

# Lowering stress with gratitude

Most of us are thankful for certain things in our lives. But, how often do we think about them?

Gratitude doesn't always come naturally. It's easy to get caught up in situations that go wrong, whether big or small. This can lead to higher stress levels. The good news is that we may be able to reverse some of this stress with gratitude. It may improve our overall emotional health, too.



---

---

## GETTING GOING WITH GRATITUDE

---

---



How should you get started with a gratitude habit? You must make it part of your routine. Practicing gratitude every day will have the most benefits and you'll be more likely to stick with it.

Take a few minutes each day, whether in the morning or at night, to think about good things in your life. They can be things that happened today, such as a good day at work. They can also be bigger things, like your overall health or people in your life.

If you find your mind wanders during this activity, don't give up. Try writing things down in a notebook if that's easier for you.

After you've named some things in your life that are good, stop. Take a moment to think about the positive experience or person. Let yourself feel happy about these things. You can even relive them in your head if you like.

Try writing a letter to someone who did something nice for you. You don't even have to send it. The act of writing the letter is a way to feel your gratitude. You can also send a text or email to them explaining why you appreciate them.

During this time, try not to focus on any negative thoughts or situations.



---

---

## BEING GRATEFUL DURING GOOD & BAD TIMES

---

---

This practice is helpful if you're under a lot of stress. But, don't forget about feeling grateful when things are going well. Even when life is great, keep up your gratitude habit. This could make it easier for you to do when things aren't going right.

Of course, when things get challenging in life, you may feel more "down." This is normal and expected. Don't try to force yourself to feel happy all the time. In fact, experts think that hiding your feelings can make you feel worse.

Accept your feelings and talk about them with someone you trust. Go for a walk or exercise to help combat stress. Then, try to focus your thoughts on gratitude once again.

Source: National Institutes of Health