



Why Gratitude is Important During the Pandemic

We're living through unusual and trying times. The COVID-19 pandemic has people feeling stressed and frightened. That's why it's perhaps more important than ever to focus on gratitude — the practice of noticing and being thankful for what is valuable and meaningful to you. It's good for your mental and physical health, it can help you relax, and its effects can help you stay well through the coronavirus pandemic and beyond.

Here are some ways why gratitude is important:

- **Improving your immune system:** The practice of gratitude can improve immune function, especially during the COVID-19 crisis, since people with compromised immune systems face a high risk of becoming severely ill from coronavirus.
- **Lowering your risk for mental health issues:** Studies have shown that people who practiced gratitude showed a significantly lower risk for major depression.
- **Getting a handle on stress:** Focusing on positive emotions can help improve your ability to cope with stress.
- **Setting yourself up for success:** Grateful people have been shown to exercise more and eat healthier diets.

Practicing Gratitude Can Be Easy, Rewarding, and Fun. Cultivating thankfulness isn't homework, and it doesn't require much time or energy. You can start small by taking a few moments to notice things that are going well in your life.

Jot Down Your Joys. Make a habit of writing down the things you are grateful for. It does not have to be a long list, but if you regularly challenge yourself to identify and name your gratitude, you may notice improvement in your emotional well-being.

Make Mealtimes Mindful. Before and during meals, take time to appreciate the bounty on your table. When eating, slow down and savor every bite. Not only will you feel more thankful, but you will also be less likely to overeat.

Count Blessings Instead of Sheep. Before falling asleep, take a moment to think about the positive things that happened during your day.

Stop and Savor. When you find yourself enjoying a moment, a sound, a memory, a conversation, try to pause for a bit and bask in the experience.

Create Your Own Moments. Devote time to yourself. You deserve some pampering, and it'll be one more thing you can be grateful for later on.

Pass It On. The more selfless you are, the more you may get out of it. During this COVID-19 pandemic, you can help make an impact on your community while staying safe.

Source: <https://bit.ly/35DzjJm>

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Why We Need Gratitude Now. In times of crisis, it's important to stay connected to others, and among its many other benefits, gratitude can help with this, too.

People who practice gratitude are:

- More generous and helpful
- More likely to offer emotional support
- More likely to share their possessions
- More willing to forgive others

If ever there was a time when these traits were needed, it is now.

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