

Teaches the "secret formula" for creating a new habit in your brain

INCLUDES  
9-WEEK GRATITUDE  
JOURNAL

# THE MINUTE-PLUS JOURNAL

Hack Your Brain to Make  
Gratitude a Habit

PDF EDITION

Paul Goddin



GODDIN  
CREATIVE





*Paul Goddin*





The Minute-Plus Journal: Hack Your Brain to Make Gratitude a Habit  
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*This book is dedicated to...*

*Gus Goddin III*

*as good and decent a man as I know, and someone also who has,  
incidentally, saved my life on more than one occasion.*





Before progressing any further in this book, readers may wish to take a survey to test their general level of happiness. The below link is to a survey created for this purpose; a blunt instrument, to be sure (and certainly not a diagnostic tool), but one that will establish a rough baseline level of happiness that can be measured again after the book's completion.

<https://bit.ly/3KQszfB>

Happiness Baseline Score (0-40 points): \_\_\_\_\_

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# Acknowledgements

Discoveries were made just this century, in the 2000s, that have upended much of what we thought we knew about our brain and how it operates. I don't think it is an exaggeration to say that when you learn about this research, described in this book, you will view yourself and the world a little bit differently.

I didn't break this story. That accolade goes to **Charles Duhigg**, author of *The Power of Habit*. This book owes a big debt to him, and also to **James Clear** and **Wendy Wood**, whose follow-on books were as compelling as Duhigg's and added new insights to this story. My hope is that this book continues the dialogue the writers above started, while adding applicability to readers' lives (the brave ones anyway) with its included gratitude habit formation plan.

Now, thanks where thanks are due: to my mother **Debbe Goddin** for proofreading my manuscript and for being my number one fan, and to my friend **Ross Wiltshire**, for re-proofreading my manuscript with a precision that only an engineer could muster. Sorry for all the rewrites; it wasn't me, even though it was.



# Preface

A 2006 Duke University study demonstrated that more than 40% of our actions each day don't result from decisions; *they're habits*. Habits are automatic behaviors we engage in without the involvement of the conscious part of our brains. They are behaviors we perform on "autopilot."

Most of us have habits that develop unbeknownst to us and without our permission or buy-in. However, advancements in neuroscience have taught us how habits are formed, the parts of the brain involved, how long the process takes, and the outside factors influencing a habit's adoption.

We now know enough about this once black-box process that we can recognize it when it occurs, to interrupt it before a bad habit takes root, or we can entirely replicate the process, to create any habit we desire for ourselves. With a bit more effort we can even rid ourselves of the bad habits no longer serving us (but this is trickier).

In clear language and using simple repeatable steps anyone can follow, this book explains how to "hack" the brain's habit formation process. It is a process scientists didn't know existed less than two decades ago, and one of which almost everyone else is still unaware. At times the information you will read will sound like science fiction, but rest assured it is not. It is all based on peer-reviewed research and scientific literature. But it is data that's still being analyzed and therefore its interpretation is still evolving.



If there was only one habit you could pick up, you could do a lot worse than gratefulness. Positive psychology has taught us of the many benefits associated with gratitude: overall better physical health, relief from depression, a healthier heart, better quality sleep, improved work performance, and better relationships. Grateful people are even considered more attractive.

If the benefits I just listed came in a pill form, there would be no limit to what I could charge for it. Well, think of this book as that pill. It is a method for developing all of those outcomes and an intervention that could have miraculous effects in your life.

This book, while a short read, is packed with what I hope is useful information. It describes the benefits of gratitude in the first chapter, then explains the science of habit formation in some detail in the second chapter, and finally combines the two subjects in the third chapter, which includes a nine-week gratitude journal. Regular and consistent use of this journal in the manner specified in this book should have profound effects in your life as you make a gratitude mindset into an automatically occurring habit.

This book began as a little book called *Journal Your Way to Bliss* that I self-published in 1999. I had originally planned to only update that book's cover, then decided to revisit what I'd written. By the time my "edits" were complete, the changes were so profound I realized this was a completely different book. Everything other than the book outline has been reimagined: content, cover, guided journal pages, title, and everything in between.

This book was not easy to write. Both the benefits of gratitude and the mechanics of habit formation are relatively new areas of research, and we've really only started to scratch the surface of understanding both of them. Each existing research study generates more questions than provides answers. With respect to the science of habit formation, in particular, the topic is popular but without consensus. Three leading experts in the field contradict each other on key points.



This book has been written in non-technical language, and often uses computer terminology to describe the biological processes of the brain when there is enough similarity to do so. I've generally used quotes to indicate my use of an imprecise computer-related term to describe one of the brain's neurological processes (e.g. the prefrontal cortex "spins down" when a habit is initiated and the basal ganglia takes over). This book is intended for a general audience, so it is written for the layman, not the scientist. This book is for people like myself, tinkerers and DIYers who want to hack their brain's habit formation process to better their lives.

I have tried to be transparent when inserting my own opinion or conclusion, and when discussing a topic in which the leading experts are not in agreement. One new study could make this book obsolete or outdated overnight, but I hope that doesn't happen.

I hope you get something out of this book, and if you find that it does markedly improve your life — and I believe that it can — then please write to me and let me know. My web site is a great way to get in touch with me.

Paul Goddin  
6 July 2023  
Washington, D.C.  
<https://godd.in/books>





Did you take the happiness self-assessment yet? If not, please  
take the short survey at  
<https://bit.ly/3KQszfB>  
then enter your score on page iv.



*"Whether you believe you can or you believe you  
can't — you're right."*

— HENRY FORD

*"You are what you repeatedly do."*

— ARISTOTLE\*

\* as paraphrased by Historian Will Durant



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## Chapter 1.

# Gratitude's Benefits

What is gratitude? It is many things, but it is primarily defined as an emotion. According to the *New Oxford American Dictionary*, it is “the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.”

Gratitude is sometimes an action: the simple declaration of “thank you” for a kind deed. It is also a spiritual concept, with theological roots in all the major religions. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam each discuss how cultivating gratitude leads to a good life.

Gratitude is a state of being related to positivity and optimism. A grateful person isn't in denial of reality or current circumstances, but that person makes the choice to recognize there is also good in almost every situation. Gratitude provides another vantage point from which to view the world: it is a wide-angle lens showing the big picture when most of us are stuck obsessing over one small detail or another.

Without gratitude, we would focus only on life's imperfections, our current struggles, and what needs “fixing” in any given moment (and



there is always something that needs fixing). Gratitude reminds us that most of the time things are actually pretty good.

Gratitude was a topic that was of great interest to ancient and medieval philosophers. **Plato**, **Aristotle**, and **Rumi** all famously expounded on the subject. Their quotes flourish today on Pinterest, BrainyQuote, and elsewhere, establishing them as influencers centuries after their deaths. Some modern philosophers, too (at least

Philosopher:	On Gratitude:
<b>Plato</b> (428–348 B.C.)	"A grateful mind is a great mind which eventually attracts to itself great things."
<b>Aristotle</b> (384–322 B.C.)	"He who has conferred a benefit on anyone from motives of love or honor will feel pain, if he sees that the benefit is received without gratitude."
<b>Rumi</b> (1207–1273)	"Be grateful for your life, every detail of it, and your face will come to shine like a sun, and everyone who sees it will be made glad and peaceful."
<b>Oprah</b> (1954– )	"When you focus on the goodness in life, you create more of it."



Fig. 1. Philosophers past and present.



if **Oprah Winfrey** can be considered one) have also had their statements on gratitude canonized on the great internet runes.

## Positive Psychology

Despite the value ancient philosophers gave to the concept of gratitude, in the modern era the topic has been of considerably less interest to learned men. The systematic study of gratitude did not begin until 1998, when a man named **Martin Seligman** introduced a new branch of psychology called **positive psychology**.

Practitioners of positive psychology emphasize their clients' strengths rather than weaknesses and focus on building up what is good rather than trying to fix what is broken or bad. They nudge clients towards behaviors that are positive and away from those that are negative. The thinking is that it is far too easy to get "stuck" in a negative mindset, and mainstream psychology's preoccupation with trauma, mental illness, abnormal psychology, pain, and fear seemed like a strange oversight to Seligman. Might that focus somehow compound patients' problems rather than alleviate them?

Ample research has been performed in the field of positive psychology to determine the traits and habits associated with greater happiness or life satisfaction. According to the Positive Psychology web site, this research is "to learn how to help people flourish and live their best lives," and gratitude has figured prominently in its research.

This research has found that an outlook or mindset of gratitude is associated with lower rates of anxiety and depression, as well as other signs of psychological unease. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions as they become more appreciative of their good experiences. The research has linked gratitude with stronger relationships and better work performance. Grateful people are also considered more likable than those who aren't. All of this adds up to an overarching correlation: grateful people are happier.



Although some people may be naturally more grateful than others, the interesting thing about gratitude is researchers have found that acting *as if* one is grateful, even if one doesn't actually feel that way, results in the same social and health improvements naturally grateful people enjoy. The takeaway is, *fake it until you make it*. Choosing to be grateful is really enough, since in this instance perhaps more so than others, behavior changes biology.

When one considers the health, psychological, and social benefits of being grateful...

- ❖ Improved mood
- ❖ Less depression
- ❖ Lower blood pressure
- ❖ Better quality sleep
- ❖ Better overall physical health
- ❖ Stronger relationships
- ❖ Better liked by peers and coworkers
- ❖ Stronger romantic relationships
- ❖ Better work performance
- ❖ Considered more attractive

... and the deeper positive character traits grateful people also demonstrate ...

- ❖ self-esteem
- ❖ optimism
- ❖ selflessness
- ❖ spirituality
- ❖ empathy

... the takeaway appears to be, Why not try to be grateful? What is there to lose?

In the short term, there are also immediate benefits to being grateful. A positive gesture is known to release a hormone called **oxytocin**, which helps create and strengthen bonds between people. An expression of gratitude also releases **dopamine** and **serotonin**, neurotransmitters responsible for our emotions that produce a “good” feeling immediately when produced. This effect is felt in both the giver and recipient of the grateful expression. Nobody



## THE MINUTE-PLUS JOURNAL

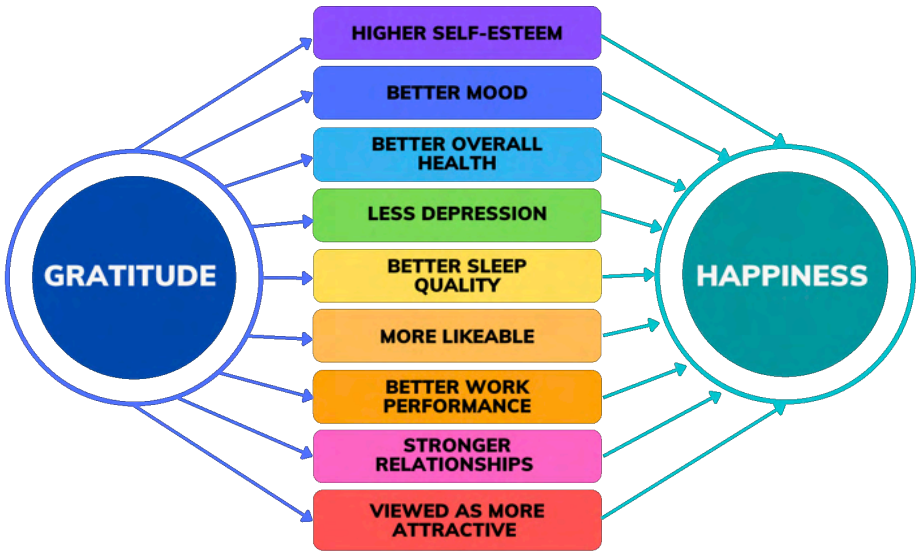


Fig. 2. Gratitude produces benefits that increase happiness.

needed a scientist to tell them that being nice and being grateful makes people feel good, but it is nice to understand precisely why that is.

There are many ways to practice gratitude, but as it relates to increasing one's happiness or life satisfaction, creating a habit of gratitude — making it an automatic and default mindset — must surely produce the most profound changes in outlook. Creating a habit requires time, repetition, planning, and intention, of course, making a gratitude journal an ideal tool with which to effectuate such a change.

## Gratitude Journaling

In a study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, it was found that individuals who counted their blessings on a frequent basis were more likely to be happy than individuals who



didn't. This shows that a gratitude journal can be an effective tool in improving one's happiness and well-being.

A gratitude journal is a diary or notebook that often (but not always) contains guided meditations designed to elicit feelings of gratitude. It is an ideal method to create a grateful outlook, and a journal is included in Chapter 4 that has been created specifically for that purpose.

The gratitude journal included in this book is also ideally suited to create a gratitude habit. It possesses the precise number of entries studies have shown are required, on average, to transform a conscious behavior into an automatic one. In order for it to work, your use of the journal must be regular and consistent for the entire length of the journal.

Gratitude journals essentially all operate the same way, and one probably isn't a lot better than any other. The important thing with respect to habit formation, which will be discussed later in the book, is that the journal be utilized every day, consistently, for an appropriate length of time. In other words, your commitment to the process must be fierce.

The gratitude journal in Chapter 4 is a series of simple questions to guide you to a grateful mindset. The questions take only a couple of minutes to answer, and have you count your blessings, which has been shown to have a measurable positive impact on happiness.

Consider the case of two men, equal in every way except materially. The poor man has few possessions, and the wealthy man has many. Research has shown that when either the rich or poor man acquires a new possession, there is a corresponding spike in happiness directly afterwards. The spike is temporary, though. The improvement is short-lived and quickly settles back to its baseline. In other words, accruing possessions or wealth doesn't make someone meaningfully happier.

So what does?



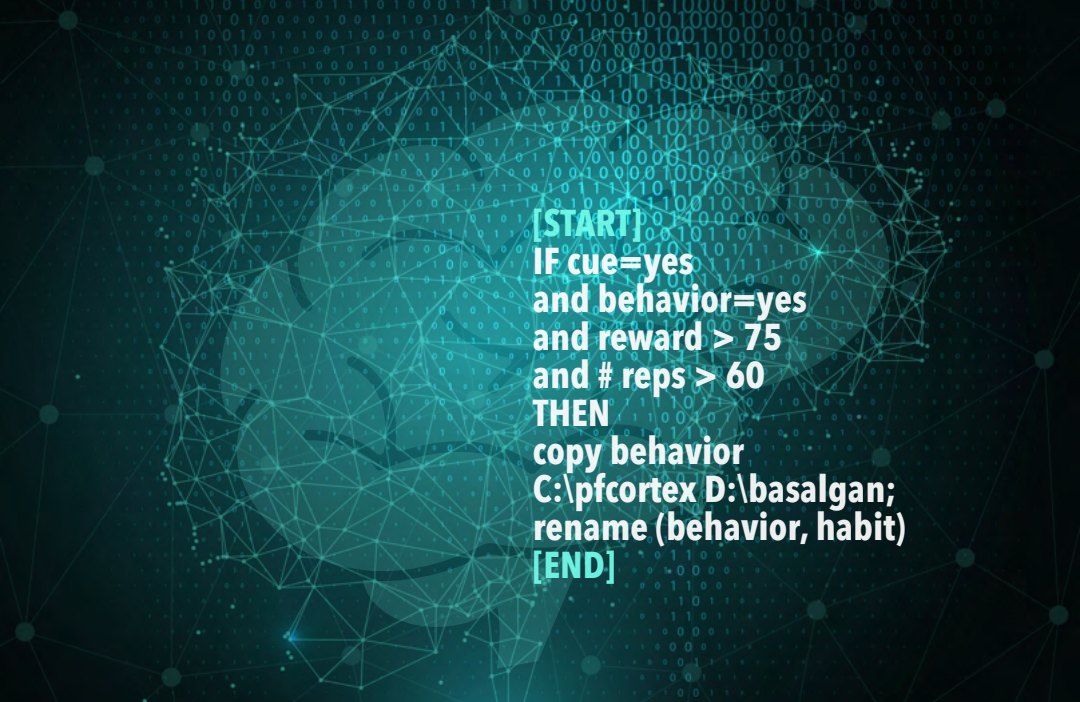
*It is not joy that makes us grateful;  
it is gratitude that makes us joyful*

Meaningful happiness, it turns out, occurs from our good relationships with others and our appreciation of being alive and fully present at any moment. It also happens when someone, despite his or her circumstances, focuses their attention on what they already possess, and expresses gratitude for the presence of it in their life. This attitude dramatically changes the person exhibiting exhibiting it, so much so that their relationships with others also begin to rapidly improve. Being present and appreciating one's life, with strong supportive relationships one cherishes... these add up to a marked improvement in happiness.

As the old saying goes, money won't buy happiness, nor will material possessions. The decision to be grateful stems from this idea: happiness doesn't come from acquiring the things we don't have, but from taking stock of and appreciating the things we do.

Put another way: *It is not joy that makes us grateful; it is gratitude that makes us joyful.*





```
[START]
IF cue=yes
and behavior=yes
and reward > 75
and # reps > 60
THEN
copy behavior
C:\pfcortex D:\basalgan;
rename (behavior, habit)
[END]
```

## Chapter 2.

# Habit Mastery

Have you ever “zoned out” while driving home from work, becoming lost down a rabbit hole of thought, and when you finally snapped out of it were surprised to find you had arrived home safely even though you had no memory of the drive? That’s because the habit of driving home was invoked during your commute, and the routine behaviors involved in getting there unspooled in a different part of your brain than where conscious thought resides. The conscious part of your brain, unnecessary for the task at hand, was allowed to roam freely, which you experienced as daydreaming about other aspects of your life, tasks you needed to accomplish, or other thoughts unrelated to driving your vehicle.

A habit is a behavior or action that has been repeatedly performed with such regularity that one can engage in it without thinking about it; it is a behavior that’s performed on “autopilot.” Habits are so automatic, in fact, we’re often not aware we are doing them at all, as was the case in the above example. When we



*are* aware that we're engaging in a habit, we rely on this awareness to believe that we are in control of it; that we are acting with intention. Neither of these are true. As shocking and disconcerting as that may be, rest assured that by the end of this chapter, insight into the habit formation process will give back some measure of that control.

Habits can be as simple as scratching an itch or as complex as all of the individual actions that converge in the operation of a motor vehicle. The key detail is that they take place below our conscious awareness of performing them. It might surprise you to learn that a researcher at Duke University found that over 40% of our actions each day are habits.

**Aristotle** said, "You are what you do every day," and **William James** said, "All our life, so far as it has definite form, is but a mass of habits." Both men were acknowledging the importance of habits to define who we are, but even they would be surprised at how independently habits operate compared to our other behaviors, how hidden they are from conscious awareness, and how shielded they are from interference.

Most of the time, habits form without our buy-in or intent. In fact, by and large they seem to "just happen" to people. Even worse, many of the habits we develop aren't particularly beneficial or even useful to us. Brushing one's teeth is a good habit, certainly. Other habits, like the ones associated with having "good manners" (holding the door open for an elder or saying "thank you" after a nicety) may not be particularly useful but their ability to keep us civilized is a good thing. Other habits, like picking at scabs, cracking knuckles, and habitually checking social media accounts are neither useful nor beneficial, while others, such as screaming at one's children or doing hard drugs deserve to be classified as negative or harmful habits. The reason habits seem to "just happen" to people is most aren't aware of how habits are formed and what causes the brain to invoke them. Not even neuroscientists knew this twenty years ago. Recent research has changed all that. but it hasn't yet become common knowledge.



## Neuroscience

Just as positive psychology has advanced our understanding of the benefits of gratitude, the field of **neuroscience** has advanced our understanding of the brain. Studies performed on the brains of both mice and human beings using advanced imaging technologies such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) have led to new insights and challenged old assumptions about the brain.

Using advanced imaging technology, neuroscientists have peered into the brain at the moment a new habit is created, and have witnessed the birth of new neurons and the creation of new neural connections associated with this. They have pinpointed the exact structures in the brain involved in forming habits, and they lie in an ancient, interior part of the brain that's so primitive, humans share it with all other mammals: the **basal ganglia**.

The **prefrontal cortex** is where conscious thought resides and is associated with complex decision making. It is the part of the brain responsible for what scientists call **executive control functions**. It is the part of the brain most of us consider the seat of who we are. The basal ganglia, on the other hand, has long been known as being responsible for motor functions like breathing and walking, behaviors we engage in automatically and over which we have little control. We now understand that the basal ganglia is also associated with habit behaviors.

The association of habits with the basal ganglia makes sense, given our understanding of how these automatic behaviors operate below conscious awareness. Compare this to another behavior controlled by the basal ganglia: breathing. Breathing is an automatic behavior over which it is possible to exert only a limited amount of control. By focusing on one's breath it is possible to speed up or slow down one's rate of breathing, but our control doesn't extend much further than that. The desire to stop breathing does not permit one to do that for any length of time, and any control one exerts over the rate of their breath, for instance, evaporates the moment their mental focus shifts elsewhere. This is equivalent to the amount of



control anyone has over habits, as well. While a habit can be influenced to a degree by focusing on it, once that focus is removed, the habit behavior proceeds unabated.

A habit is a group of related actions that are performed sequentially. Even a relatively simple task like brushing one's teeth is a number of many smaller actions performed one at a time: taking the cap off the toothpaste, squeezing the toothpaste onto the brush, inserting the brush into the mouth, and so on. These individual steps are grouped together into a **routine** in the brain, in a process scientists call "chunking." Habits exist for behavioral routines; repeatable sequences of events operating together to accomplish a result.

When a new behavior is performed, the brain creates a neural pathway (or synapse) between neurons in different parts of it. Repeating the behavior makes the connection grow stronger, while abstaining from it makes the connection grow weaker. Stronger synapses for established habits are more entrenched and harder to break than newer ones. To make matters even more difficult for the person trying to break a habit, when the habit behavior begins to unspool in the basal ganglia, a hormone is produced that discourages the prefrontal cortex from interfering with it. The brain, all other things equal, tends to prefer habits over behaviors resulting from decisions. This makes habits resilient and hard to get rid of once established, which isn't great news for someone trying to kick a drug problem, for instance.

Why are habit behaviors, associated with the primitive basal ganglia, preferred over behaviors associated with the much more

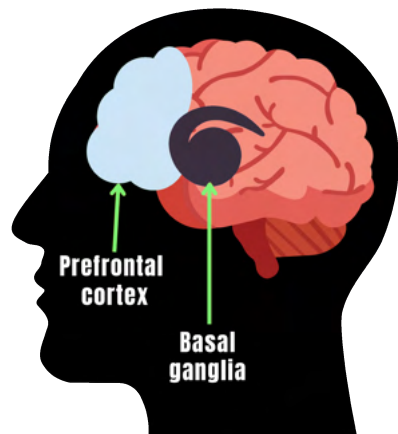


Fig. 3. The basal ganglia is associated with habits and prefrontal cortex is associated with complex decision making.



advanced prefrontal cortex? One might assume that, evolutionarily speaking, behaviors resulting from calculation and deliberation would provide an advantage with respect to survival over less reasoned, more instinctual ones. While that may be the case in some circumstances, it isn't in all. Sometimes the best behavior for survival is simply the quickest one instead of the smartest one.

Scientists theorize that the brain prefers habit behaviors over calculated ones primarily due to reasons of energy efficiency. Consider that the brain is essentially an organic computer, and, like a computer, has a tendency to overheat and sometimes freeze up when processing too much data. The prefrontal cortex is responsible for the majority of the brain's "CPU cycles." Any decision that can be taken off its plate is good from an energy efficiency perspective. When a habit behavior commences, scientists have witnessed the prefrontal cortex "spinning down" and resting while the more efficient basal ganglia takes over.

Habits are a good way to conserve the brain's energy, but there's also a benefit to our psyche derived from their existence. Remember the first time you decided you were going to start going to the gym. Perhaps the decision resulted from finally becoming fed up with your weight and deciding "enough is enough." Whatever the reason, the decision to start exercising probably wasn't an easy one. Lifestyle changes are hard. But you weighed the pros and cons, deliberated, and made the decision. This is what the prefrontal cortex was made for.

Now imagine going through that anguish *every time* you wanted to go to the gym. That would be awful, wouldn't it? Thankfully, the brain has a mechanism whereby you needn't go through that process every time you work out. It is a learning system for repeated behavioral routines where the routine is copied from the prefrontal cortex to the basal ganglia, allowing the routine to be performed without taxing or even engaging the prefrontal cortex at all. This is a benefit we derive from the brain's ability to form habits.

It is important to note that every habit, of course, was at one point a decision. The habit of where to eat lunch, when to take a coffee



break, which route to drive to work, and so on, was at one point a fairly complex decision that needed to be made. Some time after that, however, that decision turned into a habit, such that the brain no longer had to expend resources calculating the pros and cons for that behavioral routine.

Scientists say that without the basal ganglia, humans would quickly become overwhelmed by the complexities involved in daily life today. When the prefrontal cortex becomes thus overloaded, fed too much data and expected to output more decisions than it is capable, it behaves exactly like a computer would: it freezes. That's what we would soon experience without the basal ganglia and habit formation process, scientists contend: we would freeze, unable to take the next action.

There is another aspect of the basal ganglia and habit formation process that increased the likelihood of our ancestors surviving: it gave them "excess bandwidth" in the prefrontal cortex with which to daydream and invent all sorts of ways for society to advance, including learning farming, harnessing fire, outwitting predators, building weapons, all the way up to creating the internet and exploring space.

## Neuroplasticity

The brain's ability to create new neurons and neural connections when new behaviors are learned and performed relates to an overarching theory of the brain that is quite different than the way we once thought this organ operated.

Not so long ago the brain was believed to be fairly static in adulthood. We believed that it developed and matured throughout youth, but at about age 20 or the brain "hardened" into its mature and relatively fixed form, not unlike cement curing. The theory was in keeping with what was understood about the development of other organs, and the body, generally, from birth to maturity.



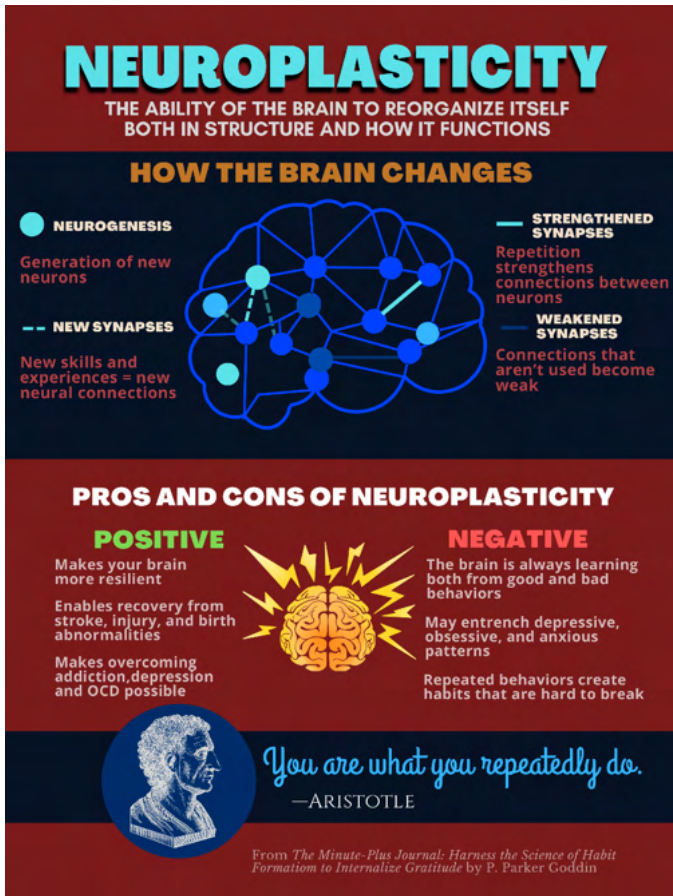


Fig. 4. Neuroplasticity infographic

Recent neuroscience research has corrected the old, incorrect "cement" theory of brain development. We now understand that the brain is changing *all the time* in people of *all ages*. It changes a tiny bit with every thought, action, and feeling experienced. It is actually quite malleable, able to reorganize and "rewire" itself in certain circumstances, even creating new neural pathways and new neurons (in a process called neurogenesis) when needed. This capacity is called **neuroplasticity**, a quality that permits new habits to be created in people of any age, allows the brain to regenerate and reorganize



itself, and gives hope to those suffering from brain injuries or drug addiction by facilitating healing in parts of the brain damaged by drug use or injury.

## The Habit Loop

Arguably the biggest advancement in the understanding of how the brain forms habits didn't originate from science, research, or academia, and didn't even happen this century. It came from the mind of an advertising executive by the name of **Claude C. Hopkins** (sometimes called the father of "scientific advertising"), who observed the "formula" for creating a habit over 90 years ago.

In a way it is fitting that such a discovery would come from advertising. The discipline's preoccupation with the habits of shoppers and the vast wealth that was promised to them for influencing said habits made the discovery almost inevitable. Nevertheless, it appears that Hopkins stumbled upon his find almost by accident. One can imagine the advertising industry holding up such a find — a method of creating a shopping habit in consumers — as a kind of Holy Grail. After all, a consumer who prefers your product is one thing, but a consumer who buys your product out of habit and no longer even considers the competition is a gold mine.

First, it should be prefaced that Hopkins' discovery occurred in the 1930s in America. He was attempting to sell consumers on a relatively new product called Pepsodent toothpaste. Back then oral hygiene was only practiced in about 10% of American homes and the surgeon general had declared oral health a national crisis, yet no one could figure out how to convince consumers they needed to clean their teeth and mouths with the same regularity and care they cleaned the rest of their body.

Hopkins understood if he was going to succeed at selling Pepsodent he would need to convince consumers they needed to add a new ritual into their morning routine: one of brushing their teeth, preferably using his client's brand of toothpaste. In other words,



*Hopkins needed to convince consumers to adopt a new habit.* He wasn't the first to try this, nor was Pepsodent the first product on the market aimed at addressing the problem. On the contrary, countless other tinctures and remedies had been foisted upon consumers to address this issue a new type of paste was just the most recent iteration.

In brainstorming the problem, Hopkins came up with the characteristics of a habit, which also can be used as a kind of formula for creating a new habit. He called it the **habit loop**:

1. **Cue:** The habit loop begins with a cue or trigger, which can be an external or internal prompt that initiates the habit. Cues can be various stimuli, such as a specific location, time of day, emotional state, or certain actions.
2. **Routine:** The cue prompts a habitual routine or behavior, which is the action or behavior that follows the cue. This routine can be physical, mental, or emotional in nature and often serves as a response to the cue.
3. **Reward:** The routine is followed by a reward, which is the positive outcome or satisfaction associated with the habit. Rewards can be tangible or psychological and provide a sense of pleasure, relief, or gratification.

When using the habit loop to assist the creation of a new habit, one simply creates or names a cue for the routine behavior and a reward for performing engaging in it.

It's a fairly straightforward concept. When a behavioral routine is repeated many times, a cue (which is often a sound, another person, or a location) directly preceding it can become associated with the routine, and then serve as a "trigger" for performance of the routine. Likewise, a reward can also become associated with a routine such that the subject knows that engagement in the routine will produce the reward. The reward incentivizes performance of the routine. More significantly, though, the cue itself becomes associated with the reward such that appearance of the cue signals to the brain of the subject that the routine is about to begin or should be started, which



means the reward will be coming soon. Using a cue and reward, Hopkins said, ensures a routine becomes a habit without any resistance from the subject.

Using the components of the habit loop, Hopkins was able to sell Americans on a new daily behavior: brushing their teeth (the routine). He did so by producing ad campaigns that defined a problem, the dirty film one sometimes feels on one's teeth (the cue). He then proposed the solution, brushing one's teeth every day with Pepsodent (the routine) and told them their reward would be a more attractive smile. It is likely the reward was also the immediate, pleasant, cool and tingling feeling consumers got from the Pepsodent toothpaste. For adoption of a habit, an immediate sensation works better as an incentive than a long term promise, although it can be motivating as well.

Hopkins' plan worked exceedingly well: he inspired an entire country of people to simultaneously start engaging in a new daily habit, and became very wealthy in the process. He may not have fully understood it at the time, but by invoking the habit formation process in consumers' brains, he was circumventing their conscious thought processes. While the habit Hopkins created was beneficial, one can imagine the same prefrontal cortex-circumnavigating techniques being used for less benign purposes.\*

After his success with Pepsodent, Hopkins boasted that he could create any habit he wanted in people so long as he had the right cue and reward. That may not have been hyperbole.

Now, 90 years later, we Americans dutifully brush our teeth *en masse* once or twice a day, not because the dentist recommends it, but because an advertising executive engineered a rather persistent habit in the brains of our forebears. The dentist's recommendation is nice, of course, but it means little to the brain when it comes to a habit.

---

\* Indeed, they have been: McDonald's uses knowledge of the habit loop in the design of its restaurants, which all look identical by design, so that any of them can serve as a cue to create or invoke a McDonald's eating habit.



In recent years, researchers at MIT have validated the observations Hopkins made about the habit loop. They witnessed neural activity corresponding with the steps Hopkins described, confirming the habit loop as a viable method of creating a habit.

What Hopkins didn't understand at the time was that the cue and reward in the brain sometimes create a neurological craving for the habit behavior. Some recent representations of the habit loop incorporate craving into the process in some manner. Experts are not in agreement as to how often cravings develop. James Clear contends that a craving is always present if a habit exists. Clear places *craving* into the habit loop, after *cue* and before *routine*, as seen in [Fig. 5](#). The writer of this book rather prefers the stance of **Wendy Wood**, however. Wood, author of *Good Habits, Bad Habits*, suggests cravings only develop when a habit approaches the level of an addiction. This makes sense, and would also factor in differences among subjects. One person can try cocaine once and never desire to pick it up again, while another person can do it once and immediately get hooked. Why wouldn't we expect habit cravings to have a similar variability?

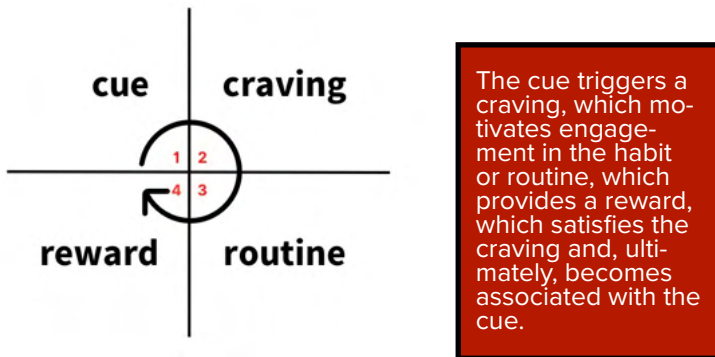


Fig. 5. James Clear's "Habit Loop"

The following are real-world examples of habit loops using Clear's four-part model:



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1. Cue	2. Craving	3. Routine	4. Reward
Your phone emits a message alert sound.	Desire to know the message contents.	You pick up your phone and read the message.	You satisfy your curiosity. Checking your phone becomes associated with the alert sound.
It's payday and you had a tough work week.	Desire to treat yourself to some "retail therapy."	You go shopping and splurge on an expensive skin cream.	Pampering yourself makes you feel better. Frivolous spending becomes associated with payday.
You see a post on Facebook about the President that is patently untrue but entertaining.	You're craving social contact and validation.	You repost the story even though you're spreading misinformation which is bad for democracy.	Your post gets a lot of attention, satisfying your need for validation. Salacious posts become associated with you reposting them.

## Habit Formation in the Brain

When the brain turns a routine into a habit, the routine becomes associated with the basal ganglia as if it is being *copied from* the prefrontal cortex over to the basal ganglia, but we don't know if such a transfer actually occurs. We know only that a routine, when it becomes a habit, becomes the domain of the basal ganglia rather than prefrontal cortex. We also do not know exactly when that change-over takes place, only that it occurs after many repetitions of the routine. Once the brain understands that a routine is a repeating pattern that will likely be used in its current form in the future, the brain will initiate transforming it into a habit, with the change in domain mentioned earlier.

We have known little about the conditions leading to formation of a habit other than there must be many repetitions of the behavior



first. How many though, has been anyone's guess. It is thought that the brain needs to be "convinced" that a habit is needed for the routine, that an energy savings will result from making a new habit. In addition to how many repetitions are needed, we also haven't known how far apart recurrences of the routine need to be (one week, one day, one hour). Researchers have used "one day between recurrences" as the de facto standard, however.

A 2010 study by a researcher in England named **Phillippa Lally** was conducted to shed some light on these questions. The results of that study showed that it takes anywhere between 18–254 daily repetitions of a routine for it to become a habit, with an overall average of 66 repetitions. The number of repetitions needed varied according to the individual/subject and the complexity of the routine behavior. Lally got us a little closer to a definitive number, but her research needs refinement. At this time the best answer to the question, "How long does it take to create a habit?" is approximately 66 days.

Lally's study demonstrated that gratitude becomes a habit in less time than the average of 66 days/repetitions. Thus, this program to develop a habit of gratitude uses a nine-week (63-day) gratitude journal, which you will find in Chapter 4.

Knowledge of the brain's habit formation process (i.e., the habit loop) is essential if one wants to make a new habit or change an existing one. When one understands that each habit one possesses likely has an associated cue and reward, one can then be on the lookout for these. Once recognized, it is then possible to manipulate or "fiddle with" those components to discover how one's habit is affected. For instance, removing or changing a cue or reward has been shown to eliminate a habit altogether in some cases. Another option is to keep an existing cue but change the routine it triggers. Knowledge of the habit loop permits that kind of experimentation.



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However, do so with care. The information provided here amounts to a brain hack; a hidden back door to your brain's source code. Use your new power wisely.

*The information provided here amounts to a brain hack. Use your new power wisely.*





Chapter 3.

# Applying What You've Learned

## Creating a New Habit

Awareness of the habit loop will allow you to create new habits with intention, versus having them develop seemingly randomly, as is the experience for most people. Understanding that a cue and a reward are needed for a behavioral routine to become a habit, your task is to choose what these will be for the gratitude journaling routine you will practice in Chapter 4. The following table, adapted from James Clear's writings, shows the traits your cue and reward should possess.

To Create a Habit

Step:	Should be...
1. Cue	Obvious
2. Routine (Habit)	Easy
3. Reward	Satisfying



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We have established that the reward for gratitude journaling will the assorted benefits that develop from such a mindset. However, this is more of a medium- or long-term reward. To facilitate formation of a habit, a short-term external reward works best. Your task is to select one; something you can give yourself after journaling each day: a favorite treat or a fun activity, perhaps.

Understand, though, that the gratitude journal included in this book is a twice-daily activity over nine weeks — once in the morning and once in the evening, necessitating two daily rewards. A cupcake would be a poorer choice than a sugar-free candy in this instance.

Next, you will select a cue that will set off or trigger your gratitude journal routine. If you select a time-based cue, then choosing a unique ringtone or alarm to trigger your journaling every day would work well.

When creating new habits, simple routines are more likely to be adopted as a habit than complicated ones, and are adopted as habits in less time as well. To this end, we have made your routine as easy and frictionless as possible. The journal in Chapter 4 requires no setting up or tailoring. Simply turn the page and begin. Other than selecting a physical location for the routine and devising a cue and reward, you won't need to lift a finger before you begin journaling.

When you have selected a cue and reward, please enter them below:

<b>Cue:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Routine:</b>	Twice daily entries in gratitude journal
<b>Reward:</b>	<input type="text"/>



## Kicking a Bad Habit

While unrelated to this book's gratitude project, at some point most readers will want to know how to eliminate an established habit that no longer serves them or is otherwise problematic. Eliminating an unwanted habit (which means, making it so that a particular habit behavior only occurs from a conscious decision) is more difficult than creating a new one, but it can be done.

Once again, knowledge about the habit loop is key. One should be on the lookout for the habit's cue and reward. Once identified, one should attempt to remove the cue or alter the reward, then observe how the unwanted behavior is affected. A one-page **habit tracker** table is a good tool to use for this purpose (the web page for this book has free downloads for readers, including a habit tracker. See <https://godd.in/books>).

If a craving is associated with this habit behavior, determining the craving (which will differ from person to person) is very helpful to eliminating an undesired habit. A habit's craving is not always easily determined. A smoker, for instance, might light a cigarette for many reasons: to experience the chemical effects of the nicotine, because they are bored, to socialize, or to calm anxiety in a group situation. Look inside yourself the next time you experience a craving and ask what you were feeling at the time.

Remember, though, it is impossible to remove a habit completely. Each habit a person possesses is etched into the structure of their brain. This is the reason some learned things cannot be unlearned. Take riding a bicycle, for instance. You've probably heard the phrase, "It's like riding a bicycle," that represents this idea.

When one first learns how to ride a bike, it can feel impossible, as if the synchronization of balancing, pedaling, steering, and environment scanning is too complex... until the moment it isn't, and on that attempt your bike remains upright as it all just clicks into place.



The moment it all "clicks" into place, the research suggests, is likely when one's brain has actually copied the routine over to the basal ganglia. The newly formed neural connections aren't terribly strong at first, which is why you're a bit wobbly at first. Over time, these synapses will grow stronger, the habit will become more entrenched, and you will be a cycling pro.

No matter how many years you step away from cycling, the moment you get back on a bike (the cue) and begin to pedal (the routine) it will be as if you never stepped away from the activity. The wind blowing through your hair as you zoom past houses and pedestrians (the reward) will make you wonder why you stepped away from cycling at all.

This aspect of habits — their apparent permanence — is both advantageous and disadvantageous. On the one hand, no one wants to have to relearn how to drive a car after taking a vacation. On the other hand, when the bad habit is a drug addiction, the ability to forget its associated habits would be a godsend. The problem is, the brain can't tell a good habit from a bad one; they're all just routines providing rewards, thus it will store (and never forget) a bad habit as easily as a good one.

So, even if you haven't engaged in a bad habit in a long time, it still sits there waiting for the right cue and reward to come back into your life again.

That said, habits are not destiny. But because your prefrontal cortex essentially powers down when a cue for a habit is received, you will have to be very intentional and determined to break it, or even to just not engage in it.

James Clear has said that in order to remove a habit, one should focus on making the parts of the habit loop take on the following aspects:



### To Remove a Habit

Step:	Should be:
1. Cue	Invisible
2. Routine (Habit)	Difficult
3. Reward	Unsatisfying

Wendy Wood claims the easiest way to eliminate a habit is to attack one's environment. Many cues are related to a place, so if you can change your location, you can erase one of the cues for the unwanted habit. There is a saying in **Alcoholics Anonymous** (AA) that encapsulates this idea. It is a phrase old-timers often recite to newcomers: "If you hang out in a barbershop long enough, sooner or later you'll get a haircut." There is another similar piece of advice commonly heard in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous (NA): a warning to stay away from the "people, places, and things" associated with using. Both pieces of advice are about avoiding the cues (triggers) for a drinking or drugging habit. As Wood advised, start with environment, but don't forget the people and things associated with the habit you want to kick, either.

## Changing a Habit

Another easy way to kick a bad habit is simply to change it into something else; preferably into something beneficial. To do that you will keep in place the cue and reward, but change the routine to something completely different than the original habit. It will help if you can create a craving for the new habit. You might consider giving yourself a special treat every time you complete the routine, especially in the beginning.



The above method will supplant your bad habit with a new one and is more effective than simply trying to remove the unwanted habit. Interestingly, once again this is a key method used by 12 step programs like AA and NA to get members to stop drinking and using. AA, for instance, uses the same cues for attending a meeting as exist for going to a bar: time of day, occasion, or feeling. Whatever cue led you to a bar, it can be used to get you to a meeting. Twelve step groups give out lots of rewards, in the form of chips for days sober and acknowledgement and support from the group when counting days.

In the end, however, it's the social rewards of 12 step that equate to rewards of drinking and using for most people. And that is 12 step's great advantage: a support system composed of people in active addiction will never be able to hold a candle to the support from those same people when clean and sober. will receive from the same people who are clean and sober. It is "the Fellowship" that really bolsters all of the other habit-changing methods of 12 step groups.

As much as **Bill Wilson**, founder of AA and writer of the twelve steps, believed spirituality was the basis for his sobriety and the sobriety of every member of a twelve-step group, there's solid evidence that AA and its offshoots succeed, at least in part, because of how good that program is at changing members' habits. The social support of the fellowship takes one of the rewards of drinking and using, but improves it dramatically. This writer can't help but believe that quality of the reward can assist the brain with swapping out one routine for another to eliminate a bad habit.

Because this little book is about creating a new good habit out of gratitude, though, it will not delve any deeper into the subject of habit removal, but both *The Power of Habit* by Charles Duhigg and *Atomic Habits* by James Clear discuss this subject thoroughly.

And now, it appears you are ready to create a positive and transformative new habit, a **state of gratitude**, beginning on the next page.





## Chapter 4.

# Making Gratitude a Habit

In the journal that begins in a couple of pages, you will answer focused questions that will orient you towards a gratitude mindset. This is a twice-daily activity to be performed once after you wake up and again before you go to bed, directly following the cue you have pre-selected. This activity will take little more than a minute or two per sitting. Follow up your journaling with a small reward — a piece of sugar-free candy, perhaps. The cue and reward will facilitate the formation of a habit out of your grateful mindset.

The journal that follows contains 63 daily check-in pages, one page for each day, to elicit your gratitude. In addition, there are nine mood tracker summary pages to be filled out weekly, by simply re-entering data from that week's journal entries. Use this to look for trends and patterns, an activity that will improve your ability to be self aware, which is crucial for personal growth.

Through simple repetition, your gratitude mindset — no matter how unnatural it feels at first — will start to become familiar and



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comfortable. By the end of nine weeks, you will have established optimal conditions for your brain to make gratitude into a transformative habit.

If and when this occurs, new neural connections will have been created in your brain corresponding to this new habit. You will no longer have to consciously decide to be grateful; you just will be. First your outlook will improve as will your quality of life, and you will realize that you are happier.

Are you ready to begin?



# Instructions

## How to Use This Gratitude Journal

Note that the journal entry number (1-63) appears on each page in a light gray typeface.

Enter the date, day of week, and weather at the start of each day.

A different notable quote relating to gratitude sets the tone for each day.

Track daily hydration using the updated-for-2023 rule of 1.5 liters (6 cups) of water per day.

**A.M. ENTRY**

Enter time and current mood, then respond to the prompts.

**P.M. ENTRY**

MINI JRNL GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow. — Melody Beattie

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

S M T W T F S

TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ MOOD: \_\_\_\_\_

I am grateful for another opportunity to make my life better. Each day is a new fresh start.

Today's Affirmations:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you grateful for today?

TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ MOOD: \_\_\_\_\_

What was good about today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you looking forward to tomorrow?

NOTES/REMINDERS: \_\_\_\_\_

A general initial affirmation has been pre-filled each day to inspire you to create two more specific to your life.

Mark your morning mood and evening mood and look for patterns over time.

Enter a note in the free-form section to elaborate on anything unusual or special about your day.

Mood emojis include excited, happy, content, worried, sad, sorrowful, and angry.





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

one

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more.  
— *Melody Beattie*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for all that is abundant in my life; I want for nothing.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





## GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

two

The way to move out of judgment is to move into gratitude.  
—Neale Donald Walsh

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for the gift of another day on Earth.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

three

Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues  
but the parent of all others.  
— *Marcus Tullius Cicero*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for my talents and my intellect.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

four

Some people are always grumbling because roses have thorns; I am thankful that thorns have roses. — *Alphonse Karr*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for my ability to read, which exposes me to limitless new ideas.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

five

Gratitude is the fairest blossom which  
springs from the soul.  
— *Henry Ward Beecher*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

● I am grateful for the family who raised me, for they shaped me into the unique person I am today.

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

six

Gratitude is a powerful catalyst for happiness. It's the spark that lights a fire of joy in your soul. — *Amy Collette*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

I am grateful for this enormous, abundant world, all that I've seen in it, and all I have yet to see.

---

---

---

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

---

---

---

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

---

---

---

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

---

---

---

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

seven

Gratitude is when memory is stored in the heart and not in the mind. —*Lionel Hampton*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

I am grateful for my body: my bones, blood, muscles & organs, all working in concert and coming together to make "me."

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





## WEEKLY SUMMARY

THROUGH

# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

## EVENING MOOD:

## A cartoon illustration of a hand holding a pencil, pointing to a question mark. The hand is stylized with a large thumb and index finger holding the pencil. The question mark is large and bold, with a small circle above it. The background is white.





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

eight

Joy is the simplest form of  
gratitude.  
— *Karl Barth*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for down time and free time; time to do the things I love.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

nine

Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow. — *Melody Beattie*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



I am grateful for another opportunity to make my life better. Each day is a new fresh start.

Today's Affirmations:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you grateful for today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was good about today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you looking forward to tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

ten

You cannot do a kindness too soon because  
you never know how soon it will be too late.  
— *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for the work I do now – whatever that is – for many are jobless.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

eleven

The more grateful I am, the more  
beauty I see. —*Mary Davis*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for my home; the roof over my head protecting from the elements and keeping me safe.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

twelve

There is a calmness to a life lived in gratitude, a quiet joy. — *Ralph H. Blum*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's Affirmations:

● People like doing nice things for me, and I am worthy of that and all the blessings the Universe is bestowing upon me.

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you grateful for today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was good about today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you looking forward to tomorrow?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

thirteen

Gratitude will shift you to a higher frequency, and you will attract much better things. — *Rhonda Byrne*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for surprises; life is an unpredictable adventure.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

fourteen

I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought, and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder. —*K. Chesterton*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- Today, I am more than enough.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# MOOD TRACKER

## WEEKLY SUMMARY

DATE  THROUGH  DATE

## GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

WATER:

WEATHER:

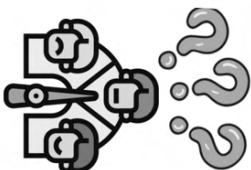
MORNING MOOD:

EVENING MOOD:

DAY 1:																			
DAY 2:																			
DAY 3:																			
DAY 4:																			
DAY 5:																			
DAY 6:																			
DAY 7:																			

### NOTES/TRENDS:

At the end of the week summarize your a.m. and p.m. mood entries along with each day's weather and water intake and note any correlations or trends, both within the current week and in comparison to other weeks. #selfawareness







# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

fifteen

Gratitude is the sign of noble souls.  
—Aesop

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- All challenges are an opportunity for growth, and I am thankful for the chance to evolve.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

sixteen

Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have you will never, ever have enough. —*Oprah Winfrey*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I give thanks for the helpful spirits and ancestors that guide me in this life journey.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

seventeen

The root of joy is gratefulness.  
— David Steindl-Rast

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for the beauty in nature that surrounds me.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
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- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

eighteen

Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us. — *Albert Schweitzer*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am thankful for the positive relationships in my life.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

nineteen

We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures. — *Thornton Wilder*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am so blessed that I woke up this morning; many did not have the privilege.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





## GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

twenty

Nothing is more honorable than a grateful heart. — *Lucius Annaeus Seneca*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- Thank you for second chances and opportunities to mend fences.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

twenty-one

When I started counting my blessings,  
my whole life turned around.  
— *Willie Nelson*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am learning to be grateful for what I have while being excited for what has yet to come.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





## WEEKLY SUMMARY

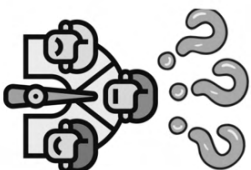
THROUGH

# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

## EVENING MOOD:

[illegible]

At the end of the week summarize your a.m. and p.m. mood entries along with each day's weather and water intake and note any correlations or trends, both within the current week and in comparison to other weeks. #selfawareness







# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

twenty-two

We often take for granted the very things  
that most deserve our gratitude.  
— *Cynthia Ozick*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for discovering my power to create the reality I will love.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
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- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

twenty-three

He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things that he has not, but rejoices for those which he has. — *Epictetus*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I see improvements in my life, and I am both astounded by and grateful for all of them.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

twenty-four

Gratitude is the most exquisite form of courtesy. — *Jacques Maritain*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for the time I have been given on Earth.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

twenty-five

Gratitude for the present moment and the fullness of life now is true prosperity.  
— *Eckhart Tolle*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for all of my qualities, both "good" and "bad."
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

twenty-six

Gratitude is the healthiest of all human emotions. — *Zig Ziglar*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for my friends, both old and new.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

twenty-seven

No one who achieves success does so without the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude. —*Alfred North Whitehead*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

● I am grateful for my wrinkles and gray hair (or no hair), for they remind me that life is fleeting.

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

twenty-eight

Gratitude helps you to grow and expand;  
gratitude brings joy and laughter into  
your life. — *Eileen Caddy*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am worthy of being loved, being happy, and doing that which brings me joy.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# WEEKLY SUMMARY

THROUGH

# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

## EVENING MOOD:

## NOTES/TRENDS:





## GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

twenty-nine

The more gratitude I feel, the more I  
am aware that the supply is endless.  
— *Louise Hay*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for the past, for it is my teacher; and for the future, for it is my opportunity.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

thirty

We must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them. — *John F. Kennedy*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful that every day is a new opportunity to create who I want to be.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

thirty-one

Your current life is the result of your previous choices. If you want something different, begin to choose differently.  
— *Joe Tichio*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I'm grateful that the healthy habits I'm creating are becoming second-nature and automatic as new neural connections are created.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

thirty-two

Expressions of gratitude are moral  
reinforcers.

— *Michael E. McCullough et al.*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for all the help from others at my disposal, even as I realize I am more capable than I ever thought possible.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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- 
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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

thirty-three

Love yourself first and everything else falls into line. You really have to love yourself to get anything done in this world.  
— *Lucille Ball*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for children, and all the possibility they represent.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

thirty-four

Growth is painful. Change is painful. But nothing is as painful as staying stuck somewhere you don't belong.  
— *Narayana Murthy*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am beautiful, I am worthy, I am loved.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

thirty-five

Of all crimes that human creatures are capable of committing, the most horrid and unnatural is ingratitude.  
— *David Hume*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

● I am grateful for the cycle of regrowth that happens in the world through the changing of seasons and happens in my body with the creation of new cells.

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

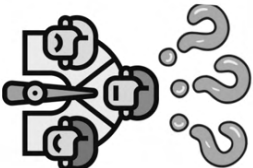
NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

## EVENING MOOD:







# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

thirty-six

Gratitude may be one means by which tragedies are transformed into opportunities for growth.  
— *Emmons and Crumpler*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am in the right place at the right time doing the right thing.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

thirty-seven

Living in a state of gratitude is the gateway to grace.

— Arianna Huffington

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's Affirmations:

- Courage starts with just showing up and being seen.
- 
- 

What are you grateful for today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was good about today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you looking forward to tomorrow?

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- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

thirty-eight

Joy is the simplest form of gratitude.  
— *Karl Barth*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I open up my heart and drink in this glorious day.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

thirty-nine

I awoke this morning with devout  
thanksgiving for my friends, the old and  
the new. — *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- That perfect moment you've been waiting for? This is it.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

forty

I am happy because I am grateful. I choose to be grateful. That gratitude allows me to be happy. — *Will Arnett*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- Hell yes I'm good enough; dumb question!
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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- 
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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

forty-one

"Enough" is a feast.  
— *Buddhist Proverb*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am love. I am purpose. I was made with divine intention.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

forty-two

Sometimes you face difficulties not because you're doing something wrong, but because you're doing something right.  
— *Joel Osteen*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am worthy of what I desire.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
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NOTES/REMINDERS:























































































































## WEEKLY SUMMARY

THROUGH

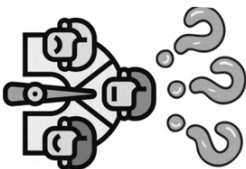
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

## EVENING MOOD:

DAY 1:	DAY 2:	DAY 3:	DAY 4:	DAY 5:	DAY 6:	DAY 7:
   1L  1.5	   1L  1.5	   1L  1.5	   1L  1.5	   1L  1.5	   1L  1.5	   1L  1.5
          	          	          	          	          	          	          
  	  	  				

At the end of the week summarize your a.m. and p.m. mood entries along with each day's weather and water intake and note any correlations or trends, both within the current week and in comparison to other weeks. #selfawareness







# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

forty-three

Gratitude [is] an emotion, a virtue, a moral sentiment, a motive, a coping response, a skill, and an attitude.

— *Emmons and Crumpler*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I will not compare myself to strangers on the Internet.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

forty-four

Who you are inside is what helps you  
make and do everything in life.  
— *Mister Rogers aka Fred Rogers*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- When I really want something I am unstoppable.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- 
- 
- 

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- 
- 
- 

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- 
- 
- 

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

forty-five

You must do the things you think you cannot do.

— Eleanor Roosevelt

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

● I am the hero of my story. \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

forty-six

The secret of attraction is to love yourself. — *Deepak Chopra*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I will achieve great things through small steps.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

forty-seven

I am the greatest. I said that even before I knew I was. — *Muhammad Ali*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am fulfilling my purpose in this world.
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- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

forty-eight

I thank the universe for taking  
everything it has taken and giving to me  
everything it is giving — balance.  
— *Rupi Kaur*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I embrace the glorious mess that is me.
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- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

forty-nine

Gratitude is the closest thing to beauty  
manifested in an emotion.  
— *Mindy Kaling*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- My life is just beginning.
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- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# MOOD TRACKER

## WEEKLY SUMMARY

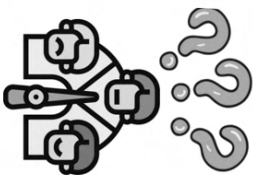
DATE  THROUGH  DATE

## GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

	WATER:					WEATHER:					MORNING MOOD:					EVENING MOOD:				
DAY 1:																				
DAY 2:																				
DAY 3:																				
DAY 4:																				
DAY 5:																				
DAY 6:																				
DAY 7:																				

### NOTES/TRENDS:

At the end of the week summarize your a.m. and p.m. mood entries along with each day's weather and water intake and note any correlations or trends, both within the current week and in comparison to other weeks. #selfawareness







# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

fifty

Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very Small Heart, it could hold a rather large amount of Gratitude.  
— A. A. Milne

DATE:

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TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- Everything that is happening now is happening for my ultimate good.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

fifty-one

If you have good thoughts they will  
shine out of your face like sunbeams  
and you will always look lovely.  
— *Roald Dahl*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- Everything I need is already within me.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

fifty-two

Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is  
like wrapping a present and not giving it.  
— *William Arthur Ward*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I choose to let go of what no longer serves me.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

fifty-three

The way to develop the best that is in a person is by appreciation and encouragement. — *Charles Schwab*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- Today, I align myself with all things meant for my greater good.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

fifty-four

The deepest craving of human nature is  
the need to be appreciated.  
— *William James*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I don't chase, I attract. What's meant for me will find me.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

fifty-five

Silent gratitude isn't very much to anyone. — *Gertrude Stein*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for the abundance and miracles that I continue to receive.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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- 
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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

fifty-six

The struggle ends when gratitude begins.

— Neale Donald Walsch

DATE:

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TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:



I am grateful technology allows me to keep in touch with friends and family both near and far.



What are you  
grateful for  
today?



TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?



What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?



NOTES/REMINDERS:





# MOOD TRACKER

## WEEKLY SUMMARY

DATE

THROUGH

DATE

## GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

WATER:

WEATHER:

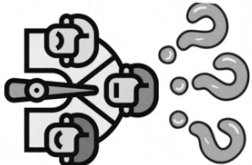
MORNING MOOD:

EVENING MOOD:

DAY 1:																							
DAY 2:																							
DAY 3:																							
DAY 4:																							
DAY 5:																							
DAY 6:																							
DAY 7:																							

### NOTES/TRENDS:

At the end of the week summarize your a.m. and p.m. mood entries along with each day's weather and water intake and note any correlations or trends, both within the current week and in comparison to other weeks. #selfawareness







# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

fifty-seven

This is a wonderful day. I've never  
seen this one before.

— *Maya Angelou*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I recognize the happiness within me, and know that gratitude is the basis for that happiness.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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- 
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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

fifty-eight

Things turn out best for those who make  
the best of the way things turn out.  
—*John Wooden*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I commit to noticing the beauty of nature; I will stop and smell the roses.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

fifty-nine

If forgiveness is medicine for the soul,  
then gratitude is vitamins.  
— *Dr. Steve Maraboli*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- Every day I feel more grateful, and every day that much more content.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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- 
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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

sixty

Don't forget, a person's greatest emotional need is to feel appreciated.  
— H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for positive feedback I've received that tells me I am on the right path.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

- \_\_\_\_\_
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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

sixty-one

Gratitude is the place where all dreams come true. You have to get there before they do. — *Jim Carrey*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

● Embracing gratitude doesn't just affect me, but those around me. I am grateful for my desire to change.

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● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

● \_\_\_\_\_

What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

sixty-two

The real gift of gratitude is that the more grateful you are, the more present you become. — *Robert Holden*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- As I internalize gratefulness, I am rewiring my brain, and I am excited to meet who I become.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

sixty-three

In this life we cannot always do great things. But we can do small things with great love. — *Mother Theresa*

DATE:

S M T W T F S



TIME:

MOOD:



Today's  
Affirmations:

- I am grateful for my ability to finish what I start, and for "graduating" into a life beyond my wildest dreams.
- 
- 

What are you  
grateful for  
today?

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TIME:

MOOD:



What was  
good about  
today?

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What are you  
looking  
forward to  
tomorrow?

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NOTES/REMINDERS:





# MOOD TRACKER

## WEEKLY SUMMARY

DATE  THROUGH  DATE

## GRATITUDE CHECK-IN

WATER:

WEATHER:

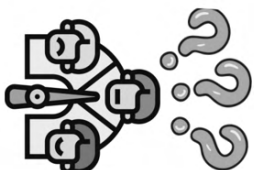
MORNING MOOD:

EVENING MOOD:

DAY 1:																				
DAY 2:																				
DAY 3:																				
DAY 4:																				
DAY 5:																				
DAY 6:																				
DAY 7:																				

NOTES/TRENDS:

At the end of the week summarize your a.m. and p.m. mood entries along with each day's weather and water intake and note any correlations or trends, both within the current week and in comparison to other weeks. #selfawareness







## Chapter 5. Congratulations

Congratulations, you have reached "the end" of your 63-day (nine-week) program of daily attunement to gratitude with *The Minute-Plus Journal*. The work itself should not have been difficult or time-consuming, but the commitment required to reach this milestone has been significant and is quite an impressive achievement. Bravo.

In truth, very few people reach this chapter boasting a 100 percent journal completion rate. If you did, you deserve props. That kind of laser focus is extremely rare and exceedingly difficult in today's modern world, where life often becomes an act of juggling competing goals, and the first item most people allow to slip will be a personal one.

Perfection isn't required to realize the benefits of your gratitude journal. It's like any other medication or intervention: perfect adherence with your treatment regimen is the goal, but 90 percent adherence is probably good enough to achieve the desired effects, and 70 percent will be enough for some people. It's just impossible to know who those people are until after the fact.



If you didn't do that well, and you know you can do better, start over! This is really a life-long process anyway, which is why I put "the end" in quotes in the first sentence of this chapter. While it is helpful for people to believe there's an end point, it's also an illusion and a bit of a fake-out.

## What now?

Now that you've finished the journal with a high completion rate, what now? More to the point, what if you don't feel any different? When will you start feeling different, if ever. It's a great question, and more common than you might think.

First of all, *feeling changed* and *being changed* are two different things. For changes that are gradual, the subject of them very often won't feel different from one day to the next. They will reach the end of treatment feeling that nothing significant has occurred. They have been present in their body the entire time, but they are too close to it. Their journey of a million tiny steps over a long period feels like standing still. To an outside observer, looking on from a different vantage point, the total distance traveled is more apparent.

The same rule applies to any potential changes in yourself. The true litmus test for that will be the feedback you receive from those around you; specifically, feedback from people who know you well but haven't seen you in a while, preferably not since before you started reading this book. Their feedback and behavior will really be crucial in determining whether you have changed or not, which means whether this program was legit or just a bunch of B.S.

Let's assume the feedback will be or has been positive (and I have great faith that is the case). For instance, let's assume more than one person has commented about how you appear more serene. Or perhaps people are spending more time with you, or have expressed a desire to do so. Or maybe you yourself have noticed that you seem to "click" with people better lately or have had fewer arguments with



people. This positive feedback and these improved relationships are because your attunement to gratitude has changed you. *And that is how you become happier.*

You attract the same kind of energy you resonate, so if the people in your orbit have changed in the past nine weeks, that is another sign you have changed. Assuming better quality people are in your orbit, and I would bet money that they are, *that too is how you become happier.*

Now let's reassess your happiness again. Navigate  
once more to

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/W6BQDWF>

and then enter the provided score below. Did  
the number change?

**End-of-Book Happiness Score:**

\_\_\_\_\_

If the program worked, please tell one friend about it. Buy them the book or loan them yours. And remember, the new habit you have formed is real, but it's still a baby. It needs to be fed and nourished. True, it's impossible to destroy a habit once created, but let's not try, shall we? Start over from day one of this program and go through everything again (there's no need to buy the book again, I'm not Claude C. Hopkins after all). Build those gratitude muscles until they are as strong as a rock. And again, please send me your success stories.

Paul Goddin  
[books@godd.in](mailto:books@godd.in)



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## About this Book

Discover the life-changing power of gratitude and learn how to make it an automatic state of mind in *The Minute-Plus Journal: Hack Your Brain to Make Gratitude a Habit*.

In this book, freelance writer Paul Goddin describes the many benefits of gratitude based on research associating it with various social benefits and improvements in physical and psychological health. Next, he discusses how technological advancements and new research in neuroscience have changed our understanding of the brain, especially with respect to habit formation. We now have the formula to create a new habit, making a behavior occur automatically, below conscious awareness. Goddin describes this formula, then outlines simple steps readers can take to create a new habit of gratitude. Using the included gratitude journal in a specific manner for a specific length of time will make an orientation towards gratitude the reader's default state of mind. With gratitude thus internalized, readers will notice their life improving: their relationships becoming stronger, their health becoming better, and others' opinions of them improving. This will add up to a greater sense of peace and an increase in happiness.

Goddin's book will appeal to fans of Charles Duhigg's *The Power of Habit* and James Clear's *Atomic Habits*, as it continues the dialogue started in those books and furthers it with its application of its principles to readers' lives.

Whether you're looking to cultivate more joy in your life, overcome a specific challenge, or simply appreciate the present moment more, this book will empower you to create lasting change in your life by teaching you how to intentionally create a new habit and providing a blueprint for the creation of perhaps the greatest habit of all: gratitude.





## What is a Habit?

A habit is a behavioral routine that has been performed so many times, it can be done on autopilot. Through repetition, the brain learns what behaviors can be transformed into a habit, and does so as part of its endless quest for efficiency. Habits are less energy intensive than behaviors resulting from decisions, and reside in an older and simpler part of the brain made for this purpose, separate from conscious awareness. This part of the brain is also associated with autonomic processes like eating and breathing, and in a similar manner, habit behaviors play out automatically and are resistant to interference from our conscious selves.

## A Brain Breakthrough

Technological advances of the 21<sup>st</sup> century have allowed scientists to look at the inner workings of the brain with startling clarity and detail. We are beginning to finally comprehend how this remarkable organic computer works, which is quite different than we originally thought. Habit formation, once an unknown, black-box process in the brain, has been decoded, allowing a glimpse at the brain's "source code." Our newfound ability to control this process has enormous implications for behavior change.

*The Minute-Plus Journal: Hack Your Brain to Make Gratitude a Habit* is a book in the tradition of *The Power of Habit* by Charles Duhigg and *Atomic Habits* by James Clear. It provides a concise but thorough description of the discoveries that have shaped our understanding of habit formation in the brain, explains the steps to create a new habit, and empowers readers to apply that knowledge to their own lives by transforming gratitude into a habit using the 9-week gratitude journal included in this volume for free.



PAUL GODDIN

## FREE CONTENT

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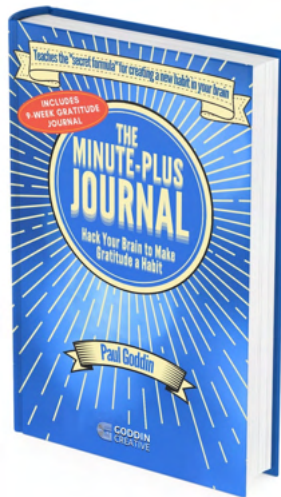


## The Minute-Plus Journal™ Series

Make mindfulness part of your routine  
in just a few minutes each day.



Available  
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In Buddhism the lotus flower symbolizes purity, rebirth, and spiritual enlightenment, no doubt inspired by the flower's unusual growth pattern: rooted in mud at the bottom of a murky pond, the lotus flower resting on its surface is so beautiful and exquisite as to belie its origins. It embodies the capacity all living beings have to thrive despite adversity.

