

THANKS

  
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How often do you give THANKS for everything you have in your life?

I mean really express your THANKS & GRATITUDE?

We casually say THANKS to the person who makes our Cappuccino, the person holding the door open for us, our partner who loads the dishwasher, parents for looking after the children, a friend who drops by with a cake. But how often do we give deep and meaningful THANKS without their being a good deed done before? THANKS just because you love and appreciate your partner, parents, siblings, friends? Do you do that?

A deliberate act of giving THANKS can leave others feeling incredibly good. It can also make you feel pretty amazing and uplifted too.

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### **What are THANKS & GRATITUDE?**

THANKS, is an expression of appreciation or GRATITUDE or an acknowledgement of services or favours given. (source Collins Dictionary).

So, THANKS is GRATITUDE, GRATITUDE is THANKS.

GRATITUDE is a personality trait, a human emotion which is a feeling of happiness. We are all familiar with and we enjoy the feeling we get when we give and receive GRATITUDE or THANKS.

### **The Effects of THANKS**

Giving THANKS does not cost you anything. It is free to give and free to receive. When you receive a heartfelt THANKS you immediately feel happier, uplifted and better than you did before. When you give a heartfelt THANKS, your mood is lifted.

I often find myself being kinder and more GRATEFUL when someone has been kind and GRATEFUL to me. The act seems to pass on. You have probably heard the expression 'Paying it Forward'.

In Positive Psychology research has found that the benefits of GRATITUDE and practicing GRATITUDE is a powerful tool for increasing well-being in all sorts of settings.

McCraty and colleagues (1998) who conducted a study into positive emotions found that there was a mean 23% reduction in the stress hormone cortisol after adults were taught to cultivate appreciation and other positive emotions. Participants were found to experience lower levels of stress.

Seligman et al (2005) also conducted an experiment into GRATITUDE and the results showed that participants who engaged in positive letter writing reported more happiness for one month after the intervention.

Research has identified several positive outcomes from practicing GRATITUDE, such as reduced levels of stress, decreased levels of anxiety and depression, generally feeling more happy, positive with increased overall well-being.

In essence THANKS and GRATITUDE is a win win!

*“Cultivate the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to you, and to give thanks continuously. And because all things have contributed to your advancement, you should include all things in your gratitude.”*

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

#### 7 Scientifically Proven Benefits of GRATITUDE (source Psychology Today)

1. Opens doors to more relationships
2. Improves physical health
3. Improves psychological health
4. Enhances empathy and reduces aggression
5. Improves sleep
6. Improves self-esteem
7. Increases mental strength and resilience

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#### **Exercise 1 – GRATITUDE Journal**

Keeping a daily journal has been one of the most powerful and uplifting habits I have introduced into my day. And more recently I have found myself writing down 10 things I am GRATEFUL and THANKFUL for that have happened every day.

This exercise, completed at the end of my day, is so powerful. I go back over my day, reflecting upon all that has happened and even when I have days, which I believe are truly horrible, I search for the positive things that have happened. There are always at least 10 if not many more. I look for the big things and the small things. I write them all down. What they are and why I am THANKFUL.

I would like you to add this exercise into your daily practice.

1. Think of 10 things from your day you are THANKFUL and GRATEFUL for.

2. Write them down. Don't just write a list of things though. You also need to write down why you are THANKFUL. This part of the exercise is important, because when you are writing it down in more detail you experience the happy and uplifting feelings again.
3. At the end of the week write down 10 things you are THANKFUL for from the whole week. You recall all the amazing things that have happened, think about all the people you are GRATEFUL for all the wonderful deeds that have been bestowed to you and you again experience the happy and uplifting feelings.
4. If you have children try doing this with them before they go to sleep at night.

### **Exercise 2 – GRATITUDE to your Partner/Friend/Colleague/Parent/Sibling**

1. Think of someone in your life who you come into contact with regularly. Someone who you spend a lot of time with and do things for you regularly and vice versa.
2. Next, reflect upon all the thoughtful actions and benefits you receive from this person and all the thoughtful actions and benefits they receive from you.
3. Make a note of all the good deeds that person does for you every day for a fortnight and vice versa.

This exercise is a great way to reflect upon the good the other person does. Sometimes in relationships whether they are romantic or platonic we take the other person for granted. We feel that we do more for them than they do for us. We become complacent. This is a great way to become aware again of all the good. You can see how thoughtful the other person is and appreciate them with a newness.

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**DEVELOP AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE.**