

Wheel of Well-being

keep a 'gratitude diary' or write a gratitude letter



“We become what we think about” - Napoleon Hill

Keeping a gratitude diary or journal is a particularly effective way to shift your thinking to a more positive and appreciative mind-set.

It is simply a diary you keep everyday, where you list things or people in your life - 'Things to be Grateful For'. These can include everyday things you take for granted eg - enjoying the sunshine, having a hot shower, sleeping in a comfortable bed – these are all pleasures that most of us don't appreciate anymore, as well as all the new 'goodies' you are attracting to yourself.

The spiralling effect of gratitude is often surprising - the more you appreciate, the more you get!

What to do

- 1 Start by getting yourself a notebook that you'll enjoy writing in, decorate a plain one yourself, or use the WoW yourself page we've provided. Download [here](#).
- 2 Every day, write down (or draw) 3 things you are grateful for in your notebook. They can be anything - feeling the sunshine on your face, happy that a friend phoned, receiving a present, being able to take a walk, anything.
- 3 Work out a time that suits you to do this. Ideally, around the same time every day works best – try keeping your diary beside your bed and writing your list just before you go to sleep
- 4 Try to write in detail, write why you are grateful for it. Or if you don't have time, just write one line.

Here's what might happen

The first day you'll be thinking hard about what you're grateful for. Most of us complain a lot, so finding things to be grateful for will be difficult at first.

The second day, knowing you must find 3 new things to write down, you'll probably start to look for things to be grateful for.

As the days go by, you'll experience a shift in your attitude. You'll begin to expect things to happen to be grateful for. As more days pass, there will be another shift. You'll start to recognise when things happen to be grateful for.

Another shift will take place when you start to feel grateful at the time the event takes place. This is when the miracle of gratitude will really start happening for you.

This process will probably take about one month. It's been suggested that it takes 21 days to start a new habit so a little perseverance may be needed for 5 minutes each day – not too hard, is it?



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Each night for the next week before you go to bed reflect on three things that went well or that you are grateful for – and why. Let us know how it goes.

sunday

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

monday

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

tuesday

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

wednesday

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

thursday

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

friday

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

saturday

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



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Writing a gratitude letter is an especially effective way to improve your mind-set, strengthen your relationships and bring more positive emotions into your life - and the lives of others. (Keeping a gratitude diary is another. You can find out more [here](#)).

Select one important person from your past who has made a major positive difference in your life and to whom you have never fully expressed your thanks. Choose someone who is still alive.

Write a letter just long enough to cover one A4 page. Take your time writing this – several weeks if you need to. Invite that person to your home or travel to that person's home. It is important that you do this face-to-face, not just in writing or on the phone. Do not tell the person the purpose of the visit in advance.

Bring a laminated version of your letter with you as a gift. Read your letter out loud slowly, with expression and eye contact. Then let the other person react unhurriedly. Reminisce together about the events that make this person so important to you.

If you find this a bit 'over the top', you might want to just try building more gratitude into your every day life. Begin by being more aware of what you should be grateful for and make sure you thank people when they do something for you or help you in any way.

Martin Seligman, Authentic Happiness

