



DAVID DOUGLAS WELLNESS

David Douglas School District
— WELLNESS —

HAPPY Newsletter

March 2018

Five Scientific Facts that Prove Gratitude is Good for You

Thanksgiving isn't the only time of year we should reflect and take stock of all the positive things in life. As it turns out, there is scientific proof that being grateful is plain good for you. Here are five ways to integrate scientifically endorsed gratitude into your life.

Write Down What You're Grateful For

Scientists performed an experiment in which they asked one group of people to write down the things that they were grateful for on a weekly basis, while the other group recorded hassles or neutral life events. The folks who kept gratitude journals exercised more regularly, reported fewer physical symptoms, felt better about their lives as a whole, and were generally more optimistic about the upcoming week—compared to their negatively focused counterparts.

Start Today: At the end of each day, write down one great thing that happened. Use a notebook or keep a digital log.

Even a Single Act of Kindness Can Go a Long Way

Scientists studying positive psychology found that a one-time act of thoughtful gratitude produced an immediate 10% increase in happiness and 35% reduction in depressive symptoms. The happy effects disappeared within three to six months which shows that gratitude is an act to be repeated again and again.

Start Today: Every act of gratitude counts, and it can be as small as saying thank you or telling someone important how much they mean to you. For a bit of motivation, try a gratitude activity on Happify or check out The Global Appreciation Project.

It's Never Too Early to Start Practicing Gratitude

Psychologist and researcher Jeffrey Froh created and implemented a gratitude curriculum for kids aged 8 to 11. The youngsters who received the lessons showed an increase in grateful thinking, appreciation and positive emotions as compared to their classmates who did not partake. The lessons had long-lasting effects, with differences between the two groups at their greatest five months after the program.

Start Today: Lead by example and introduce the concept of gratitude to young people around you. At your next meal where kids are present, go around the table and say something that each person is thankful for—we bet the answers will move you!

Gratitude Can Boost a Romantic Relationship

While being grateful is good for you, being on the receiving end of it can do wonders for your romantic relationships! A recent study found that after receiving gratitude, participants noticed that their partner was more responsive to their needs and overall more satisfied with their relationship. Gratitude was shown to have had a long-term effect that was seen six to nine months later.

Start Today: While mornings can be a hectic time before heading out of the house, make it a point to tell your partner how much you care about them.

Saying Thank You is Good for Business

When was the last time you said thank you to a colleague? According to research by psychologists Adam Grant and Francesca Gino, a thank you can go a long way. Especially if you are in a supervisory position, expressing your thanks for a job well done can make your employees feel a strong sense of self-worth and confidence. The study also revealed that being grateful has a ripple effect, leading to an increase in trust between colleagues and more initiative to help one another out.

Start Today: Acknowledge a colleague for their professional contributions with a genuine heartfelt thank you.

<https://www.goodnet.org/articles/5-scientific-facts-that-prove-gratitude-good-for-you>

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Healthy Eating

Chicken Pesto Stuffed Sweet Potatoes

These chicken pesto stuffed sweet potatoes are seriously tasty, filling and easy to make! A paleo and Whole30 compliant pesto (or us your favorite store bought pesto if you are in a pinch) is mixed with shredded chicken and tops perfectly baked sweet potatoes. Great to make ahead of time and the leftovers save well!

Course Dinner, Lunch
Cuisine Paleo, Whole30
Prep Time 5 minutes
Cook Time 1 hour
Total Time 1 hour 5 minutes
Servings 6
Calories 573 kcal
Author Michele

Ingredients

- 1 cup raw shelled walnuts
- 4-5 cloves garlic
- 3 cups fresh basil leaves
- 2 cups fresh spinach kale, or other leafy greens
- 2/3 cup light olive oil
- 1 1/2-2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp
- 3/4 tsp sea salt or to taste
- 3 cups cooked shredded chicken breast or about 1 lb uncooked
- 6 medium sweet potatoes
- Coconut oil and salt for baking

Instructions

1. Bake Potatoes: Preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Coat sweet potatoes with a bit of coconut oil and sprinkle sea salt all over. Place on a parchment lined baking sheet and bake 60-70 mins until soft.

2. Meanwhile, make the pesto. Combine walnuts, garlic, basil leaves, spinach, olive oil, lemon juice, nutritional yeast, and salt in a blender or food processor. Blend on high speed until a paste forms, scraping sides as needed.

Combine shredded chicken and all the pesto in a large bowl. Once potatoes are ready, cut each one lengthwise and top generously with chicken pesto mixture. You can serve as is or return to oven for a few minutes to heat through. Enjoy!

<https://www.paleorunningmomma.com/chicken-pesto-stuffed-sweet-potatoes-paleo-whole30/>



App of the Month

Grateful: a gratitude journal

According to researchers at the Harvard Medical School, "Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships." Grateful was created to make expressing gratitude in your life both easy and fun, as well as to remind you, during those down moments, of the many blessings in your life (that you've documented in Grateful). Available free for iPhone/iPad only. Lots of similar options are in the Android store though.



Wellness Around the District

Kudos to the MECP site and its wellness rep Kim Fairbanks for the creative wellness challenges they are doing to keep it fun and healthy for the staff and for kids! First, they are encouraging all staff to have walking meetings so they can get the blood pumping while they meet! In addition, the MECP is doing a healthy snack challenge. This is a challenge to create healthy snacks for children that they will ask for again! All members from each team are encouraged to submit healthy, kid-friendly snacks. One recipe will be chosen to be taste tested and go against recipes from other teams. The recipe should be healthy, but also appealing! Presentation might influence children's choices. The final recipes will go up against a panel of judges. Each final recipe (and the recipe card with allergy information) will be presented to the judges. The judges will include Speech groups of children and their families and a member of MECP staff. These are just of the awesome (and delicious) things that are happening around our district!!

Recommendation from Staci Heath at DDHS

Being an educator, parent, friend, spouse, partner, mentor.....these are all wonderful things, but they all take a lot of headspace and we all deserve time in our day to be mindful and intentional in our thoughts and actions. At the high school we have given our staff the opportunity to have a year long free subscription to the mindfulness app Headspace.

I used the Headspace app this summer and really enjoyed my 10 minutes to take a deep breathe and take the time to look at things from a different perspective. It was a great way to start my day.

A blogger describes Headspace as..... Giving yourself an opportunity to turn your attention inwards and to view the mind from a different perspective. It is the ability to develop a sense of acceptance and appreciation for whatever may arise in your experience. By introducing you to some of the fundamental principles of meditation, in time we can become more aware of ourselves and others and begin to see things with more clarity, ultimately enhancing our experience of everyday life.

<https://www.headspace.com>

Coping in the Aftermath of a Shooting

Over the course of the last few weeks, reports of mass violence and shootings have plagued the news. Although people are resilient and often bounce back after difficult times, these events nearly always interrupt our sense of order and safety. The impact often extends to individuals who live far outside of the affected area with no personal connections to the event. This is especially true when the event is human-caused with the intent of harming others. Even counselors with advanced training can become overwhelmed by the intensity of these tragic events. In the aftermath of recent shootings, ACA would like to provide some tips and resources for counselors and those they serve:

- **Attend to self care.** While it may seem counterintuitive to think about taking care of yourself first, you cannot be of service to others if you are unstable. Monitor all of your physical health needs - being sure to eat, sleep, exercise, and (if possible) maintain a normal daily routine.
 - **Pay attention to your emotional health.** Remember that a wide range of feelings during these difficult times are common. Know that others are also experiencing emotional reactions and may need your time and patience to put their feelings and thoughts in order.
 - **Try to recognize when you or those around you may need extra support.** It is not uncommon for individuals of all ages to experience stress reactions when exposed (even through media) to shootings or mass violence. Changes in eating and sleeping habits, energy level, and mood are important signs of distress. Watch for regressed behaviors, such as clinging in children and intense emotional reactions, such as anxiety or a strong need for retribution in adults. When necessary, point individuals to licensed professional counselors who can provide needed support.
 - **Avoid overexposure to media.** While it is important to stay informed, media portrayals of shootings and mass deaths have been shown to cause acute stress and posttraumatic stress symptoms. Limit your exposure and take a break from news sources.
 - **Maintain contact with friends and family.** These individuals can provide you with emotional support to help deal with difficult times.
 - **Focus on your strength base.** Maintain practices that you have found to provide emotional relief. Remind yourself of people and events which are meaningful and comforting.
- Talk to others as needed.** It is important to ask for help if you are having trouble recovering and everyday tasks seem difficult to manage.

<https://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/coping-in-the-aftermath-of-a-shooting>

Five Rainy Day Hikes Near Portland

Rainy days are inevitable in the Pacific Northwest but there are plenty of trails near Portland where you can get out in to nature and have a great time.

Oxbow Park and Sandy River Gorge: The Sandy River offers a wilderness-like forest just 30 minutes from Portland, with 800-year-old living trees, petrified trees even older and spawning salmon. The river is designated as wild and scenic, so there's plenty to see on the 12 miles of trails that run near it in Oxbow Park. And Sandy River Gorge, some 700 feet deep, is a great destination inside the park.

Drift Creek Trail: One of the more gentle rainy day hikes near Portland, this trail wanders alongside the pool-and-drop Drift Creek in the fern-studded Siuslaw National Forest. This great hike traverses a 240-foot cable suspension bridge—100 feet above ground—that will get your heart thumping and takes you to stunning Drift Creek Falls. The trail is well maintained and just three miles round trip.

Columbia Gorge: There are scores of excellent trails in the Columbia River Gorge, all of which are easily accessible on a day trip from Portland. The side canyons are verdant and feel primordial in the rain. Waterfalls abound and are made even more enchanting with the dampness. Hikes vary in length so you can choose what suits you based on your fitness level and time commitment. Among the best are the Tunnel Falls Hike and Wahclella Falls.

Opal Creek: The gorgeous canyon and old growth forest of Opal Creek east of Salem include two great rainy day hikes near Portland: the 6.6-mile Jawbone Flats hike along the turquoise-hued Little North Santiam and the former mining town of Jawbone Flats, now an outdoor museum of old mining equipment. For a longer ramble, consider the Opal Pool-Cedar Flats Hike, which passes the stunning emerald waters of Opal Creek. It's possible to loop this trip into the Jawbone Flats hike, too.

Cape Lookout: Little compares to witnessing the sheer power of a storm barreling into the Pacific coastline. At Cape Lookout, 25 minutes from Tillamook, your options include the five-mile Cape Lookout Trailhead or the day us trailhead which leads to a longer, 9.6-mile hike.

<http://www.activelynorthwest.com/fitness/best-rainy-day-hikes-near-portland/>

Do you have ideas for an upcoming newsletter?

An app you use everyday? A favorite healthy recipe? A great relaxation technique to share with your co-workers?

Please submit ideas to meagan_lutu@ddsd40.org

