

GRATITUDE CONTINUED

Regularly focusing on feelings of gratitude in our everyday experiences creates a happier and healthier life. What are some common side effects of gratitude? In your body, your brain receives signals of “Send out the good stuff! Everything is OK. I’m not anxious, or worried, or nervous.” Your neurochemistry changes as you experience gratitude. You move from fight or flight mode, to rest and relax. Being in rest and relax mode allows all kinds of good and useful processes to happen in you:



You are better at understanding the feelings and needs of others.



You become a better decision maker.



You become more responsible and more authentic.



You are nicer and you reach out to others.



You are willing to lend a helping hand.



You speak softly and don't yell.



You listen more.



Looks like gratitude might win the all-around best virtue in our quest toward living a happier and more meaningful life.

A few of the gratitude practices that have shown positive results include:

- *Focusing on why things are going well*
- *Focusing on past successes*
- *Writing a gratitude letter to someone in your life*
- *Forgiving someone in your life*
- *Reconnecting with old friends*

Here you'll chose from *one* of these activities to do now. (You can do the other one at a later date.)

1) Three Good Things Journal 2) Gratitude Letter

Three Good Things Journal

Sit down once a day (best to keep it same time every day) and write a list of at least three things for which you are grateful. Of course, your list can be longer than three things and as detailed as you want it to be. Be on the lookout every day for things you can include in your list at the end of your day. That's a really fun practice.

After writing your three things, pick one of them and write down why you think it went well and how you contributed to it going well.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Chose one of the above. Why did it go well?

What did you do to contribute to it going well?

Do the 3 Good Things Journal for a week (keep track on a separate piece of paper or a notebook) and see how it makes a difference in your life.

After one week: How do you notice that your gratitude practice is working?

