

• TWEAK 3 •

GRATITUDE

Track your daily gratitude practices with [this handout](#).

WHY PRACTICE GRATITUDE?

Studies show that people who are consistently grateful are happier, have more energy, and experience positive emotions more frequently.

Dr. Sonja Lyubomirsky, Professor and Researcher at the University of California and author of *The How of Happiness*, lists eight ways that gratitude boosts happiness:

- 1 Grateful thinking promotes the **savoring** of positive life experiences.
- 2 Expressing gratitude bolsters **self-worth and self-esteem**.
- 3 Gratitude helps people **cope with stress and trauma**.
- 4 The expression of gratitude encourages **moral behavior**.
- 5 Gratitude can help **build social bonds**, strengthen existing relationships, and nurture new ones.
- 6 Expressing gratitude tends to **inhibit envious comparisons** of others.
- 7 The practice of gratitude is **incompatible with negative emotions** and may actually diminish or deter such feelings as anger, bitterness, and greed.
- 8 Gratitude helps us **thwart hedonic adaption**. Hedonic adaption is illustrated by our capacity to adjust rapidly to any new circumstance.

This month, you'll practice a different gratitude strategy each day of the week. The idea is to try out several strategies to find the best fit for you.

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MONDAY: SMILE FILE

A smile file is a collection of images, quotes, letters, or memories that can be reviewed at any time. It allows you to relish in the laughter, joy and happiness that life brings. Smile files are a great way to brighten even your toughest days.

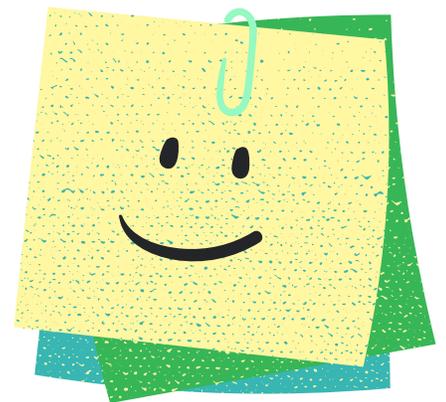
WHAT TO DO:

- **On your computer:** create a new folder on your computer desktop so you can view it often
- **On your phone:** create a new album on your camera roll to add happy images
- **If you want to share your smile file:** use Pinterest, Adobe Spark, Imgur, Instagram, Flickr, Facebook or any other media platform to find, curate and create content that makes you happy and brings you joy
- Continue adding content as you come across things that make you smile!



REMEMBER...

- When we look at photos or pictures with people, places, or things we love, we are able to remember the past and recall that moment in time.
- When we look at photos of things that make us smile, it becomes easier to access other happy thoughts and stay in a positive mindset.
- **Laughing creates physical changes in your body,** relieving stress and soothing tension.
- You can create a smile file online to share with others using Instagram, Adobe Spark, Pinterest, and more!



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TUESDAY: GRATITUDE WALK

The purpose of a gratitude walk is to be fully present and aware of your surroundings, to take a moment to get out of your head. On the first part of your walk, take in all of the sights, sounds and smells around you. End your walk by reflecting on all of the wonderful things you are grateful for.

WHAT TO DO:

- **Calm your mind** and savor your surroundings. This will allow you to relax and appreciate the world around you.
- Set aside some time to walk around your neighborhood, park, office, etc.
- Use these [walking maps](#) to find a new walking route and take a sort break from work

REMEMBER...

- Spending time in nature and being outdoors raises positive feelings and boosts your mood
- Walking and taking in the sights around you gives you time to mentally de-clutter
- Walking with intentionality (being present with yourself and your environment) is type of mindfulness that allows you to feel more relaxed and stable
- Walking briskly releases endorphins and gives you the boost to feel happier and calmer



RESOURCES

- [How About Taking a Gratitude Walk?](#)
- [Walking into Well-Being](#)
- [Mindfulness](#)
- [Walking Challenge](#)

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WEDNESDAY: SELF-GRATITUDE

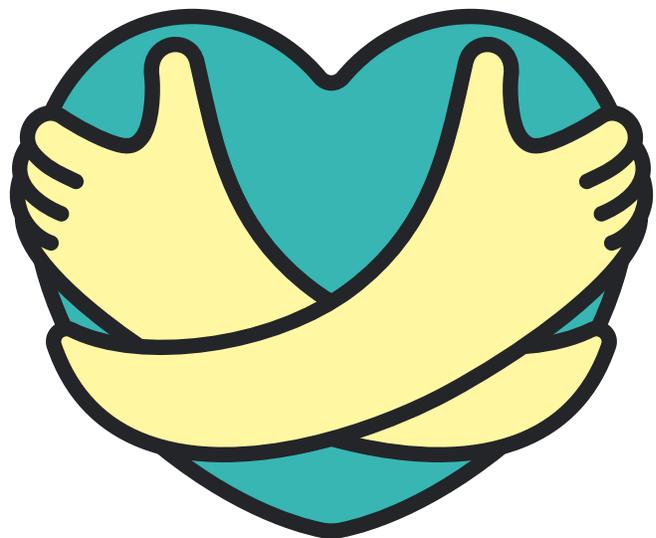
It is not always easy to consider all we are grateful for when enduring daily life stressors. Take time to think of everything in your life that you have and do not want to wake for granted. Give yourself daily space to quiet and relax your mind and think of yourself in a positive light - focusing on things about **yourself** that make you feel grateful.

REMEMBER...

- Self-gratitude is not self-centered or egotistical - even if it might feel that way at times
- Don't give into negative comparison thoughts - everyone's life path is unique and ever-changing, so find what makes yours special to you!
- If you're having trouble, it's okay! Check out the resource below for some tips to see yourself in a more positive light

RESOURCE

[5 WAYS TO BUILD
LASTING SELF-ESTEEM](#)



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THURSDAY: THE POWER OF "THANK YOU"

Studies show that individuals who express gratitude by saying thank you are often happier and optimistic people. Try to incorporate more thank you's throughout your day. Let others know you appreciate them.

REMEMBER...

- Sending a thank you note can help to nurture your relationship with the person you are thanking while also making you feel happier.
- Send a hand written note to someone who has influenced you for an even more personal expression of care.
- Show you are grateful every chance you get and say thank you for even the smallest actions.
- Personalize the thank you for the specific individual you're writing to.
- Be sincere and authentic.
- Write a thank you letter to yourself every once in a while.



RESOURCES

- [Gratitude Spreads postcards](#)
- [Ted Talk: Remember To Say "Thank You"](#)
- [The Thank You Project YouTube Video](#)
- [The Benefits of Gratitude At Work](#)
- [Send an eCard](#)

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FRIDAY: REFRAME THAT THOUGHT

Evidence shows that practicing gratitude inhibits negative emotions, but sometimes, those negative thoughts still come. The next time you find yourself having a negative thought, reframe your perspective by using the following reminders and resources.

REMEMBER...

- Take a deep breath in through your nose for 3 counts, hold for 3 counts, then breathe out through your mouth for 3 counts - releasing your negative energy. Repeat!
- Think about a negative situation from a different perspective and find the positivity in it. Ask: Will you remember this in a year? Is it worth the stress?
- Use an affirmation to bring you back into balance. Repeat your affirmation, breathing in the positive and out the negative. Find examples in the resource below.
- Remind yourself that you can't always control the situation but you **can** control your thoughts. That in itself is very powerful!



RESOURCES

- [Think This, Not That](#)
- [The Importance of Positive Thinking](#)
- [Positive Thinking Exercises](#)
- [11 Smart Habits to Staying Positive](#)
- [Positive Affirmations](#)

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SATURDAY & SUNDAY: GRATITUDE JOURNAL

At the end of each week, reflect on three things that you were grateful for. Write them down on your handout and record your happiness level.

REMEMBER...

Writing your emotions of gratitude can help to increase positivity and self-esteem while decreasing stress!

GRATITUDE APPS



Gratitude Happiness Journal

(Android and iOS: Free/Monthly/Yearly Subscription)

- Daily motivational quotes and affirmations
- Free access to customizable journal entries, affirmations, backup and restore, and passcode lock
- Access to personal coaches, mindfulness coaches, yoga trainers, and mentors



365 Gratitude: Self-Care

(Android and iOS: Free/Monthly/Yearly Subscription)

- A science-based self-care toolkit with daily journal prompts, joy courses, meditations, mood tracking, grateful quotes, and more
- Access to their self-care community



Day One Journal

(Android and iOS: Free/Monthly/Premium Subscription)

- Customizable layout with ability to add photos, videos, drawings, or audio recordings to your journal entries
- Revisit moments from the past with their “on this day” function
- For documenting and journaling memories and past experiences with data security

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MORE GRATITUDE APPS



Happify

(Android and iOS: Free/Monthly/Yearly/Lifetime Subscription)

- Science-based activities and games to help the user overcome negative thoughts, stress, and other challenges life brings
- Games, meditations, and progress tracking



Live Happy Podcasts

(Android and iOS: Free)

- Brings users knowledge from interviews of best-selling authors and happiness gurus
- Variety of topics such as wellness, gratitude, well-being, and mindfulness
- Can stream episodes anywhere

