



cultivating gratitude



Why Gratitude

Many scientific studies, including research by renowned psychologists Robert Emmons and Michael McCullough, have found that people who consciously focus on gratitude experience greater emotional well-being and physical health than those who don't. In comparison with control groups, those who cultivated a grateful outlook:

- Felt better about their lives as a whole
- Experienced greater levels of joy and happiness
- Felt optimistic about the future
- Got sick less often
- Exercised more regularly
- Had more energy, enthusiasm, determination, and focus
- Made greater progress toward achieving important personal goals
- Slept better and awoke feeling refreshed
- Felt stronger during trying times
- Enjoyed closer family ties
- Were more likely to help others and offer emotional support
- Experienced fewer symptoms of stress

I don't have to chase extraordinary moments to find happiness — it's right in front of me if I'm paying attention and practicing gratitude." — Brene Brown



Cultivating Gratitude

1. Each night before going to sleep keep a journal or log of what you are grateful for. Write at least 3 things.
2. Tell the people in your life, family members, friends, employees, service people what and why you are grateful for them and/or what they do. Of course, you always want to be genuine and not make things up.
3. At year-end, create a vision board of what you are grateful for from the year.



4. When you notice something you don't like about something or someone (including yourself), immediately turn it around in your mind to a positive. Example: I hate the way my husband eats. Changed to: I love that my husband loves to eat the food I cook.
5. Be mindful of all things around you and be grateful for them. I love watching my dog sniffing around for food, listening to the children playing outside, seeing the sun rise over the mountains, the glow of the moon, the quiet of the morning.
6. Give time, money or services when and where you can.
7. Look for the lessons when things don't go as planned.
8. Choose not to gossip, criticize, or complain for a day, a week, and on and on.
9. Take a gratitude walk especially in nature.
10. Write thank you cards and actually send them in the mail.
11. Keep a gratitude journal.
12. Create a list of blessings and possibilities.
13. Watch your words. Use words of love, peace and kindness. Words matter.
14. Choose to be with positive people.
15. Add your own.

"Gratitude can turn common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings." ~William Arthur Ward

