



Simple Reasons to Practice Gratitude

Gratitude is defined as the quality of being thankful; the readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.¹

People who regularly practice gratitude by taking time to notice and reflect on things they are thankful for experience more positive emotions, feel more alive, sleep better, express more compassion and kindness, and even have stronger immune systems.²

Research supports the benefits of positive thinking and practicing gratitude. Increasing our mindfulness in these things can help build resilience, increase our longevity, and improve our overall health. Embracing gratitude can also lead to:

- A sense of abundance in our lives
- Appreciating the contributions of others to our well-being
- Recognizing and enjoying life's small pleasures
- Acknowledging the importance of experiencing and expressing gratitude.

Simple ways to inspire gratitude

1. **Find 100 things:** Wherever you are, aim to find 100 things you like about it. For instance on a walk outdoors, you may identify a tree, flowers, or a bird flying past. This practice can help you train your brain to seek out positive things around you. If you remain indoors, close your eyes and count 100 things you are thankful for in that space or this day.
2. **Start a Gratitude Journal:** By writing down things for which you are grateful, you begin to increase your mindfulness of them. Be as specific as possible. Rather than stating that “I am thankful for the sunshine,” try to expand your appreciation. Notice how the sun feels on your face or skin, or what the sun makes you think of. Set a goal to journal 3-4 days a week.
3. **Engage in a Single Act of Kindness:** Perform or acknowledge a single act of kindness. Remembering to say thank you or sharing a kind word can produce a feeling of gratitude in both the giver and recipient. Look for ways you can perform a simple act of kindness for another.
4. **Speak with Gratitude:** Share positivity with others. Practice inserting gratitude statements in a mindful way when talking with others. For example “I love to see the signs of spring change a bit more each day.” This encourages us to be more mindful and present of what is presently happening.

Gratitude can have many positive effects on our lives. Improved physical health including reduced stress, improved quality sleep, and improved psychological health are well-documented benefits of practicing gratitude.

For more information about the benefits of practicing gratitude, visit <https://positivepsychology.com/benefits-of-gratitude/>

<https://neuropathyallicentx.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/The-Healing-Benefits-of-Gratitude-nh.compressed.pdf>

References:

¹ <https://www.happify.com/hd/the-science-behind-gratitude/>

² <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/gratitude>

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