

# Gratitude Can Change Your Attitude

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# Learning Objectives

- + Define the difference between appreciation and gratitude
- + Understand gratitude & some of the science behind it
- + Learn tips, tools and strategies for practicing gratitude
- + Experience a Gratitude Meditation

A pair of hands is shown from the front, cupping a large bouquet of white flowers. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color, making the hands and flowers the central focus. The text is overlaid on the image.

**Appreciation** – the act of acknowledging the goodness in life

**Gratitude** – Takes it a step further... it recognizes how the positive things in our lives, like success at work, are often due to forces outside of ourselves, particularly the efforts of other people

*“The Moral Memory of  
Mankind”*

*-Georg Simmel*

# Gratitude Affects Our Well-Being in Three Distinct Ways

- How we feel on a daily basis
- What is going on in our bodies
- What kind of behaviors we engage in



# Some of The Science...

## What can the brain reveal about Gratitude?

- + Participants in gratitude studies who reported grateful feelings showed activity in the medial prefrontal cortex, an area of the brain that is associated with understanding other people's perspectives, empathy and feelings of relief
- + A researcher at Indiana University performed a study examining how practicing gratitude can alter brain function in depressed individuals and may even be able to change and rewire the brain

# Health Benefits of Gratitude

- + Fewer health problems
- + Fewer physical symptoms
- + Increases resilience
- + Improvements in sleep
- + Healthier lifestyle
- + Inspires us to perform kind acts for others
- + Can motivate people to improve themselves and their communities



# The How of Gratitude



- Journaling/Art
- Letter Writing
- Meditation
- Savoring
- Mental Subtraction Activities



## Habits of Grateful People

- + Once in a while, they think about loss or giving something up
- + They savor
- + They recognize the good things in life as gifts
- + They are grateful to others
- + They are specific
- + They show gratitude toward even the hard things



# Practicing Gratitude

- + 2-3 times a week, write down up to 5 things for which you feel grateful (a good event, experience, person or thing in your life)
- + Say it with art – “Tinning” visit: [todayinoticed.com](http://todayinoticed.com)
- + Say thanks out loud
- + Stop & take a deep breath before saying thanks
- + Give public thanks for the good things people do
- + Write a letter of gratitude or thanks
- + Stick with it – the feeling really lasts!
- + Pay it forward





Experience a Gratitude Meditation

# Gratitude Prompts

- + What positive quality do I really admire about myself?
- + What is an old relationship I am grateful for?
- + How can a weakness of mine be perceived as a strength?
- + What is one thing I appreciate about my body?
- + What qualities do I appreciate about my co-workers?
- + What food do I appreciate and why?
- + What do I appreciate about the home I live in?
- + What do I appreciate about the music I listen to?
- + What is one piece of clothing I appreciate?
- + In this moment, what are you most thankful for?
- + What self-care practice do you exercise that you most appreciate?
- + Despite the difficulty of the last few years, what are you most grateful for?
- + What can I appreciate about today's weather?
- + What is one thing I appreciate about my health?
- + What obstacle have I overcome that I appreciate about myself?

# Resources

- + <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/>
- + Smith, Jeremy Adam., Newman, Kira M., Marsh, Jason., Keltner, Dacher. (2020). *The Gratitude Project: How the science of thankfulness can rewire our brains for resilience, optimism, and the greater good*, New Harbinger Publications.



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