

## Why Being Grateful Isn't Just for Thanksgiving

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While turkey and pumpkin pie usually take center stage, Thanksgiving is ultimately a holiday that is to remind us of all we are grateful for. Research has linked gratitude with an increase in self-esteem, resiliency, and overall life satisfaction. In fact, a professor of psychology at UC Davis reports that clinical trials indicate the practice of gratitude can have dramatic and lasting effects in a person's life. It can lower blood pressure, improve immune function, and facilitate more efficient sleep.

Being grateful is allowing yourself to be happier, more content, and more satisfied with everything that is going on around you. So, how do we do this?

- **Learn to live in the moment:** Don't just go through the motions of repetitive activities and boring tasks. Life is a wonderful adventure filled with enriching experiences and endless possibilities. Instead of doing something just for the sake of doing it, actually make an effort to savor the experience. Attending a conference? Absorb it. Babysitting a grandchild? Savor the moment.
- **Make an oath of gratitude:** Be aware of your goal to be more grateful. Gratitude is a conscious decision. You have to practice it consistently.
- **Make a gratitude board:** You may have a "To Do" board so why can't you have a gratitude board? Post what you are grateful for. Focus on people or experiences rather than materialistic things that won't necessarily last very long.
- **Control your thoughts:** Of course you have the power to control what you're thinking of! If you find yourself thinking more and more self-entitled, **stop**. If you find yourself repeating negative junk, **stop**. And if you find you're comparing yourself to other people, **stop**. You are given a conscience. Make wise use of it.
- **Always resist the temptation of comparing yourself with other people:** As humans, we have a natural tendency to compare ourselves with others with hope of attaining satisfaction. This activity does not help you to feel more grateful.



- **Watch your words:** You can feel more grateful in life if you are using positive encouraging words.
- **Appreciate what you have right now:** The happiest people are those who are content with what they currently have, not what they lack.
- **Acknowledge the past, but move on:** Be aware of your past mistakes, failures, and heartbreaks but use them as stepping stones. Acknowledge the fact that they did happen in the past and utilize the lessons you learned from them.
- **Help others and touch their lives in a meaningful way:** There is nothing more rewarding in this world than helping other people improve their lives. Donate your time, volunteer at charitable institutions, seek out opportunities to help others.

When you simply open your eyes and look around you, there is so much to be grateful for!

- Emails with problems that can be resolved with one sentence
- Getting something done that you were procrastinating
- Having a friend at work (which is surprisingly great for your productivity)
- The freedom to be yourself
- People in your life who you have the opportunity to love in return
- A supportive church
- Sunrise, sunset, and sunshine
- Technology, for making life much more convenient
- The future—and the opportunities it holds, for both you and your loved ones
- To be blessed in so many big and small ways
- All of your life experiences—good and bad
- Memories of times with family members and loved ones

So, this Thanksgiving take the time to not only be grateful for the turkey and pumpkin pie, but all the “little things” in life. It will benefit you in so many ways.

<https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

<http://www.lifehack.org/articles/communication/10-tips-more-grateful-life.html>

<http://alifeofproductivity.com/100-things-to-be-grateful-for/>

