

## EAP Newsletter – November 2024

---

### Practicing Gratitude in Everyday Life

Many people live with a mindset of always wanting something more, whether a higher-paying job, different relationships, or material objects. It is easy to see the grass as greener elsewhere and to take aspects of your life for granted. Author Roy T. Bennett said, “Be grateful for what you already have while you pursue your goals. If you aren’t grateful for what you already have, what makes you think you would be happy with more?”

Gratitude is the quality of being thankful and can change your life for the better. There are numerous benefits to practicing a life of gratitude, such as improving your mental and physical health, coping skills, happiness, relationships, and sleep, as well as reducing anxiety and depression. Here are some tips for cultivating your practice of gratitude.

#### Practice mindfulness

Whenever you notice your thoughts shifting to the past or worrying about the future, this is a reminder to refocus on the present moment. Be grateful for things just as they are—right now. Deep breathing exercises can help bring you back to the present moment by slowing down your heart rate, lowering stress levels, and making you feel more relaxed.

#### Turn off auto pilot

Often your brain runs on auto pilot while performing daily tasks, such as when cooking a meal or driving to work each day. Try to notice when you might be in auto pilot mode, as you are more likely to miss out on what’s right in front of you.



## Count your blessings

Grateful people tend to have a sense of abundance rather than scarcity. Be grateful for the big and small things in life. Focus on all that you have versus what you feel your life is lacking. As you begin a gratitude practice, it can be helpful to write down what you're grateful for on a daily or weekly basis.

## Don't compare yourself to others

Everyone is on their own journey in life and lives within different circumstances. As Theodore Roosevelt said, "Comparison is the thief of joy." Rather than striving for perfection, do your best with what you have. Even though someone else might seem to have it easier than you in one aspect of life, they likely have other struggles that you don't know about.

## Be grateful for yourself

Many people go through the day without showing themselves much self-love. Have gratitude for just being you. Remember that you are worthy and your contribution to the world matters.

## Share your gratitude

It's important to show ourselves gratitude and feel good when we've made a contribution. Equally important is being able to acknowledge other people's successes and acts of kindness. Realize when people are doing a great job or going out of their way to help you. Let people know when you appreciate them.

## Spread positivity

Make an effort to be kind when interacting with others, whether loved ones, coworkers, or strangers. When you approach situations with positivity, notice how people tend to reciprocate. Small gestures like calling someone on their birthday or giving a sincere compliment can go a long way. This can also help foster feelings of gratitude.

*Life Advantages, LLC ©2024*

# No More Monday Morning Blues

Few people actually look forward to Mondays, but the first day of the week doesn't have to be the worst day of the week. If you find yourself feeling anxious or overwhelmed Sunday night by the anticipation of work and work-related stress, follow the tips below so you can learn to look forward to a new workweek instead of dreading its arrival.

## Prioritize with a Daily or Weekly Plan

Set tasks for the week ahead; this will make your workload more manageable and give you some goals to pursue. You can write down what needs to be done today and tomorrow, or you can make a weekly list of tasks in advance. You'll feel a sense of accomplishment once you cross off some of those tasks. Consider making a weekly plan on Friday, so that Sunday night you can rest peacefully knowing that Monday morning you already have a plan to tackle your work.

## Schedule Tasks

Are you more energetic and productive in the mornings or the afternoons? Plan your work accordingly. Do routine tasks when you are low on energy, and when you are more alert, go after the more important and challenging tasks.

## Use Your Time Wisely

Avoid time wasters, like unnecessary phone calls or e-mails, gossiping, or taking extra breaks. You'll accomplish more if you set aside chunks of time dedicated to a specific task or goal, and then reward yourself when you meet them. However, it is important to leave some time unstructured to benefit your mental and physical health. Take a break to stretch or grab a glass of water when you need it, take some time for professional reading, or look at an inspirational quote.

## See If Stress Is Affecting Your Work

If you've tried these tips and Monday mornings still get you down, take a look at outside factors. Do you have a lot of stress at home or feel like you are being pulled in all directions? Try to examine what is happening that may lower your energy and happiness at work. A counselor, support hotline, or friend can help you find out what is really wrong.

To fully beat Monday morning gloom, try to keep a healthy lifestyle both at the office and at home: eat nutritiously, exercise, and get enough sleep.