

Making Gratitude Work for You

In a world where we are constantly being told to do more, want more, and achieve more, **we can get caught up in a mindset where we predominantly focus on what we don't yet have, rather than what we do.**

“Gratitude is the appreciation of what is valuable and meaningful to oneself; it is a general state of thankfulness and/or appreciation.”¹

Making a conscious effort to practice gratitude can be both grounding and uplifting to our overall wellbeing. Gratitude is both an emotion and a practice of using reflection and mindfulness to focus on the positive. We can each strive to find ways to intentionally practice gratitude.

We recognize that gratitude is not a cure-all. Nor can we be positive and grateful at all times of every day – that is not realistic, and it can be harmful and invalidating to those who may be struggling. Hardships, and life's many complexities, deserve acknowledgement and space too.

However, practicing gratitude is an action we can take in an effort to find bright spots in the midst of the chaos of daily life. Gratitude is beneficial to your emotional wellbeing and can boost your health while reducing stress.²

REFLECT

- What is something you enjoyed doing today or something that made you smile?
- Did you enjoy a meal, snack, or beverage today?
- Did you connect with someone this week who was kind, positive, or encouraging?
- Have you watched a movie, show, or social media clip that you really appreciated? A podcast, book, or article?
- Consider your “rose, bud, thorn,” list one good thing (rose), one challenge (thorn), and something you're looking forward to (bud).

ACT

- Send a shout-out to a colleague or friend for a positive action that you recently observed or appreciate.
- Write a thank-you note or send a text expressing thankfulness.
- Take photos of things you're grateful for and consider making a photo album to reflect on later.
- Take a walk, or simply look around, pausing to take in things that are good or enjoyable in your surroundings.
- Consider setting reminders or pairing gratitude with a routine action like brushing your teeth to build more gratitude into your daily habits.

This material is to be used for informational purposes only and is not intended to be exhaustive, nor should any of the materials be construed as professional or medical advice.

USE THIS SPACE TO WRITE DOWN SOME WAYS YOU PRACTICED GRATITUDE THIS WEEK

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

1. Sansone, R. A., & Sansone, L. A. (2010). Gratitude and well being: the benefits of appreciation. *Psychiatry (Edgmont (Pa. : Township))*, 7(11), 18–22.
2. Mental Health First Aid USA. (2022, November 17). The importance of practicing gratitude and celebrating small victories. *Mental Health First Aid*. <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2022/11/practicing-gratitude/>