

“It’s not happiness that makes us grateful, but gratefulness that makes us happy.”

– **David Steindle-Rast**

In his [Ted Talk about gratefulness](#), Monk David Steindle-Rast points out that it’s not the things we acquire that make us happy, and we often forget to take a moment to be grateful for the things that are not things.

“In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships.”

– **Harvard Health**



# Inspiring Gratitude Mantras:

I am grateful for all the good in my life

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I am grateful for the ups and the downs

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I will appreciate and enjoy the simple  
moments today

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I am grateful to be here and now

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I am grateful for who I am and what I have

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"Acknowledging the good that  
you already have in your life is the  
foundation for all abundance."

– Eckhart Tolle



**I am  
grateful for:**



# Letting go

While gratitude may be the easiest way to inspire positivity, letting go is one of the most difficult. When our past prevents us from moving forward, we then have to look at how we can work to release those negative influences. We love our negative thoughts, we embrace them, we have grown comfortable with them, and we know that we often keep them around longer than we should.

So how can you start letting go? You've already begun the process by finding something positive to be grateful for. You're working on your own daily mantra to start replacing those negative thoughts with more positive messages. What other steps can you take?

"In the end only three things matter: how much you loved, how gently you lived, and how gracefully you let go of things not meant for you"

– Buddha





Jill Sherer

In her [TEDxWilmingtonWomen](#) video, *The Unstoppable Power of Letting Go*, Jill Sherer Murray takes us on a personal journey of letting go, and the positive impact that it had on her life – and how you can apply these lessons to your own positivity journey.

Jill's top 5 lessons:

- 1. Let go of taking things personally.**
- 2. Let go of what other people think.**
- 3. Let go of trying to be something you're not.**
- 4. Let go of the need to be perfect.**
- 5. Let go of “not yet”**

“Begin and end every conversation with one uplifting thing. So the positivity part is like the two slices of bread, and all the grumbling and griping gets stuffed in the middle. The point is to practice gratitude without silencing the lows.”

– Kiaundra Jackson,  
**The Art of Productive Positivity**

# Finding



# focus

Refocusing requires taking the established patterns that we've become accustomed to and consciously applying that energy in a more positive direction.

For example, you might be frustrated about a situation at work (and rightly so). But instead of complaining to your co-worker, which will only inspire more negative thinking, try rethinking the conversation to be: "I appreciate you lending a hand Susan. This task is one I don't enjoy doing, but you've just helped to make it go quicker and easier. Thanks!

The situation may still be frustrating, but you both can think about it in a more positive way – that you helped each other.

# Refocus Exercise

Before you go to bed, set aside a few minutes to write down 3 things that went well for you that day.

It doesn't matter if it's in a physical journal, a digital document, or on your phone. Use whatever method is most convenient for you. The items don't need to be earth-shattering in importance. They can be about anything, not just your mental health or self-improvement goals.

All kinds of bad things could have happened to you that day, but the exercise isn't interested in them. **Look for the good.**

**For example:**

- Went on a bike ride and explored some new trails
- Saw an interesting new movie with my friends
- Had a nice chat with my mom on the phone
- Got a big chunk of that project at work out of the way

**Beside each item write a quick explanation about why it happened.**

**For example:**

- The weather was nice and I took advantage of it.
- I spent time researching new trails to try out.
- I know I need to make time to get out and do things on my own.

This simple refocus will allow you to go to sleep with positive thoughts that will carry you through the night and allow you to wake in the morning with positivity. These positive thoughts may invade their way into your dreams as well!

*(from [www.succeedsocially.com/positiveexercises](http://www.succeedsocially.com/positiveexercises))*

**The good:**

**The why:**

**The good:**

**The why:**

**The good:**

**The why:**

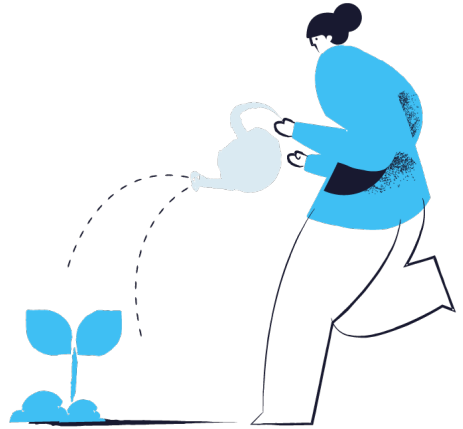
# Sustaining positivity

Now that you're thinking about refreshing, resetting and refocusing, how do you maintain that momentum?

Find exercises that you can fit into your schedule. Start small and add to them as you find your success. Something as simple as a positive re-affirmation daily exercise requires little effort, but starts your day on a positive note – to give it the momentum to continue that positivity throughout your day.

"Positive orientation has been shown to have a significant impact on emotional control in nursing students during the pandemic."

– Kupcewicz, Mikla et al (2022)



## Positive re-affirmation daily exercise:

Start with 3 simple statements: Start your day every day with your own, personal mantra. Remind yourself of your mantra throughout the day.

Write them down and carry them with you if you need to. Commit to these 3 simple statements today:

**Today I am grateful for**

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**Today I will let go of**

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**Today I will focus on**

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# How to think positive thoughts – 8 simple tips!

**Focus on the good**

**Practice gratitude**

**Keep a gratitude journal**

**Open yourself up to humour**

**Spend time with positive people**

**Practice positive self-talk**

**Identify your areas of negativity**

**Start every day on a positive note**



Add your own!

*(from [www.healthline.com/health/how-to-think-positive](http://www.healthline.com/health/how-to-think-positive))*



# Remember to share

Now that you're letting more positivity enter your life, you'll find that the more you give, the more you will get in return.

Share this new experience with your co-workers, friends, family, and acquaintances. Pass along the power of positivity – especially in a healthcare setting.

"The divergent outcomes that optimists and pessimists experience are partly a function of the strategies they use to deal with stressful encounters. Optimists do better at least in part because they use strategies that are more likely to pay off."

**Scheier, Weintraub  
and Carver (1986)**

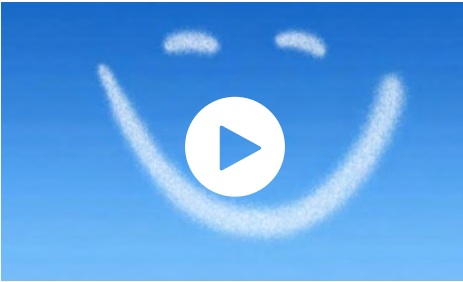
A recent study of nursing students found the power of positivity can influence your resilience as well. It's like putting a little extra fuel in your tank to help you get through the more challenging parts of your day.

Some strategies involve problem-focused coping, an elaboration or reflection of how they coped, and the active seeking of social supports for better and more positive outcomes.

The message here is that you need to look for tools and resources that work for you. Start simple. Add one of our suggestions to your daily routine.

When you find that has become part of your every day, then add another tool. Positivity can be learned if practiced consistently. And it's easy to start today!

# Resources for positivity



**POSITIVE CULTURE:**

["Our Canada: Are We Happy?"](#)



**POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS:**

[5-minute morning affirmations – over 20 video/ audio resources. So easy to just listen to or watch.](#)



**HAPPINESS TRIGGERS:**

["Where the Heck is Matt" video](#)

[Listen to Pharrell Williams "Happy"](#)

[Refocus wrist bands:](#)

**APPS:**

[Bliss](#)

Unlock a happier, more successful life with the most powerful, scientifically-proven exercises from positive psychology



**POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS:**

[Sound Bath event from WeRPN Nursing Week 2021 Reset](#)

[Happify](#)

(from the WeRPN self-care module)

# References and further reading

## **The Power of Positive Thinking**

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/the-power-of-positive-thinking>

Scheier, M. F., Weintraub, J. K., & Carver, C. S. (1986). **Coping with stress: Divergent strategies of optimists and pessimists.** *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51, 1257–1264

Caprara, Gian Vittorio et al. "The Positivity Scale." *Psychological assessment* 24.3 (2012): 701–712. Web.

Optimistic people hold a view of future in which good things will be plentiful and bad things scarce (Scheier & Carver, 1993). Empirical findings show that dispositional optimism is linked to desirable outcomes and in particular to active and effective coping. (Scheier, Weintraub, & Carver, 1986).

## **Correlation between Positive Orientation and Control of Anger, Anxiety and Depression in Nursing Students in Poland, Spain and Slovakia during the COVID-19 Pandemic.**

Kupcewicz E, Mikla M, Kadučáková H, Grochans E, Valcarcel MDR, Cybulska AM. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2022 Feb 21;19(4):2482. doi: 10.3390/ijerph19042482. PMID: 35206674 Free PMC article.

## **Want to be happy? Be grateful | David Steindl-Rast**

It's not happiness that makes us grateful, but gratefulness that makes us happy  
<https://youtu.be/UtBs13j0YRQ>

## **5 Minute Morning Affirmations —**

20 Powerful Affirmations to Change Your Life!  
<https://youtu.be/PalfLuVGYEI>

## **Giving thanks can make you happier, Harvard Health**

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier>





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