



*“Showing gratitude is one of the simplest yet most powerful things humans can do for each other.”*

~ Randy Pausch

# Cultivate an Attitude of Gratitude

It's the season to count our blessings and be thankful. Don't take your blessings for granted; focus on what you have, what you've accomplished and the great people in your life.

## 9 Ways to Count Your Blessings

**1. Keep a gratitude journal.** A gratitude journal can give you perspective about the great things in your life. Take some time every day to write down five things that you are grateful for that day.

*Writing down what you are grateful for allows you to organize your thoughts and put the experience into context.\**

**2. Remember and be grateful for challenges and “negative” experiences** because they've taught you valuable lessons in patience, understanding, humility and strength.

**3. Focus on the gifts.** Be thankful for the gifts that we receive from others, such as a smile or a kind word, as well as the gifts we offer to others.

**4. Pray for gratitude** or for the ability to be grateful. Whether or not you are religious, take the time to sit quietly and think about what you're thankful for.

**5. Be grateful for your health.** The human body is an amazing machine. Be thankful for all that yours can do.

**6. Keep a visual reminder to be grateful,** such as a picture frame with your favorite gratitude quote, and surround yourself with grateful people.

**7. Commit to practicing gratitude.** Make a concerted effort to practice gratitude every single day. Let others know you appreciate them.

**8. Maintain a positive, grateful attitude.** Replace a negative internal monologue with positive thoughts.

**9. If you must, fake it.** If you're having trouble being grateful, fake it until you are. Smile, say thank you and write a thank you note to someone who's helped you recently. Soon, all of this gratitude will overtake any negativity.

\* Source: Emmons, Robert A. (2007) Thanks! How Practicing Gratitude Can Make You Happier. New York: Houghton Mifflin



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# 10 Ways to Say "Thank You" to the People You're Grateful for

Although it only consists of two words, the phrase "thank you" can have a huge impact on those to whom it is said. It can be used in a variety of circumstances; you can say it to the stranger who holds the door open for you or to the waiter at your favorite restaurant for the great service. Many of us find it easier to thank total strangers than to thank the people in our lives who mean the most to us.

There's no time like the present to express gratitude to the people in your life that you're most grateful for. Make a list of the people that you are glad to have in your life, which can include:

- Family
- Friends
- Neighbors
- Co-workers
- Business associates
- Proprietors of the businesses you frequent
- Community leaders
- Your child(ren)'s teachers or coaches
- Your doctor or health care professional
- Anyone who goes the extra mile to help you

**1. Write a note,** whether it's a personal note sent by mail or a sticky note posted where they're sure to see it.

**2. Tell them.** It sounds simple, but the best way to express thanks is to say it.

**3. Surprise them** with their favorite snack, baked treat, beverage or flowers.

**4. Take them out for a meal,** or if you're a great cook, make a meal for them.

**5. Buy them a book** that pertains to their interests.

**6. Reciprocate.** Help a neighbor shovel his walkway, volunteer at your child's school, or watch the kids while your spouse goes for a run or gets a massage.

**7. Give them a gift certificate** to their favorite restaurant or store.

**8. Make it public.** Write a good review online, and praise the person or business whenever you can.

**9. Make time for those you care about,** and unplug from technology when you're with them. Be present when with those who are most important to you; they may not always be around.

**10. Pay it forward,** and do something thoughtful for someone else.

## Words of Thanks

It can be difficult to express gratitude in words. Here are some phrases to get you started:

**"I appreciate you/your work."**

**"You made my day."**

**"You make my life/job/day so much easier."**

**"You're a great role model/example for others."**

**"I'm grateful for all that you do."**

*Expressing gratitude encourages others and also contributes to your long-term personal happiness.*

THANK You!