

Thanksgiving and Gratitude

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With the Thanksgiving season upon us, I feel more inspired to express gratitude. In the company of friends and family, I enjoy sharing stories and the history of our connections. Gratitude is an excellent practice not only at Thanksgiving but year-round. In fact, I highly recommend a practice of expressing gratitude daily.

Cultivating gratitude might seem like a luxury, but it can have a huge impact on your health and happiness. Studies show that gratitude can even improve your blood pressure and your immune function. WEB MD shares an excellent article about gratitude and its many positive effects on your health. [You can find the article here.](#)

One easy way to delve into gratefulness is to appreciate your food. Appreciate the food that you are about to eat. Eat slowly, savoring each bite. Reflect on the source of the food. Imagine the natural environment in which it grew, the people that helped it to flourish, and all of the steps that it took to get that food on your plate.

Another great gratitude exercise is listing “3 things that I am grateful for” right before going to bed. For me, this leads to a more peaceful sleep and helps keep me out of “worry” mind.

Cultivating gratitude is heart-felt and is also a practical exercise. Below are some resources that will help you to immerse yourself in a more grateful state of being.

Stop by the wonderful Network for Grateful Living at <http://www.gratefulness.org>. They also have a Facebook page. Like their page and have nuggets of gratefulness sneak their way into your Facebook feed.

One of my top favorite tools for cultivating gratitude is “Gratitude Works: A 21-Day Program for Creating Emotional Prosperity.” This small book is authored by Robert A. Emmons, who also wrote the best-selling book titled simply “Thanks.” Gratitude Works gets high marks and offers a highly practical approach to tap into the benefits of gratitude. It’s a step-by-step guide that offers up effective daily gratitude practices.

Emmons is also exploring gratitude with UC Davis. He is doing cutting edge research on the impacts of gratitude. [You can learn more here.](#)

All of us at MIIA hope that you have a wonderful and gratitude filled Thanksgiving!