

# Growing Gratitude and Grit

GRIT is the mindset we use to persevere through tough times. And nurturing positive emotions like GRATITUDE is key to building grit.\*

\*Smith, J. A., Newman, K. M., Marsh, J., & Keltner, D. (Eds.). (2020). *The Gratitude Project: How the Science of Thankfulness Can Rewire Our Brains for Resilience, Optimism, and the Greater Good*. New Harbinger Publications.  
Emmons, R. (2016). *The Little Book of Gratitude*. Octopus Publishing Group.

Gratitude is fertilizer for the mind.

It's no wonder, then, that gratitude can impact us in so many wonderful ways:



Gratitude boosts happiness, optimism, joy, and enthusiasm. During crisis, it dampens feelings of anxiety and depression and boosts our resilience.

Gratitude makes us healthier. We experience less health problems. We also tend to take care of ourselves better - we eat better and exercise more, sleep better, keep up with health check-ups, and avoid risky behaviors and substances.

Gratitude improves relationships: we care more about others and they in turn appreciate us more.

## Exercises to Grow Gratitude and Grit

### Gratitude Journal

In each entry, reflect back on three to five things you're grateful for. Use prompts if you'd like:

- I'm grateful for things I hear, see, smell, taste, or touch;
- I'm grateful for friends or colleagues;
- I'm grateful for teachers or mentors;
- I'm grateful for family members;
- I'm grateful for things at work; and/or
- I'm grateful for things at home.

You can participate in an [online gratitude journal](#) as well.



### Gratitude Rock

To think of your blessings throughout the day:

1. Find a rock or small object that you like or has special meaning to you.
2. Carry it with you, make it into a necklace or charm bracelet, or leave it where you will see it often.
3. When you see or touch this object, take a moment to think of what you are thankful for.
4. At the end of the day, touch this object to bring back to mind everything you thought of during the day. You can also do the same the next morning, to start your day immersed in gratitude.



### Gratitude Jar

For a highly visual way of counting your blessings:

1. Find a jar or box. Decorate it any way you'd like.
2. Every day, think of three things you're grateful for. Write on a slip of paper and put in the jar.
3. When you're feeling down, reach into the jar and read some of the notes.



### Gratitude Letter

Write a hand-written note to someone that you are grateful for (friend, family member, coworker, teacher, or mentor). You can write it two parts:

**Part 1:** Tell them what they did, how it impacted you, how it made you feel, and why it was important to you.

**Part 2:** Tell them what it says about them that they did this amazing thing for you. You may also want to talk about how it has impacted your relationship with them.

For added zest, do this for someone who is not expecting it. Deliver and read the letter in person.

