

Being grateful is changing the world

By Mandy Kendall

It's hard sometimes when things don't go quite the way you expected or wanted to remember the things that are going the right way or are just as you wanted.

Even though it might not seem like it at times, many believe we are more fortunate now than at any other time in history. Whether you believe that or not, it is never a bad time to be grateful for what we do have.

Studies are showing that time and time again an "attitude of gratitude" has many benefits.



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According to the American Psychological Association, teenagers who are grateful have "a more positive outlook on life, are better-behaved and more hopeful than their less grateful peers." The Journal of Happiness Studies quoted in 2010 that "grateful high school students have higher GPAs than their non-grateful counterparts."

The Journal of Applied Psychology: Health and Wellbeing discovered that subjects who journaled what they were grateful for just before going to bed, fell asleep faster and stayed asleep longer. A study in the American Journal of Cardiology

found that appreciation and positive emotions are linked with changes in heart rate variability” and “may be beneficial in the treatment of hypertension and in reducing the likelihood of sudden death in patients with congestive heart failure and coronary heart disease.”

David Steindl-Rast is a monk who gave the closing talk at the 2013 TEDGlobal. He said, “Gratefulness can change our world in immensely important ways. If you’re grateful, you’re not fearful. If you’re not fearful, you’re not violent. The grateful act out of a sense of enough, not scarcity, so they are willing to share. Being grateful does no less than change the power balance of life. It’s a nonviolent revolution that even revolutionizes the concept of revolution. Grateful people are joyful people; the more joyful people are, the more we’ll have a joyful world.”

So, it seems that being grateful does much more than give you that warm fuzzy feeling. Considering all the potential physical, mental and global health benefits of gratitude I thought I would devote this week’s *Qwik-e* tips to an Attitude of Gratitude and how to practice one.

Just think – about what you are truly grateful for. It could be simply the fact that it is a beautiful day and you are glad to be alive. You could get really specific and think of people, places, feelings or experiences. Let your imagination run wild.

Tell someone – what you are grateful for, or even tell them that you are thankful they are in your life.

Start or end your day – by writing down at least one thing a day that you are grateful for. Studies have shown this boosts mental and physical health.

When things are not quite going to plan – just pause a moment, take a deep breath and think of something you really appreciate. It can really help to put things in perspective.

If you feel that something is missing in your life – or there is something that you must have, just take some time to remember and appreciate what you have already.

If you encounter something, or someone, that is negative – take a moment to find something positive about it, or them.

Pay a compliment daily – to help someone, and you, feel appreciation.

Pay your gratitude forward – if you really appreciate something, help others enjoy it too. (If you truly love your morning coffee, maybe pay for the coffee of the person behind you in line.) Find a way to donate some time, money or skills to a cause that gives other people something to be grateful for.

Until next time.

Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe, which aligns wellness seekers with their ideal wellness provider. If you have questions, would like some advice, or would like to request some Qwik-e tips on any health and well-being topic, drop her an email at connect@healthconnective.com or keep an eye out on Lake Tahoe News for regular Qwik-e tips on how to make healthy changes one Quick and Easy step at a time.