HEALTHY TIPS

The Health Benefits of Gratitude: 6 Proven Ways It Rewires Your Brain & Body

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You have probably heard that gratitude is good for the soul; however, do you know that it is also good for your body? As kindness warms our hearts, it may also be of aid to fight off and heal specific health problems.

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How to be grateful? You can practice gratitude in a lot of different ways- from keeping a gratitude journal to praying and meditation. Or, by simply saying how you really feel and what you are grateful for every day.

Below, check out a list with the 6 best benefits of being thankful in life that we discovered on Conscious Lifestyle Mag. Check it out!

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The 6 Best Benefits of Gratitude

1. **Lowers pain**

At first, you may think that there is no way that a simple 'thank you' can help you decrease physical ache. However, it is true. A study from 2003 called *Counting Blessings vs. Burdens* showed that 16 percent of the participants experienced reduction in pain symptoms while 10 percent of them reported a decrease in overall body ache. The study also discovered that the participants were more motivated to work out and decrease their current pain levels.

2. **Reduces stress**

A study done back in 2007 found that the participants with high blood pressure who counted their blessings in life once per week experienced a major reduction in their systolic blood pressure. It was concluded that keeping a gratitude journal is able to help people decrease their blood pressure by 10 percent. Gratitude also makes us less prone to high levels of trauma and stress. One study found that the participants who practiced gratitude experienced a faster recovery after traumatic events, which was not the case with those who did not practice it.

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3. **Boosts the vitality and energy levels**

Many believe that thankfulness helps us be more optimistic and thus, it betters our vitality. Thankful people are also considered to have higher levels of energy and more relaxed happier, and healthier.

4. **Minimizes depression and anxiousness**

A lot of different studies on the advantages of gratitude have found that keeping a gratitude journal or frequently writing and sending out 'thank you' notes can elevate our happiness levels by more than 10 percent. One study from 2005 found that a gratitude journal lowered depression by 30 percent. Another more recent study on gratitude found that depressive and anxious participants who were part of a gratitude letter experiment experienced major improvements in their behavior.

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5. **Betters the health of the brain**

Hypothalamus is a brain area which is in charge of numerous functions in the body, including sleep, temperature, appetite, growth, and metabolism. According to a 2009 study done by the NIH, this brain area activates when we feel thankful or act kindly to others. Gratitude is indeed a powerful thought. Being kind and feeling thankful fills our brains with a chemical known as dopamine. When we are genuinely thankful for someone or something in our lives, the brain rewards us by providing a natural “high” feeling. Since this feeling is very good, we are further motivated to feel it again and thus, we give thanks and do good more often.

6. **Enhances our sleep quality**

A lot of different studies done on the topic of gratitude have shown that it can better the sleep quality and help us fall asleep faster and longer. Many of you are probably already aware of how important sleep is for our health and well-being. It is known to alleviate depression, pain, anxiousness, and stress. Moreover, it will strengthen the immunity and thus, improve our overall health.

Sources:

CONSCIOUS LIFESTYLE MAG

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