

Forever  
Grateful



Gratitude is an emotion that comes from appreciation. It's an awareness, a thankfulness of the good things in your life, in you and in the world around you. Gratitude is a powerful thing. It can turn any negative into a positive. It can change how you feel inside. It can bring hope and happiness. It can improve your health, your relationships, your career and so much more. It can literally transform your life.

So often in today's society, the negative is sensationalized and the positive is ignored. You see it in the news, in magazines and newspapers. You hear it in the grocery store, at work and even from family and friends. All of this negativity can be overwhelming to the point of wearing a person down.

If you're feeding into the negativity. If you're focusing on the negative rather than the positive, you are doing yourself a serious disservice. You are harming your emotional wellbeing as well as your physical body. You could be straining your relationships, hurting your career and much more.

When you express gratitude, it diminishes the negativity in a powerful way. Studies show that practicing gratitude leads to:

- A feeling of optimism, joy and satisfaction.
- Less stress, anxiety and depression.
- A strengthened immune system.
- Lower blood pressure.
- The ability to bounce back quicker after a traumatic event.
- Stronger relationships.
- A feeling of being connected to your community.
- Feeling less victimized by others or by life.
- Being able to recognize and appreciate what you have rather than what you don't.
- You becoming more compassionate and empathetic.
- A better quality and more rewarding life.

Practicing gratitude changes your perspective on life.

## **Practicing Gratitude**

In order to change your perspective, you need to make practicing gratitude a habit. One of the easiest, and most effective ways to do this is to keep a journal of the things you are grateful for.

Whether you choose to journal in the morning, or at night, or both is up to you. Pick a quiet time and spend a few minutes thinking about, documenting and appreciating the positive things in your life.

Writing in your journal every day will ensure you stay focused on the positive so the negative can be washed away. Do it for a month, two months, six months or more. The longer you do it, the more ingrained it will become in your mind and the more your thoughts will shift.

At first, recognizing the positive aspects may feel awkward, but the more you look for it, the more you will find. There is beauty all around you. There is beauty within you. A smile, a sunset, a friend, a personal goal being met. These are all things you can be grateful for. Even if you only find one thing to be grateful for each day, that's okay. It's a start. As you journal, try to work up to three, five or even ten things a day when possible.

*There's Always Something to Be Thankful For*

The following pages can be printed as your first gratitude journal. It contains 10 prompts to get you started along with some quotes to keep you motivated. There is no right or wrong way to practice gratitude. The practice itself is where the power resides.

### **How to get the most out of gratitude journaling**

We've all been told that creating a gratitude journal helps with mental health and gives us a new perspective on life when we are feeling weary. To some, this means sitting down with a diary and writing a few paragraphs each day. There are so many ways you can create your gratitude journal that will help you get even more out of this part of your day, and here are a few ways to embellish the experience.

### **Choose a Particular Time of Day for Your Journaling**

Slotting your gratitude journal into a specific time of your day brings consistency to the practice. Once you have been journaling in this fashion for a period of time, you will begin to look forward to it. It will help you prepare mentally as you anticipate the journaling. You may find that you begin thinking of things throughout the day that you can write in your gratitude journal, and this will cause your entire day to flow naturally into a more optimistic state.

### **Have a Set Number of Things to List Each Day**

Some people prefer to sit down and write the things they are grateful for each day and quit when they are finished. This is fine, but sometimes having guidelines can be helpful. If you tell yourself you will list five things, that gives you time to get into a little more detail on each one, instead of it becoming just a long list. Take time to spend a few moments thinking about each thing that you write down and realizing how truly blessed you are to have this person, situation or feeling in your life.

### **Think of Both Big and Small**

Don't feel that the things you are thankful for have to have an earth-shattering presence. You might be thankful for a wide range of things, such as a recent trip to the Caribbean, or something minor like a new pen that fits your hand perfectly. It is in these moments of learning to appreciate a wide variety of what we have, that we begin to feel joyful in anything positive that comes our way.

### **Turning Negative into Positive**

Instead of just listing obviously happy situations and ignoring the negative, try to find the positive within the negative. Even in the most troubling circumstances there is good to be found. When we see a disturbing situation on the news, there is always a positive side of people coming together to help each other out. There is always good in humanity that will show itself the strongest when you need it.

Maintaining a gratitude journal has many benefits, including gaining more energy, feeling more optimistic about life, and possessing better physical and mental health. Its many positive benefits compile to bring you an all-around better quality of life. Start yours today and see the difference it can make in your life.

*There's Always Something to Be Thankful For*

*Think about a recent hardship. What positive aspect or opportunity came from it?*



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List five things you love about yourself and why.



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*Write about a time when you really felt appreciative of something or someone in your life.*



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*Write about your favorite season.*



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*There's Always Something to Be Thankful For*

Think back to the past year or two. Write about some of the changes you've made and why you are grateful for them.



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*Write about something you love doing and why you are grateful to be able to do it.*



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List five positive aspects of your community and why you love them.



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*Sunrise or Sunset? Which is your favorite and why?*



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*Write about how you felt the last time someone did a kind deed for you.*



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Write about something that makes you belly laugh.



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*There's Always Something to Be Thankful For*

*“Saying thank you is more than good manners. It is good spirituality.”  
~ Alfred Painter*



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*“Gratitude turns what we have into enough.”*



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*“God gave you a gift of 86,400 seconds today. Have you used one to say  
"thank you?" ~ William A. Ward*



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*“Silent gratitude isn't much use to anyone.” ~ Gertrude Stein*



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*“If the only prayer you said in your whole life was, “thank you,” that would suffice.” ~ Meister Eckhart*



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*“If you count all your assets, you always show a profit.” ~ Robert Quillen*



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*“There are two kinds of gratitude – The sudden kind when we receive and the deeper kind when we give.”*



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*“The struggle ends when the gratitude begins.” ~ Neale Donald Walsch*



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*“Replace fear with gratitude, and the whole world changes.”*

*~ Terri Guillemets*



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*“Hem your blessings with thankfulness so they don't unravel.”*



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*“Gratitude is the memory of the heart.” ~ Jean Baptiste Massieu*



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*“Some people grumble that roses have thorns. I am grateful  
that thorns have roses.” ~ Alphonse Karr*



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*“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” ~ John F. Kennedy*



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*“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”  
~ Winston Churchill “*



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*“It is impossible to feel grateful and depressed in the same moment.”*

*~ Naomi Williams*



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*“Kindness is a language, which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.”*

*~ Mark Twain*



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*“Be thankful for what you have, you’ll end up having more.”  
~ Oprah Winfrey*



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*“If we magnify blessings as much as we magnify disappointments, we would all be much happier.” ~ John Wooden*



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