

**Month 4 Workbook**

# **Practicing Gratitude**

**STR****BEL**  
EDUCATION

# Lesson 1: The Gratitude Research

Shawn Achor, happiness researcher, says that in just 21 days, gratitude can transform a pessimist into an optimist. And within 30 days, those habits change the neural pathways of our brains and turn us into lifelong optimists. You simply need to write down three different things you are thankful for each day!

The practice of gratitude has a powerful effect on our brains. It helps us view our surroundings through a new lens, and what we focus on grows. So the more you focus on all the abundance in your life, the more you attract more abundance into your life.

Research shows that **gratitude** can:

- **Improve your physical health.** People who exhibit gratitude report fewer aches and pains, a general feeling of health, more regular exercise, and more frequent checkups with their doctor than those who don't.
- **Outshine all other emotions.** When you feel gratitude, it often overpowers other feelings. Gratitude **shines brighter**.  
*Link: [blog.mindvalley.com/how-to-raise-your-vibration](http://blog.mindvalley.com/how-to-raise-your-vibration)*
- **Be contagious.** When you feel gratitude for one thing in your life, it tends to overflow into other parts of your life, even places that you previously thought weren't 'good enough.'
- **Improve your psychological health.** Grateful people enjoy higher well-being and happiness and suffer from reduced symptoms of depression.
- **Enhance empathy and reduce aggression.** Those who show their gratitude are less likely to seek revenge against others and more likely to behave in a prosocial manner, with sensitivity and empathy.
- **Improve your sleep.** Practicing gratitude regularly can help you sleep longer and better.
- **Enhance your self-esteem.** People who are grateful have increased self-esteem, partly due to their ability to appreciate other people's accomplishments.
- **Increase mental strength.** Grateful people have an advantage in overcoming trauma and enhanced resilience, helping them to bounce back from highly stressful situations. (Morin, 2014).

# 5 gratitude journal prompts

To help you find gratitude today

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## 1. Look in the mirror.

This is your chance to truly acknowledge what you love about yourself! Do you like your eyes, your hair, your smile? Write it down and celebrate it. But then go deeper. What about your intelligence? Your strength? Your giving nature? Your ability to be a good friend? What about the hobbies you love? You are a beautiful collection of good things. Write them down and validate the goodness within you.

## 2. "What if \_\_\_\_\_ was missing from my life?"

It's easy to say you're grateful for certain things in your life. It can be harder to articulate WHY you're so thankful for them. So flip the script! Ask yourself what would be different about your life if the thing you're grateful for was suddenly missing. We're talking things like the people you love, the modern conveniences that make daily life easier, the material possessions you hold dear. Imagine what it would be like to live without those things—and then write it down!

## 3. The great outdoors.

There are things to be grateful for all around us. Finding them is as easy as stepping outside! Take a hike and describe how the ground feels beneath your feet. Find your favorite color in a flower garden, in the treetops, in the sky above—and put the feeling it gives you into words. Spend a day in the park, and make note of everything that makes you smile. No doubt, the list of things you're grateful for will be a long one!

## 4. Gratitude at work.

Most of us spend long hours at work. So shouldn't we look for things to be grateful for while we're there? Is it a caring boss? The comfort of a reliable paycheck? A flexible schedule? A coworker who always has your back? Keep track of all the things that make you grateful to have meaningful work in your life.

## 5. Get personal.

Put into words why you're so thankful for the family members and friends in your life. Explain why a recent experience meant so much to you. Describe why being a part of your community is so rewarding. Talk about your favorite book or way to pass the time. If it means something to you personally, then it's something to be thankful for!

# Want to feel good every day?

Here are some tips to get you started ...

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## **Consistency is key.**

Habits form out of consistency. To train your brain to find the best in all possible situations, practice journaling daily. Where or when you choose to write in your journal isn't the important part. Whether you are an AM or PM writer, find a time that works for you and stick to it *every single day*. Start each writing session by putting the date at the top of the page and beginning with the words, "I am thankful ...". Then list 5 different things you're thankful for.

## **Write it down—and get creative!**

This should go without saying—it is a journal after all. But writing down your gratitude is so important. And it's also an opportunity for creativity. Find a beautiful journal that you want to open every day. Grab some fancy-schmancy colorful pens and markers. Make it your own!

## **Feel it.**

Previously we talked about the difference between real gratitude and merely saying "thank you." This is where that knowledge comes in handy. When you think about whatever you're grateful for, take a moment—even if it really is just a moment—to feel that gratitude throughout your entire body. Make the experience as real as possible. Just writing down what you're grateful for, without experiencing it, defeats the purpose of the exercise. Make it real and it will last.

## **Don't keep it in your head.**

Give it power through your written word. If you follow these simple rules, gratitude will begin to shape your life very quickly. You'll start to feel a sense of duty to your journal, and that duty will open up your eyes to all of the wonderful things life has to offer that you can be grateful for.



**For inspiration**, watch this short video from Oprah Winfrey as she discusses the power her gratitude journal has in her life.

Link: [tinyurl.com/SFJ-Oprah-Gratitude](https://tinyurl.com/SFJ-Oprah-Gratitude) - **CLICK HERE**

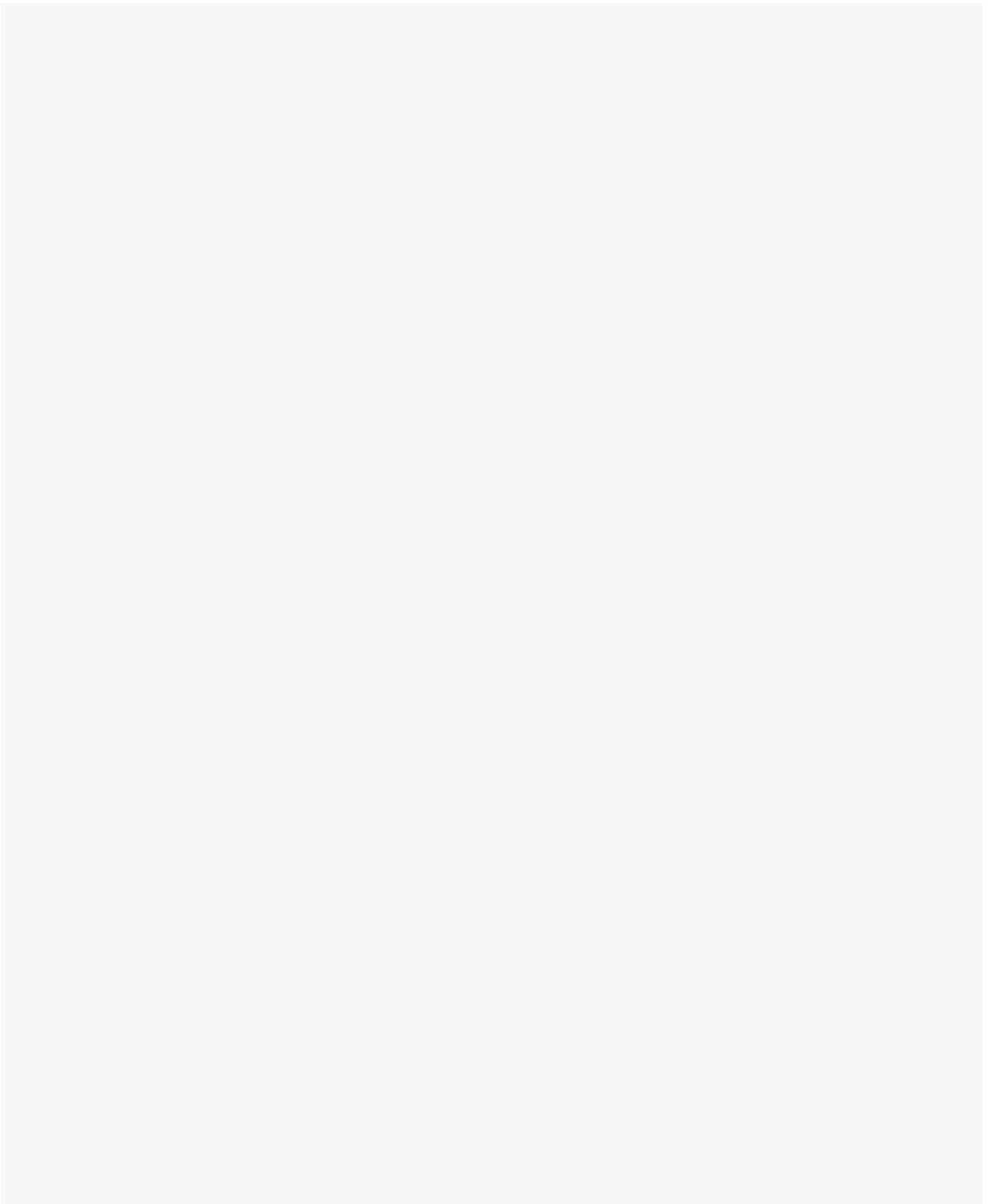
# Gratitude Challenge: 7 Days to a Gratitude Habit

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1. Schedule 5-10 minutes per night for this gratitude activity.
2. Focus on the things in your life for which you are currently grateful. *These can be big or small—you just have to be grateful for them!*
3. Write down five things for which you are most grateful. *Use a favorite notebook, or the notes feature on your phone—the choice is yours!*
4. As you write down each item, take a moment to be mindful, reflecting upon each gratitude and what it means to you.
5. List three different items you are grateful for every day for 21 days to change the neural pathways in your brain. Track your progress on the following page.

# NOTES & REFLECTIONS

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# 21 Days of Gratitude Tracker

**DAY 1**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 2**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 3**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 4**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

# 21 Days of Gratitude Tracker

**DAY 5**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 6**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 7**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 8**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself



# 21 Days of Gratitude Tracker

**DAY 9**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 10**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 11**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 12**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

# 21 Days of Gratitude Tracker

**DAY 13**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 14**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 15**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 16**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

# 21 Days of Gratitude Tracker

**DAY 17**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 18**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 19**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

**DAY 20**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

# 21 Days of Gratitude Tracker

**DAY 21**

DATE

I AM GRATEFUL FOR

---

person, place, or thing

---

activity or environment

---

something you appreciate about yourself

# Two Ways to Get More Joy

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Listen to the  
She Finds Joy Podcast

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