

Cultivating Gratitude

So how can you build your gratitude muscle—and become more appreciative? Here are some simple strategies:

- *Begin and end with intention.* Start each day by thinking about all you appreciate and expect from the day, and as you turn out the lights at the end of each day also consider all you're grateful for.
- *Give continuous attention.* Throughout each day, find small things about which you can be thankful. Perhaps the line at the coffee place was shorter this morning or your coworker made you smile. Avoid taking things for granted. Make everything count and bring conscious attention to elements which make you glad.
- *Be expansive.* Ensure you're focusing on being grateful not just for things, but for people and conditions. Perhaps you particularly appreciate the headphones which help make your workout more fun, but also pay attention to the person at the club who made you feel welcome or the fact that you have the capability to walk, lift or stretch.
- *Write it down.* [Research at Kent State University](#) found when you write down elements you're grateful for, that simple act can foster happiness and wellbeing. This is probably true because it causes you to pause, focus, reflect and reinforce your positive experiences.
- *Express yourself.* Gratitude is both an individual and a team sport. When you share what you're grateful for in a team environment, it holds even more power. Thank a coworker during a team meeting or provide positive feedback to a colleague during a project session. When gratitude is expressed and shared, it helps both you and the group.

Gratitude is good, and it has plenty of positive effects. It may also be what can help get us through the last miles of the pandemic marathon. Staying present, being attentive to others and appreciating all we have—just as we wait for all we want—can help us get to the finish line.

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