

Every-day gratitude: the joy in the ordinary



It's easy to let the ordinary pass by unnoticed. So much good happens in the ordinary – the everyday, we just need to train ourselves to notice and be grateful.

The friendly greeting from a stranger, a shared smile with someone on the tube, the sound of birdsong, a clear blue sky, a tasty lunch, a colleague making you tea, a friend calling for a chat, a budding daffodil, a street musician, a shared laugh, a neighbourhood cat, the toast falling butter-side up...

When we practice noticing the everyday ordinary good things, we fill 'our tank' with positive emotion and wellbeing, helping us to become more resourceful, particularly in times of adversity, difficulty or when we feel powerless in the face of the state of our planet.

Here are four simple steps to practice gratitude:

1

Dedicate 10 minutes daily and decide when and where the best time is for you.

2

Get yourself a notepad – the practice is more effective when you use pen and paper vs using an electronic device.

3

Think back on your day. Write down 3-5 things you feel grateful for.

4

Notice what it feels like.

Gratitude does not mean ignoring difficulties, losses, or injustice. It just means *also* paying attention to the ordinary good stuff. Gratitude comes from an expansive heart and one that doesn't think that we owe something. When someone is generous to us, we may feel moved to give something back which in itself is fine but gratitude is not guilt or indebtedness – both make it harder for us to feel grateful.

PS:

I am emphasising the ordinary good stuff here because it's harder for us to notice than the extraordinary good stuff like a new job, a holiday, a promotion, a dinner invitation – we're hard-wired to focus on the negative, but with regular practice, you'll notice the joy in the ordinary with little effort.

