

Journey to Wellness — A free self-guided healthy living program

Benefit from a grateful heart



Gratitude is your **thankfulness** for life's little and larger blessings. When you **practice gratitude**, you can become happier and more resilient.

Studies show that feeling thankful can improve sleep, mood and immunity. Gratitude can decrease depression, anxiety, chronic pain difficulties and disease risk.

Acknowledging gratitude and mindfulness supports a positive shift to improve your mental well-being and health. Your thoughts and behaviors change your biology by releasing oxytocin, which helps you connect with others. Being connected to others is a protective factor that helps increase resiliency.

Ideas for practicing gratitude

- Keep a daily gratitude journal and write what you are thankful for.
- Each day, say out loud something you are thankful for.
- Each evening at dinner, encourage the family to share something they're grateful about.
- Practice gratitude meditation. Visualize all the things you are grateful for.
- Create a gratitude jar or collage. Every day, write something you are grateful for on a slip of paper and add it to a jar. Or take photos of what you are grateful for and use them to create a collage. If you are feeling down, reflect on your work to remind yourself of the good things in your life.
- Let people in your life know why you are grateful for them through a letter, email, card or conversation.
- Practice a sense of gratitude by naming something you see, something you smell, something you taste, something you touch or something you hear that you are grateful for.
- Go on a gratitude walk. Observe and appreciate what you see.

Practicing gratitude has many benefits. As you learn to acknowledge and appreciate life's small and ordinary things, you may eventually be transformed and find gratitude even in adversity or hard times.

Information adapted from [mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org): [Can expressing gratitude improve your mental and physical health?](#) and [Something to think about: Five depths of gratitude video](#).

[mayoclinichealthsystem.org](https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org)