

MATTMCWILLIAMS

Live with Passion. Lead with Purpose. Leave a Legacy.

9 Ways to be More Thankful All Year

Thankfulness is not a state of being. It's not something you are born into or discover. It's not something that comes naturally or that you accidentally wake up feeling. Thankfulness is something you practice, that you develop intentionally.

In the United States, this is the week that we all are mindful of thankfulness. Perhaps we even share some things for which we are thankful around the table on Thursday, and resolve to be more thankful next year.

And then Friday comes. That thankful feeling is replaced by the same mundane feelings of every other day.

Thankfulness should be an everyday practice. Thankfulness is directly tied to your levels of productivity and performance, and therefore your success at work, your income, and the stability of your relationships.

In short, thankfulness is one of the lynchpins in determining your ability to live out your calling, achieve your dreams, and change the world.

So, how can you be more thankful throughout the year? Here are 9 ways.

1. Remember this:

Unexpressed gratitude is ingratitude. -Unknown

Do not let today go by without telling someone how grateful you are. Write them a note expressing something from deep inside your heart. Feeling gratitude is not enough. You must express it.

2. Keep a gratitude journal.

Ask yourself this simple question everyday:

For what am I thankful?

Then record your answers in a simple gratitude journal. It really does work.

3. Get this in your spirit:

The things for which I am thankful, I maintain.

The things for which I *express* thankfulness, I increase.

When is the last time you spoke or wrote your thankfulness for your health, your income, your family, your intelligence, or your friends? If you want abundance in those areas, you must first express thankfulness for what you already have.

4. Join the Thank You Revolution.

The Revolution has been on hiatus for a few months, but it's coming back big-time after the holidays. The Revolution will inspire you and keep you motivated to express your thankfulness.

By keeping it on the forefront of your mind, you will have no choice but to be more thankful throughout the year.

Join the Thank You Revolution

5. Be specific with your thank yous.

Anyone can say, "thanks," but the more detail you provide, the more impact it makes.

Here are six key phrases to use:

"I could not have done it without you."

"I know how much time you put into it."

"I was absolutely amazed by the result."

"Your effort was above and beyond the call of duty."

"Here is the impact that it made."

"Because of you, ____."

6. Serve others.

I'll never forget a moment during my sophomore year of college. As an athlete at the University of Tennessee, we were required to do a certain amount of volunteering (hey, we are the Volunteers, after all). No one on our team wanted to be there at the time, but we found ourselves serving the Special Olympics bowling competition.

As we were talking back to the dorm that night, my teammate Jimmy said, "Those are the happiest people I've ever been around. It's infectious." As we serve others, we are more thankful and inspired ourselves.

7. Smile more.

Want to know the secret to smiling more? Read this: [*How to smile more.*](#)

8. Remember the little things.

Your health. A beautiful sunset. The family you see every day. A house. Your senses.

Thankfulness doesn't have to be about the big things. Often, I found the most joy in thinking of the smallest things.

9. Make thankfulness routine.

Routines sound boring and perhaps less meaningful right?

I'd heard for years about the power of journaling. I knew about the research that says that just journaling about three things for which you are thankful each morning can increase your happiness and productivity by 31%. I knew all the reasons why I should journal and yet I wasn't.

Until I made it part of my routine. Some days I was going through the motions. I'd list the same five or six things I listed the day before. But I kept doing it each day.

And it really does work. Expressing gratitude, whether it be in a journal or a thank you note really does increase my happiness, my energy levels, and my productivity.

Make expressing gratitude a part of your routine.

You can be more thankful year round and reap the rewards using these tips, but I'd love to hear what's helped you be more thankful year round. Leave a note in the comments below.

What are you thankful for this year?