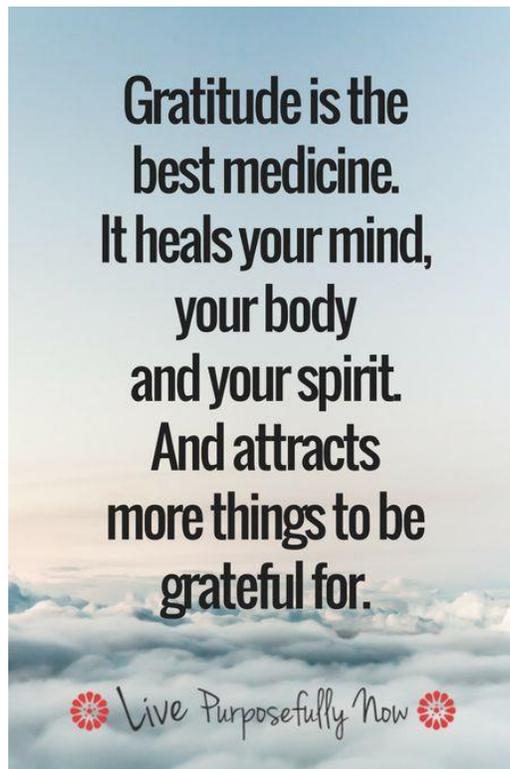


Gratitude



Women of Enlightenment

Center of Enlightenment

November 8, 2019

Lisa Argo

8 Ways To Have More Gratitude Every Day

Forbes Women

By Janet Miller

In the famous words of Ferris Bueller, “Life moves pretty fast. If you don’t stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.”

It can be easy to get swept away in the fast lane and forget to stop and show your appreciation for what you do have. A life well lived is one of gratitude and thankfulness. To help you on your gratitude journey, here are 8 ways to have more gratitude in your daily life.

1. Don’t be picky: appreciate everything

Gratitude doesn’t have to be saved for the “big” things in life. The habit of being grateful starts with appreciating every good thing in life and recognizing that there is nothing too small for you to be thankful for.

Even if it is as simple as appreciating the clear weather or how quickly your mailman delivered your mail last Friday, don’t leave anything out when practicing your gratitude.

2. Find gratitude in your challenges

Gratitude is not only about being thankful for positive experiences. In fact, sometimes thinking about negative or difficult situations can help to really nail down what you have to be thankful for.

Western Buddhist master **Jack Kornfield** remembers an exercise he did with a man who was caring for his grandson while his son and daughter-in-law battled a drug addiction. Despite all that he had been through, the man was still able to find gratitude for the amount of compassion he had learned to show and the impact he was able to have on other people.

Dig a little deeper into some of your own past experiences and try to figure out how they have helped shape you into the person you are today.

3. Practice mindfulness

Sit down daily and think through five to ten things you are grateful for. The trick is that you need to picture it in your mind and sit with that feeling of gratitude in your body. Doing this every day will rewire your brain to be naturally more grateful, and you'll start feeling happier after every session.

It only takes eight weeks of gratitude practice for people to start showing changed brain patterns that lead to greater empathy and happiness.

Your brain is a powerful tool, and training it towards gratitude is all part of ensuring that the gratitude comes more easily as you practice, so what are you waiting for?

4. Keep a gratitude journal

After your mindfulness session, write down your positive thoughts! Keeping a journal of all of the things you are thankful for can help you keep track of and refer back to the positives in your life.

Write down your positive thoughts to further focus your attention on the subject. While you are putting the pen to paper, you have no choice but to consciously think about the words you are writing without other distracting, ungrateful thoughts.

You can journal every day after your gratitude practice, or you can come back to the journal on a regular schedule weekly or monthly.

5. Volunteer

For many people, the key to having more gratitude is to give back to others in their local community. Not only will it make you more grateful for the things that you may take for granted, but studies have shown that volunteering for the purpose of helping others increases our own well-being, and thus our ability to have more gratitude.

University of Pennsylvania professor, **Martin Seligman**, supports this theory with his research in *Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being*.

After testing all kinds of variables that help improve our well-being, he found that volunteering is the single most reliable way to momentarily increase your well-being.

In other words: helping others helps you!

6. Express yourself

Sometimes it's not enough to simply keep your gratitude to yourself. You can increase your feelings of gratitude by expressing that same gratitude to the people you care about.

Soul Pancake, a group that works to discover the "science of happiness," ran an experiment where they encouraged people to write a letter to a person, they were grateful for. By itself, this exercise increased their levels of happiness from 2 to 4%. However, when the same people made a phone call to the person, they were thankful for to express their gratitude directly, happiness levels jumped from 4% to 19%.

Not only does expressing your gratitude for someone make their day a little brighter, but it can do wonders for increasing your own levels of gratitude and happiness in the long run

7. Spend time with loved ones

If you're struggling with feeling the gratitude in the moment, go spend time with your friends and family. Of course, it will help you grow closer to them and strengthen your relationship, but it will also give you a chance to practice your acts of gratitude on people that you care about.

Start small if they're having trouble finding ways to support your friends and family. For instance, why don't you make sure you're listening intently the next time someone shares a story with you instead of waiting for your own chance to speak?

Or start a conversation with a difficult member of the family by complimenting their new shoes or haircut.

8. Improve your happiness in other areas of your life

Being grateful can make you happy but being happy can also make you grateful. There are plenty of other ways to get your mood up, including exercising or participating in a hobby you enjoy.

Once you are feeling the endorphins flow, showing gratitude will become even easier and you'll start to be able to make list after list of all of the things in your life you're thankful for.

Janet Miller is a serial entrepreneur, habit scientist and co-founder of **Jen Reviews**. She writes extensively and has been featured on **Fast Company**, **The Muse**, **The Huffington Post** and **Tiny Buddha**.

