31 Benefits of Gratitude You Didn’t Know About:  
How Gratitude Can Change Your Life  
<http://happierhuman.com/benefits-of-gratitude/>

## An Attitude of Gratitude

## ****1. Gratitude makes us happier****.

A five-minute a day gratitude journal can increase your long-term well-being by more than 10 percent. Gratitude improves our health, relationships, emotions, personality, and career.

## ****2. Gratitude makes people like us.****

Gratitude generates social capital. Gratitude makes us nicer, more trusting, more social, and more appreciative. As a result, it helps us make more friends, deepen our existing relationships, and improve our marriage.

## ****3. Gratitude makes us healthier.**** Individuals who keep a gratitude journal report fewer physical illness symptoms, more time exercising, less physical pain, more sleep, and increased sleep quality. Emotions of gratitude and appreciation have been shown to induce the relaxation response. Acknowledging gratitude has reduced depressive symptoms. Individuals with hypertension who maintain a gratitude journal have experienced a significant decrease in systolic blood pressure. Gratitude has been correlated with increased vitality and energy.

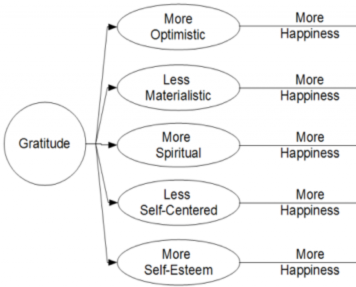
## 4. Gratitude boosts our career.

Gratitude makes you a more effective manager, helps you network, increases your decision-making capabilities, increases your productivity, and helps you get mentors and protégés.As a result, gratitude helps you achieve your career goals, as well as making your workplace a more friendly and enjoyable place to be.

## 5. Gratitude strengthens our emotions.

Gratitude reduces feelings of envy, makes our memories happier, lets us experience good feelings, and helps us bounce back from stress.

## 6. Gratitude develops our personality.



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# Personality

## 7. Gratitude makes us more optimistic.

Gratitude is strongly correlated with optimism. Optimism in turn makes us happier, improves our health, and has been shown to increase lifespan by as much as a few years.

## 8. Gratitude reduces materialism.

Materialism is strongly correlated with reduced well-being and increased rates of mental disorder.There’s nothing wrong with wanting more. The problem with materialism is that it makes people feel less competent, reduces feelings of relatedness and gratitude, reduces their ability to appreciate and enjoy the good in life, generates negative emotions, and makes them more self-centered.

## 9. Gratitude increases spiritualism.

Spiritual transcendence is highly correlated with feelings of gratitude. That is – the more spiritual you are, the more likely you are to be grateful. This is for two reasons:

1. All major religions espouse gratitude as a virtue.
2. Spirituality spontaneously gives rise to grateful behavior.

## 10. Gratitude makes us less self-centered.

Most of us are self-centered. We spend way too much time thinking about ourselves, and far too little time thinking about others. Compassion and gratitude practices can change this. This is because the very nature of gratitude is to focus on others (on ***their***acts of benevolence). In this regard, gratitude practice can be better than self-esteem therapy.

## 11. Gratitude increases self-esteem.

Imagine a world where no one helps you. Despite your asking and pleading, no one helps you. Now imagine a world where many people help you all of the time for no other reason than that they like you. In which world do you think you would have more self-esteem? Gratitude helps to create a world like that.

# Health

## 12. Gratitude improves your sleep.

Gratitude increases sleep quality, reduces the time required to fall asleep, and increases sleep duration. Said differently, gratitude can help with insomnia. The key is what’s on our minds as we’re trying to fall asleep. If it’s worries about the kids, or anxiety about work, the level of stress in our body will increase, reducing sleep quality, keeping us awake, and cutting our sleep short. If it’s thinking about a few things we have to be grateful for today, it will induce the relaxation response, knock us out, and keep us that way.

## 13. Gratitude keeps you away from the doctor.

Positive emotion improves health. The details are complicated, but the overall picture is not – if you want to improve your health, improve your mind. It’s no far stretch that some of the benefits (e.g. better coping & management of terminal conditions like cancer and HIV, faster recovery from certain medical procedures, positive changes in immune system functioning, more positive health behavior, etc…) apply to gratitude as well. In fact, some recent science shows that those who engage in gratitude practices have been shown to feel less pain, go to the doctor less often, have lower blood pressure, and be less likely to develop a mental disorder.

## 14. Gratitude lets you live longer.

Optimism and positive emotion in general have been used to successfully predict mortality decades later. The optimistic lived a few years longer than the pessimistic.

## 15. Gratitude increases your energy levels.

Gratitude and vitality are strongly correlated – the grateful are much more likely to report physical and mental vigor.

## 16. Gratitude makes you more likely to exercise.

In a recent study, individuals who were instructed to keep a weekly gratitude journal exercised 40 minutes more per week than the control group.

# Emotional

## 17. Gratitude helps us bounce back. Those who have more gratitude have a more pro-active coping style, are more likely to have and seek out social support in times of need, are less likely to develop PTSD, and are more likely to grow in times of stress.In others words, they are more resilient.

## 18. Gratitude makes us feel good.

Surprise, surprise: gratitude actually feels good. Gratitude doesn’t just make us happier; it is happiness in and of itself!

## 19. Gratitude makes our memories happier.  Our memories are not set in stone, like data stored on a hard-drive. There are dozens of ways our memories get changed over time – we remember things as being better or worse than they actually were, as being longer or shorter, people as being kinder or crueler, as being more or less interesting, and so on. Experiencing gratitude in the present makes us more likely to remember positive memories,and actually transforms some of our neutral or even negative memories into positive ones.

## 20. Gratitude reduces feelings of envy. A small bit of jealousy or envy directed at the right target is motivating. Too much produces feelings of insecurity, materialism, inferiority, distrust, and unhappiness.

## 21. Gratitude helps us relax.

Gratitude and positive emotion in general are among the strongest relaxants known to man. Gratitude may be just as or even more effective than relaxation methods such as deep breathing. With time and practice, recounting blessings in our lives and acknowledging our gratitude can become more natural and easier.

# Social

## 22. Gratitude makes you friendlier.

Multiple studies have shown that gratitude induces pro-social behavior; it makes you more likely to help others with their problems and makes you more likely to offer them emotional support.

## 23. Gratitude helps your marriage.

One way marriages start to suffer is when the passion starts to fizzle; the partners become less appreciative and more “naggy”. Scientists have actually developed an appreciation to “naggy” ratio, more formally called the Losada ratio. Basically, when partners express support, encouragement and appreciation during typical interactions, marriages lasted and were found to be satisfying. Similarly, when partners express disapproval, sarcasm, and cynicism during typical interactions, marriages plummeted toward divorce or languishment.

## 24. Gratitude makes you look good.

Ingratitude is universally regarded with contempt.  It’s opposite, gratitude, is considered a virtue in all major religions and most modern cultures. Gratitude is the acknowledgment of kindness with thanks.

## 25. Gratitude helps you make friends.

## An effective way to start a conversation or move a relationship forward is an expression of gratitude, “thank you for that coffee, it was delicious.”

## 26. Gratitude deepens friendships.

When friends verbally express appreciation to each other, each feels appreciated and that makes them feel good – about themselves and each other.

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# Career

## 27. Gratitude makes you a more effective manager.

Effective management requires a toolbox of skills. Criticism comes all too easily to most, while the ability to feel gratitude and express praise is often lacking. Timely, sincere, specific, behavior focused praise is often a more powerful method of influencing change than criticism. Expressions of gratitude can be highly motivating, while expressions of criticism can be slightly de-motivating.Typically, subordinates who receive more praise are more enthusiastic about working, express more creativity, and are so much more fun to work with.

## 28. Gratitude helps you network.

Gratitude has been shown across a number of studies to increase social behavior.

## 29. Gratitude increases your goal achievement.

## 30. Gratitude improves your decision-making.

## 31. Gratitude increases your productivity.

We may be mentally distracted by our worries. As gratitude has been shown to increase self-esteem and reduce insecurity, this means that it can help us focus and improve our productivity.

## Gratitude is no cure-all, but it is a massively underutilized tool for improving life-satisfaction and happiness.