



# HELPING HANDS



(Excerpts from VeryWell Health)

gratitude /grät'ī-toōd", -tyōōd"/

**noun**

1. The state of being grateful; thankfulness.
2. The state or quality of being grateful or thankful; a warm and friendly feeling in response to a favor or favors received; thankfulness.
3. **Synonyms** See grateful.

## What Is Gratitude?

Gratitude is a positive emotion that involves being thankful and appreciative and is associated with several mental and physical health benefits. When you experience gratitude, you feel grateful for something or someone in your life and respond with feelings of kindness, warmth, and other forms of generosity.

The word gratitude can have several different meanings depending on how others use it and in what context.

"In general terms, gratitude stems from the recognition that something good happened to you, accompanied by an appraisal that someone, whether another individual or an impersonal source, such as nature or a divine entity, was responsible for it," explain researchers Lúzie Fofonka Cunha, Lucia Campos Pellanda, and Caroline Tozzi Reppold in a 2019 article published in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology*.

What does gratitude look like? How do you know if you are experiencing a sense of gratitude? Expressing your appreciation and thanks for what you have can happen in several different ways. Some examples of ways of expressing gratitude include:

- Spending a few moments thinking about the things in your life that you are grateful for
- Stopping to observe and acknowledge the beauty of wonder of something you encounter in your daily life
- Being thankful for your health
- Thanking someone for the positive influence they have in your life
- Doing something kind for another person to show that you are grateful
- Paying attention to the small things in your life that bring you joy and peace
- Meditation or prayer focused on giving thanks



Gratitude is often a spontaneous emotion that you feel in the

The practice of gratitude can have a significant positive impact on both physical and psychological health. Some of the benefits of gratitude that researchers have uncovered include:

Better sleep, immunity, higher self-esteem, decreased stress, lower blood pressure, less anxiety and depression, stronger relationships, and higher levels of optimism.

Psychologist Robert Emmons says gratitude can have a transformative effect on people's lives for several reasons. It helps people focus on the present and helps to magnify positive emotions. It can help improve your self-worth. When you acknowledge that there are people in the world who care about you and are looking out for your interests, it can help you recognize your value.

## How to Practice Gratitude



Developing a sense of gratitude isn't hard. It doesn't require any special tools or training. And the more you practice it, the better you will become and put yourself into a grateful state of mind. Here's how to do this:

**Observe the moment:** Take a second to focus on your experience and how you are feeling. Take stock of your senses and think about what is helping you cope.

**Write it down:** Starting a gratitude journal including jotting down a few things you are thankful for each day. Being able to look back on these observations can help when you are struggling to feel grateful.

**Savor the moment:** Give yourself time to really enjoy the moment. Focus on the experience and allow yourself to absorb those good feelings.

**Give thanks:** Gratitude is all about recognizing and appreciating those people, things, moments, skills, or gifts that bring joy, peace, or comfort into our lives. Show your appreciation. You might thank a person to show you are thankful for them, or you might spend a moment simply mentally appreciating what you have.

Expressing your appreciation for others is an important component that can affect your interpersonal relationships, particularly those with your partner. People who are high in gratitude experience sharp declines in marital satisfaction when their partner does not express gratitude in return.<sup>4</sup>

Showing your gratitude for those around you can help improve the quality and satisfaction of your relationships.



The heart and soul of the District 141 Employee Assistance Program is the local lodge EAP peer coordinator. These dedicated men and women volunteer their personal time to assist other union members and their families who are experiencing personal difficulties. EAP peer volunteers do not make clinical

diagnoses or clinical evaluations; however, they are trained to make a basic assessment of your situation and refer you to an appropriate resource for a more detailed evaluation. EAP peer volunteers will follow up to ensure you have been able to access services that address the difficulty you were experiencing.

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### Gratitude Quotes

“To have friends who will always take you to higher ground is an incalculable blessing.”

— John Bytheway

We must find time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives.”

— John F. Kennedy

“Never let the things you want make you forget the things you have.”

— Sanchita Pandey

“Express gratitude for the greatness of small things.”

— Richie Norton

“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.” — William Arthur Ward

“When I started counting my blessings, my whole life turned around.”

— Willie Nelson