

CORE Solutions

National Gratitude Month



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Real Ultimate Power: Gratitude

With Turkey Day fast approaching, the holiday season is heating up. It's that cozy time of the year when we get together with friends and family to celebrate, consume carbohydrates with reckless abandon, and avoid bringing up politics at the dinner table. Although many of us may not have considered it, we enjoy doing this each year because there is real ultimate power in giving thanks.

Gratitude — the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

If there is at least one universal truth, it's that humans across the entire planet have an almost uncanny need to express gratitude. Although we all do this a little differently, the behavior is prevalent in every culture on Earth. Because it's something we're all into, scientists and researchers have studied gratitude to investigate how it affects us. To no one's surprise, there are profound psychological and physiological benefits to giving thanks.



"Real Ultimate Power: Gratitude" continued

Gratitude is great for our mental well-being and can change our brains for the better. It lowers stress and puts us in a position to handle stress better. Part of the reason is that it teaches our minds to notice and appreciate things that may not have been on our radar. When you consider anxiety and depression, the content of one's thinking is generally negative. Practicing gratitude presents a competing thought against rumination and negativity, which can be helpful in staying anchored and positive in the present moment.

Cultivating gratitude can also lead to better relationships. By taking stock and accounting for all the goodness in our lives, the majority of us would state that what we're most thankful for are the people we care about. Looking outside ourselves like this can help maintain and strengthen our current connections and in turn, the overall quality of our lives. It can also pave the way for new relationships, as studies have demonstrated that showing appreciation can lead to new opportunities.

Just as being thankful helps us form bonds with people, it also has the potential to improve our physical health. According to Dr. Gail Saltz, clinical associate psychiatry professor at the New York Presbyterian Hospital, Weill-Cornell Medical College and a psychoanalyst with the New York Psychoanalytic Institute, "People who spend more time experiencing gratitude seem to spend less time experiencing aches and pains and going to doctors. They also report more feelings of physical and mental well-being." There is even evidence that expressing gratitude may be good for your heart.

When you combine strong relationships with better physical and mental health, it's evident that being grateful makes you a happier person. For people who prioritize physical, emotional, and mental states, you'll be delighted to know that happiness and gratitude go together like turkey and stuffing.

Like anything, there are some exceptions to the rule but generally speaking, leading with the real ultimate power of gratitude will almost certainly improve every aspect of your life.

From all of us at NFP, we hope you have a fantastic day and a spare moment to reflect on some of the things you're thankful for.



Ways to Cultivate Gratitude on a Regular Basis

1. **Write a thank you note.** You can make yourself happier and nurture your relationship with another person by writing a thank you letter or email expressing your enjoyment and appreciation of that person's impact on your life. Send it, or better yet, deliver and read it in person if possible. Make a habit of sending at least one gratitude letter a month. Once in a while, write one to yourself.
2. **Thank someone mentally.** No time to write? It may help just to think about someone who has done something nice for you and mentally thank the individual.
3. **Keep a gratitude journal.** Make it a habit to write down or share thoughts about the gifts you've received each day with a loved one.
4. **Count your blessings.** Pick a time every week to sit down and write about your blessings — reflecting on what went right or what you are grateful for. Sometimes it helps to pick a number — such as three to five things — that you will identify each week. As you write, be specific and think about the sensations you felt when something good happened to you.

Source: [harvard.edu](https://www.harvard.edu)



Monthly Moves: Butterfly Stretch

The butterfly stretch is a great practice to do after a workout or if you need a break from sitting in a chair. Here's how to do it:

1. Sit on the floor with both legs straight out in front of you.
2. Bring the soles of your feet together, and then move your heels as close to your body as you can.
3. Lean forward with a straight back.
4. Push on your thighs with your elbows for a deeper stretch.
5. Hold the stretch for 30 seconds.

[Click here for a demo.](#)

Source: [healthline.com](https://www.healthline.com)



Recipe: Roasted Carrots and Chickpeas with Feta Vinaigrette

Few other cooked vegetables are as polarizing as the carrot. For many, the mantra of raw carrots good, cooked carrots bad, is the “my way or the highway” for this root vegetable. It is astounding how powerful the negative reaction can be from a known raw carrot consumer when they come into contact with a soft, boiled carrot because once you take that crunch out of the equation — it’s all bets off.

Of course, roasting carrots with the right complementary textures and flavors can be a complete revelation. That’s why this recipe is going to change your life!

Well, maybe it won’t actually change anything in your life, but it will at least liven up your Thanksgiving spread.

So, no boring or bad carrots this year. Try these instead.

Source: jessicaseinfeld.com

For the carrots and chickpeas:

- 15-ounce can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 1/2 pounds thin carrots
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika, regular or smoked
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

For the vinaigrette:

- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese

Directions:

For the carrots and chickpeas, heat the oven (with the oven rack in the middle) to 425°F.

1. Peel the carrots. Cut any larger ones in half lengthwise.
2. Pat the chickpeas dry with a paper towel. Pour onto a rimmed sheet pan. Add the carrots to the pan.
3. In a small bowl, combine the cumin, paprika, cayenne, salt, and oil. Drizzle over the carrots and chickpeas and toss again, then spread into an even layer.
4. Roast, giving the pan a shake about halfway through, for 35 to 40 minutes, until the carrots are tender.
5. For the vinaigrette, in a small bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, salt, pepper, and oil. Stir in the scallions, parsley, and feta.
6. Arrange the roasted carrots and chickpeas on a serving plate and spoon the vinaigrette over the top.