



Canadian Mental  
Health Association  
Champlain East  
Mental health for all

Association canadienne  
pour la santé mentale  
Champlain Est  
La santé mentale pour tous

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Submitted by: Canadian Mental Health Association Champlain East

Did you know that gratitude is associated with many mental and physical benefits? Studies have shown that when people are feeling thankful it can improve their sleep, mood and immunity. Gratitude can also decrease anxiety, depression, and risk of disease (1). In their article on *Psychology Today*, Amy Morin (2015) described 7 scientifically proven benefits of gratitude (2). Here is a summary of them all and suggestions to improve your gratitude skills.

1. **Gratitude opens the door to more relationships.** Showing appreciation to a new acquaintance makes them more likely to seek an ongoing relationship. You can take the time to thank a neighbour for their help or sending a thank you note to a colleague who provided advice and support with a project.
2. **Gratitude improves physical health.** Individuals who are grateful experience fewer aches and pains and report feeling healthier than other individuals do. Furthermore, grateful people are more likely to take care of their health. How about going out for a walk in nature more often and be grateful for the beauty of sounds, smells and vegetation?
3. **Gratitude enhances empathy and reduces aggression.** Grateful people are more likely to behave in a prosocial manner, even when others behave less kindly. They also experience more sensitivity and empathy toward other people and less inclined to seek revenge.
4. **Grateful people sleep better.** According to one study, writing in a gratitude journal improves sleep. Spend some time before bed to write about three things you are thankful for. This habit may help you sleep better and longer.
5. **Gratitude improves self-esteem.** Gratitude reduces social comparison. Instead of being resentful for people who are more successful, have a bigger house, or more money, grateful people are able to appreciate other people's accomplishments, which is good for self-esteem.
6. **Gratitude improves psychological health.** Practicing gratitude reduces many toxic emotions, such as envy, resentment, frustration and regret. According to Robert Emmons's (a leading gratitude researcher) studies, gratitude effectively increases happiness and reduces depression.
7. **Gratitude increases mental strength.** Research over the years have shown that gratitude reduces stress and may play a significant role in overcoming trauma. Recognizing all that you have to be thankful for—even when facing challenging times—nurtures resilience.

In conclusion, remember that your brain is designed to problem-solve rather than appreciate. To override this tendency and take advantage of all the gratefulness benefits, make it a point to practice gratitude daily, just like eating well every day for better health.



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(1) Logan, A. (December 6, 2022). *Can expressing gratitude improve your mental, physical health?* Mayo Clinic Health System. <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/can-expressing-gratitude-improve-health>

(2) Morin, A. (April 3, 2015). *7 Scientifically Proven Benefits of Gratitude*. Psychology Today. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/what-mentally-strong-people-dont-do/201504/7-scientifically-proven-benefits-of-gratitude>

## DO YOU NEED HELP?

Dial or Text 2-1-1 for free and confidential service that easily connects people to the critical social and community supports they need.

**If you are thinking of suicide, please call 9-8-8 which is a mental health crisis and suicide prevention line.**

***The information provided is not a substitute for professional advice. If you need advice, please consult a qualified health care professional. For further information or if you want to access our services at CMHA, please call 1-800-493-8271 or visit our web site at [www.cmha-east.on.ca](http://www.cmha-east.on.ca)***