

How slow can you go?

Learning Center

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One Good thing

Discover ways to grow and practice your gratitude skills.

Robert Emmons, an American psychologist and professor at UC Davis conducts research in the field of personality psychology, emotion psychology, and psychology of religion. He suggests that gratitude has two key components. One, it's an affirmation that there are good things in the world. Two, it's a recognition that this goodness comes from outside of ourselves.

Experiencing gratitude leads us to appreciate things and connect to others, both of which are good for our well-being.

1. Journal

A gratitude journal is a notebook to keep track of the things that you're thankful for. You can write about the things you are grateful for each day or create a list. You could also use your journal for drawing and other things that help you focus on what you are grateful for. The research suggests that gratitude journaling is an effective tool for increasing well-being (Flinchbaugh et al., 2012).

Need some ideas? Ask yourself:

- Are there any positive things that have occurred in my life?
- Are there any people I'm happy to have in my life?
- What foods am I most thankful for?
- What experiences am I most thankful for?

2. One Good Thing

When things aren't going well it can be hard to bring to mind things to be grateful for. Create a **Gratitude Generator**, think of one good thing: a person, situation/place, or thing.

- People to be grateful for: friend, a close family member, pastor, priest, or rabbi.
- Places to be grateful for: the roof over my head, my favorite place where I go to unwind, an upcoming vacation
- Things to be grateful for: my car, my job, my health, my cat or dog

The next time you're in a tough spot, bring to mind the **One Good Thing** and let that open the door to remembering the other good things in your life.

- Each day practice thinking about One Good Thing.

3. Notes

Gratitude notes are the shorthand version of a gratitude letter. Write one sentence on sticky note, card, or in a message to send to someone via text or social media. By sharing your gratitude, you'll feel better and you can also make someone else feel appreciated.

4. Gratitude Collection

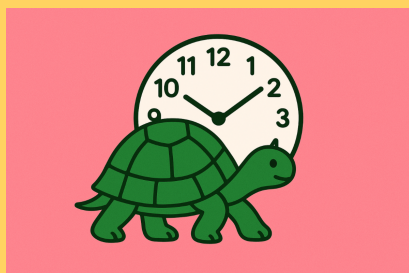
Another fun way to practice gratitude is with a collection. We collect all sorts of things that we are thankful for—memories, photos, ticket stubs, and momentos. You can create a digital collection -- funny short videos; photos of your friends, family, and pets; or inspirational quotes. *Feeling blue?* Search through your collection to remind yourself of the things you are grateful for.

In Conclusion

Being grateful is one of the simplest ways to boost well-being. It reminds you of all the good things you have in your life. Whenever you have a spare moment, try out one of these practices to get a quick boost in your mood and improve your day.

References

- Flinchbaugh, C. L., Moore, E. W. G., Chang, Y. K., & May, D. R. (2012). Student well-being interventions: The effects of stress management techniques and gratitude journaling in the management education classroom. *Journal of Management Education*, 36(2), 191-219.



Aging is a process. One that can be slowed to a crawl.

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