



TARGETING WELLNESS NEWSLETTER



GOOD NEWS FOR GOOD HEALTH

Essential Mindsets for Overall Well-being



What you appreciate, appreciates. - Lynn Twist

For this quote to become reality, we need to (1) become aware of what we appreciate in our lives now; (2) hold it with high regards; and (3) be deeply grateful for the joys/opportunities it brings us. When we do that, it appreciates! And when we don't, it depreciates. Let's continue on our journey this month focusing on the mindset of being grateful. Not only through awareness but also by putting it into action.

QUARTER ONE GRATITUDE

January - March 2024

CONCEPT

For the past two months, we have focused on building gratitude in our lives in order to create more happiness, improve overall health and strengthen our functional mental toughness (FMT).

What is meant by FMT? We often hear the term resilience or grit to measure one's ability to "bounce back" or "stay the course". The first, resilience, is based on past experiences and how they may have "shaped" who you are today; the second one, grit, is based on perseverance despite the situation, driven by the passion for a particular outcome. However, mental toughness is what sets us up for **future** resilience. It focuses on what we do today in order to prepare ourselves to face what's ahead for us. That involves thriving by applying the pillars of lifestyle we focused on last year: physical activity, healthy fueling, adequate sleep, managing stress as well as connection with others. And guess what can play a huge part in how we address each of those pillars of lifestyle? If you guessed, Gratitude, you are right!



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Contemplate this question: *Are happy people grateful or are grateful people happy?* Only the individual knows for sure. Yet study after study has shown how gratitude can improve both mental and physical health. I believe that true happiness can only come when we feel gratitude for what we already have and for all the experiences we have faced, each offering a special lesson if we are open to receive it.



FEELING GRATITUDE & NOT
EXPRESSING IT IS LIKE
WRAPPING A PRESENT AND
NOT GIVING IT.

-William Arthur Ward

Studies have also shown the vital connection between expressions of gratitude to physical well-being. As we learned last month, gratitude is good for our hearts. It also lowers blood pressure, decreases stress, and improves sleep. Practicing gratitude lessens symptoms of depression and anxiety, opening the gate to experience more happiness in life.



STORIES OF GRATITUDE & APPRECIATION



GRATITUDE CULTIVATING A POSITIVE WORK CULTURE

In any local municipality, employees often deal with numerous challenges, ranging from bureaucratic hurdles to serving the diverse needs of the community. Despite these challenges, in one particular town, leadership recognized the importance of fostering a culture of appreciation and gratitude among its employees. To implement this, the municipality introduced a program called "Gratitude Fridays." Every Friday morning, before the start of the workday, employees gathered for a brief meeting where they were encouraged to express gratitude towards their colleagues.

During these meetings, employees had the opportunity to publicly acknowledge and thank their coworkers for their hard work, dedication, and contributions to the community. Whether it was a public works employee who went above and beyond to keep the streets clean, a tax collector who provided exceptional assistance to a resident, or a colleague who offered support during a challenging project, everyone had a chance to be recognized.

Additionally, they implemented a system where employees could send "gratitude notes" to their coworkers anonymously throughout the week. These notes highlighted specific instances of appreciation, fostering a sense of recognition and camaraderie among all employees.

Over time, the Gratitude Friday's program had a profound impact on the workplace culture. Employees felt valued and appreciated for their efforts, leading to increased morale, job satisfaction, and productivity. There was a noticeable improvement in teamwork and collaboration as employees felt more motivated to support one another. The program also helped strengthen relationships between different departments and levels of the organization, breaking down silos and fostering a sense of unity among employees. By prioritizing gratitude in the workplace, the municipality created a positive and supportive environment where employees felt empowered and motivated to make a difference in the lives of the residents they served.



>>> DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK

So often we hesitate before seeking assistance, worried that we might impose on others. Yet, research has shown that in reality, the person approached often feels immense gratitude in being able to lend a hand during a time of need.

Requesting help and entrusting another with that request isn't just an act of vulnerability; it is a powerful catalyst for growth, connection, and a shared sense of purpose.

The next time you help, don't let fear hold you back from reaching out. Guaranteed there will be someone who was just waiting for the opportunity to offer their support...All you needed to do was ask.

PRACTICE FOR MARCH

Pick whatever resonates with you. Try one or multiple, every day, once a week or even once during the month...the choice is yours. Take your time and enjoy the process. We can never give too much appreciation for our lives and for each other!



>>> IDEAS TO CONSIDER

Each day, or as many times as you can during the month, pick one thing you will focus on for expressing gratitude. Here are just two examples:

Maybe you decide it's **water**. Throughout your day, every time you interact with water, such as washing hands or dishes, drinking, seeing a body of water, witnessing the rain, etc., acknowledge and appreciate it.

Or maybe it's a **particular sound** like birds singing, someone laughing, a dog barking, music playing, etc. Each time you hear it say "Thank you" or some other acknowledgement in appreciation.

*Thank you for the gift of touch.
Thank you for the gift of hearing.*



PLANT A SEED OF GRATITUDE AND WATCH IT GROW



Share your own gratitude practice with me at debby_schiffer@targetingwellness.com
Or share an act of kindness that you received and the impact it had on you.



Other ways to show gratitude & appreciation...

>>> Listen actively:

Take time to simply listen, with full attention, when someone speaks. Show genuine interest in what they have to say. Engage in conversations, ask questions, and validate their feelings to demonstrate that you value their thoughts and opinions.

>>> Offer sincere compliments:

Recognize their strengths, accomplishments, and positive qualities with genuine intention. Whether praising their hard work, creativity, or kindness, sincere words can change the trajectory of someones day and boost their self-esteem.

>>> Extend acts of kindness:

Show your appreciation through acts of kindness and thoughtfulness. This could include small gestures like bringing them their favorite coffee, surprising them with a homemade meal, or helping them with tasks or errands without being asked

>>> Express gratitude regularly:

Make it a habit to express gratitude regularly, whether through verbal thanks, written notes, or gestures of appreciation. Let them know how much you appreciate their presence in your life and the positive impact they have on you.



How grateful are you? Take one of these free evidence-based quizzes and find out.

Gratitude quiz

<https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/resources/questionnaires-researchers/gratitude-questionnaire>

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes/take_quiz/gratitude

>>> AND SPEAKING OF BUILDING HABITS...

Want to build a habit of expressing more gratitude? Try **Temptation bundling**. I read this in the book by James Clear called *Atomic Habits*. Here is the sentence structure to use:

After I [Insert CURRENT HABIT], I will [Insert HABIT DESIRED].

After I [Insert HABIT DESIRED], I will [Insert HABIT I ENJOY].

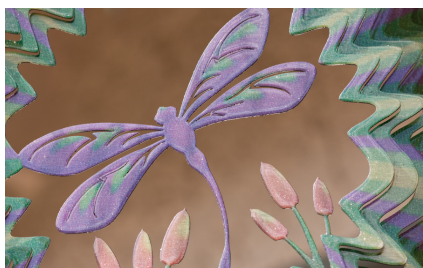
Here is an example:

After I [get my morning coffee] (current habit),

I will [say one thing I am grateful for and why] (desired habit).

After I [say one thing I am grateful for and why], I will [open my emails] (habit you enjoy).

Try doing this for any new habit you desire to start (i.e., meditating for 5 minutes, moving throughout your day, drinking more water, etc.) Make it meaningful & realistic so you build consistency and momentum.



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