus on psychological disposition and long-term social relationships.
50	Gratitude at work: Prospective cohort study of a web-based, single-exposure well-being intervention for health care workers ( <a href="#">Adair et al., 2020</a> )	Students with high gratitude disposition report lower clinical practice stress and higher satisfaction.	Gratitude-based workplace workshops and training.	Psychological External	Emphasis on social interactions and workplace environment.
51	Gratitude increases third-party punishment ( <a href="#">Vayness et al., 2020</a> )	Writing a gratitude letter once improves healthcare worker well-being and reduces emotional exhaustion.	Gratitude letter intervention with effect monitoring.	Psychological External	Effects through social influence and individual interactions.
52	Future time perspective and perceived social support: The mediating role of gratitude ( <a href="#">Casu et al., 2020</a> )	Gratitude enhances cooperative behavior and justice enforcement via social support and positive time perspective.	Social and cognitive training interventions.	Psychological External	Emphasis on social relationships and external support.

This systematic review suggests that gratitude-based interventions help cope with numerous issues, including stress, depression, anxiety, and even trauma symptoms ([Cunha et al., 2019](#); [Fuller et al., 2025](#); [Heckendorf et al., 2019](#)). Varied studies incorporating gratitude practices like journaling, group activities, and even through apps have proven to augment mental health outcomes significantly. They reduce negative affect, repetitive negative thinking, and bolster positive feelings and recovery. Strengthened by [Dennis and Ogden \(2025\)](#); [Pusvitasari et al. \(2024\)](#), simultaneously gratitude builds well being, compassion, and positive body image. The available literature on the efficacy of gratitude empirically supports its therapeutic promise as a benevolent and easy-to-utilize psychological aid to alleviate essential mental health difficulties ([Dickens, 2017](#); [Suneetha & Kunasetti, 2023](#); [Tolcher et al., 2024](#)).

Furthermore, gratitude is important for the improvement of psychological and emotional health across diverse populations, such as students in universities, workers, and even those suffering from chronic diseases. The analyzed literature shows that gratitude interventions lead to better moods, higher life satisfaction, and enhanced spiritual well-being. For example, gratitude self-reflection has been linked to increased self-efficacy and better coping skills while workplace gratitude discussions enhance participation and lower workplace stress. These advantages exemplify the versatility of gratitude across different settings and populations and indicate the need to adopt gratitude-focused mental health initiatives (Darabi et al., 2017; Fabio et al., 2017; Harty et al., 2025; Komase et al., 2022).

As noted earlier, gratitude is also crucial in augmenting social and interpersonal support. The expression of gratitude is associated with greater warmth, trust, relationship closeness, and other connections which are vital for social cohesion and mitigating community stressors. Numerous studies emphasize the benefits of gratitude for social interactions and relationships, which can act as buffers in times of psychological distress. Gratitude fosters positive social interactions and facilitates the needed conditions for emotional recovery and sustained wellness, proving its influence not only on individuals but also on relationships and communities (Bono & Sender, 2018; Harty et al., 2025; Howells et al., 2017; Imai, 2024).

### **Gratitude as a Multifaceted Psychological Intervention**

Multiple paradigms of psychotherapy can be utilized to study gratitude to understand its synergistic effects more completely. Emotion regulation and self-reflection are internal constructs cultivated through gratitude that allow individuals to process emotions and foster positive feelings like resilience. This focus on internal processes emphasizes mindfulness, cognitive reframing, and deepening the level of spirituality as some of the mechanisms through which gratitude aids recovery (Ali et al., 2022; Mills et al., 2015; Wolfe & Patterson, 2017). On the other hand, the social paradigm is concerned with social relations as well as the giving and receiving of gratitude as it relates to strengthening friendships and social support (Algoe, 2019; Lestari & Antika, 2023; Williams & Bartlett, 2015). These social and internal frameworks complement each other capturing the complete system of psychological functioning.

The interparadigm approach that combines internal and external components has shown to enhance the impact of gratitude interventions. To illustrate, gratitude journaling in combination with group discussions promotes social bonding while also fostering individual reflection. Such integrative approaches take advantage of both self-awareness and relational connection, producing a more therapeutic milieu. This combination of personal and social elements contributes to greater psychological health than interventions built around one paradigm (Crumb & Haskins, 2017; Ziv-Beiman & Shahrar, 2016).

These additional explanations fall under the transparadigm perspective, which integrates biological, psychological, and social components into the understanding of gratitude's role in health and healing. In clinical and organizational contexts, this perspective applies to how gratitude interventions could impact neurobiological domains like the psychoneuroimmunology of stress-related inflammation and more psychological and social domains (Hazlett et al., 2021; Moieni et al., 2019). For instance, the application of gratitude in healthcare not only improves patients' mental health outcomes but also their physiological recovery as well as the culture of the workplace. This approach highlights the relationship of the mind, body, and social environment through the lens of gratitude-driven therapeutic techniques (Henning et al., 2017; Soulé et al., 2022).

Examples of the transparadigm approach include nursing programs which integrate gratitude and biomarker assessment validation to clinical improvement nursing programs, as well as organizational expression of gratitude and stress management workshop interventions (Moon & Jung, 2020; Redwine et al., 2016). These models illustrate how addressing biological constituents in tandem with psychological

and social elements can yield more enduring and profound health benefits. Such systemic proactive interventions strongly affirm that gratitude's effectiveness is optimized when harnessed through a scaffold that exceeds conventional boundaries of orthodoxy.

To conclude, the integration of social and emotional processes transforms gratitude and its therapeutic effectiveness under psychotherapy paradigms, revealing its navigable duality--inter- and trans-paradigm integration. Such integrated approaches will be critical to optimally leveraging gratitude within clinical and organizational psychology, especially as research evolves. This paradigm shift will enhance sustainable psychological care by better addressing well-being's underlying complexities.

### **Effects for Psychotherapy and Counseling Practice**

Through the use of emotional expression and cognitive reframing techniques, gratitude can be integrated into counseling and therapy practices. One commonly used technique is gratitude journaling, where clients write down positive things about their life on a regular basis. This enhances their mindfulness and facilitates positive reflection ([Harty et al., 2025](#)). Dialogue-based Interventions are centered around the verbal expression of gratitude within group or individual settings and aims to reinforce the bonds formed in the therapeutic and interpersonal relations. Focusing on gratitude within meditation helps in the cultivation of mindful awareness as well as reduction of stress and improvement of emotional regulation. Moreover, mobile applications that encourage daily gratitude exercises are easy to use, scalable, and serve as a prompt for engaging after the therapy sessions, thus making gratitude practice flexible and user-friendly ([Fuller et al., 2025](#)).

Gratitude, as it relates to psychological concerns, is a helpful remedy that has increasing backing from recent studies. For instance, gratitude interventions have been useful in alleviating suicidal thoughts by enhancing emotional protective factors. After a traumatic experience during and after COVID-19, gratitude modalities enhance recovery by relieving psychological strain and facilitating post traumatic growth. Also, gratitude techniques help reduce stress and burnout at work by strengthening social support, emotional resilience, and overall psychological well-being of employees ([Bohlmeijer & Westerhof, 2021](#); [Guan & Jepsen, 2020](#); [Jans-Beken, 2021](#)). All these specific cases illustrate gratitude's remarkable ability to cope with a broad range of mental health issues using powerful yet straightforward approaches.

Furthermore, gratitude is useful both as an adjunct to traditional therapy and a separate intervention. When used in conjunction with other cognitive-behavioral treatments, such as CBT or mindfulness stress reduction, gratitude practices deepen psychological engagement with the material, enhancing emotional appreciation of the constructs, and reinforcing Pollyannaish thought patterns, thereby improving treatment results. As a standalone intervention, gratitude is particularly appealing for the promotion of mental health due to its low cost and ease of implementation across varied demographics in resource-poor environments. Furthermore, its versatility enables the design of customized interventions tailored to individual clients while fostering sustained psychological resilience ([Bennett & Shafran, 2023](#)).

To summarize, fostering gratitude provides multiple options for enhancing mental health care services with respect to dealing with therapeutic issues. By employing journaling, dialogue, meditation, and various digital mediums, counselors and therapists are able to maximize gratitude's benefits. Its association with significant psychological concerns—such as suicidal thoughts, trauma, and anxiety related to work—also substantiates its clinical importance. Ultimately, the use of gratitude in therapy as both an adjunct and independent intervention showcases the increasing available and effective methods in contemporary mental health practice.

## Comparison of Findings with Previous Literature

The results of this systematic review complements the emerging literature on the effectiveness of gratitude interventions on psychological well-being. This study, similar to previous meta-analyses and systematic reviews, found that gratitude practices tend to alleviate the symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress while enhancing positive affect and resilience (Amiri et al., 2024; Dickens, 2017; Komase et al., 2021). The presence of similar outcomes across different populations and settings adds to the strength of gratitude as a psychological resource. Also, like other studies, this review emphasizes the ability of gratitude to foster emotional regulation and cognitive restructuring, which are fundamental to mental health enhancement (Dalal & Singh, 2025).

A distinctive comparison can be drawn with prior studies based on this review. In contrast to prior research, some studies narrowed the focus to college students or clinical patients. This study draws from a wider population, including workers, chronic patients, and essential service workers during the COVID-19 pandemic (Kim et al., 2023; Nguyen & Gordon, 2022; Sirois & Wood, 2017). Moreover, the inclusion of mobile and digital gratitude interventions represents a new development that expands the use of gratitude practices into non-therapeutic settings (Fuller et al., 2025; Walsh et al., 2023). With the broad applicability of these studies, a better understanding of the impact of gratitude across varying contexts is achieved.

In addition, unlike other prior reviews that focused primarily on psychological effects, this study also examines the social and spiritual aspects of gratitude. Gratitude enhances social and interpersonal relationships, social support, and spiritual well-being, highlighting some of the roles that are less examined in earlier work (Bono & Sender, 2018; Casu et al., 2020; Elosúa, 2015). This shift marks an important shift in the field of positive psychology which has been calling for a comprehensive approach to mental health, covering intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transcendental aspects. The study confirms what the literature says about gratitude while expanding upon it from a more integrated perspective.

## Research Innovation: Mapping Gratitude Within Rocco Cotton's Paradigm Framework

An important innovation of this research is the focus on the gratitude intervention frameworks through the lens of Rocco Cotton's psychotherapy paradigms. There are not many studies that have tried to locate gratitude practices in counseling paradigms because that particular practice is absent in most theoretical frameworks. This research by Cottone (2012) brings forth a new classification by suggesting internal, external, inter-paradigm, cross-paradigm, and transparadigm admiration frameworks that helps understand the role of gratitude and its workings within therapeutic processes.

This work fills an important gap within the existing literature by mapping the paradigms through which gratitude works either by nurturing internal emotional self-regulation, improving social relations, or multilayered dimensions of therapy (Locklear et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2022). Such an organized framework helps practitioners and researchers design strategies that are more focused and efficient. Moreover, it promotes dialogue across disciplines by unifying psychological discourse with real-world practice while calling attention to strengthening comprehensive health care that looks at biological, psychological and social dimensions of a person at the same time (Fried & Robinaugh, 2020; Han et al., 2019).

Additionally, the importance of transparadigm interventions, which combine organic-medical, psychological, and systemic-relational approaches, demonstrates an innovation in contemporary approaches to psychotherapy. An integrated model for child psychotherapy advanced by Caspary (2018) aims at synthesizing different theoretical perspectives and approaches. A paradigm shift to process-based therapies is proposed by Hofmann and Hayes (2018), who focus on central mediators and moderators instead of specific protocols directed at latent disease entities. This shift may bridge various treatment orientations as well as cultures. Prout (2018) underscores the more pronounced focus on the integration



of psychotherapy and highlights the flexible paradigms integration offers patients. Nonetheless, [Hoffman and Hoffman \(2020\)](#) warn that contemporary psychotherapies' lack of transcendence has wrought the removal of any universal or absolute understandings of human nature. By focusing on these integrative models, the study goes beyond the boundaries of conventional research on gratitude, proposing new directions centered on comprehensive care that involves the mind, body, and social systems. This novel insight adds rigor to scientific understanding and enhances the practical application of gratitude in counseling and psychotherapy.

### **Criticism of Previous Research and its Gaps**

Despite having contributed to the understanding of gratitude's psychological benefits, I believe the literature is still lacking in several areas. Some of the prior studies grappled with small sample sizes, short-length interventions, or lack of cultural diversity, and as a result, the generalizability of their findings is limited. Furthermore, the absence of any rationale or systematic integration of different counseling approaches resulted in fragmented knowledge and, at times, unreliable intervention designs. These gaps slow the progress towards cohesive and scalable gratitude-based therapies.

This study attempts to address these gaps by looking through a larger body of literature and using specific quality yardsticks to enhance the reliability and volume of evidence. Utilizing Rocco Cottone's paradigms as a starting point, we hope to fill the gap that much of the literature has suffered in absence of coherent empirical reasoning ([Cottone, 2012](#)). Bridging these empirical results with counseling theory enhances sharpened conceptual clarity and offers tailored responsive design interventions that cut across clinical, organizational, and multi-contextual settings.

Moreover, by examining aspects of neglect within the context of a social construct through a biological lens, this analysis fills a gap in research that has historically neglected the intricate relationship between the mind, body, and environment. This study's advocacy of integrative interdisciplinary models, which include relational and psychological dimensions, motivates more advanced models of care. In this way, it tries to motivate future research to desist from fragmented treatment approaches and instead adopt system-wide intervention designs that more appropriately respond to the complexity of factors impacting mental health and well-being.

### **Suggestion and Limitation**

Though valuable, this study has limitations. The focus on short-term interventions and English publications poses potential concerns regarding the credibility of the contributions in more culturally diverse settings. Additionally, most studies did not include longitudinal assessments which makes evaluation of the enduring impacts of applying gratitude interventions problematic. Overcome these issues by conducting long-term, culturally inclusive, and methodological rigorous studies. These could also test the relationship between gratitude and other constructs, such as compassion, to broaden the scope of enhancing interventions designed for depression and other psychological disorders. Studying the combination of compassion with gratitude might lead to comprehensive therapies that address both self and relational aspects of mental health.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

This systematic review shows that gratitude interventions are particularly effective in dealing with numerous psychological issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, emotional dysregulation, trauma symptoms, and relationship difficulties. The empirical evidence provided through 52 studies published between 2020 and 2025 suggests that practicing gratitude, whether through journaling, group activities, or digital formats, improves emotional regulation, fortitude, social connectedness, and psychological health across different populations.

Guided by Rocco Cotton's psychotherapy paradigm framework, this research further organizes gratitude interventions into intrapsychological, extrapsychological, interparadigm, cross-paradigm, and transparadigm categories. This mapping explains that gratitude functions not only as a therapeutic instrument for self-focused intrapsychic healing, but also as a catalyst for enhancing social and biological relationships and tissues. In particular, the intervening in the transparadigm—the integration of biological, psychology, and sociological elements—holds the most potential for holistic interdisciplinary intervention within clinical and organizational environments.

Furthermore, gratitude also facilitates recovery from life's challenges—fostering personal development, aiding in psychological growth, and enhancing motivation. This broad functionality allows gratitude to be employed as both a go-to and supplementary method, making it a culturally inclusive resource in contemporary counseling and therapy, while also being economical. These modern psychotherapy paradigms benefit clinicians, educators, and policy makers needing to devise affordable solutions for mental healthcare systems.

In response to these findings, consider integrating other positive psychological elements like compassion alongside gratitude, offering an unexplored perspective on ongoing longitudinal studies focused on contextual culture integrations and cultural synergy. These suggestive interventions will construct a multi-faceted framework for devising exercises centered on gratitude within various therapeutic settings.

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