



Live Well, Work Well

November 2025

The Power of Gratitude and Positive Thinking

It can be easy to get caught up in everyday stress and negativity. However, practicing gratitude can be a powerful tool to improve mental health. Gratitude involves recognizing and appreciating life's positive aspects. By focusing on what one has rather than what one lacks, gratitude helps shift the mindset to a more positive and resilient state.

Gratitude is similar yet different from appreciation. The American Psychological Association defines gratitude as "a sense of happiness and thankfulness in response to a fortunate happenstance or tangible gift."

Gratitude encourages individuals to savor the present moment and acknowledge the good in their lives, no matter how small. This positive focus can lead to a more optimistic outlook and stronger relationships. It also encourages resilience, the ability to bounce back from setbacks more quickly. Similarly, gratitude instills a sense of control over emotions, enabling calmer and more effective responses to stressors. A positive outlook doesn't mean ignoring life's challenges; rather, it means approaching them with a constructive and hopeful attitude.

Ways to Practice Gratitude

Regularly acknowledging what you're grateful for can cultivate a sense of contentment. Starting small and being consistent can make a significant difference. Consider these tips to get started:

- Keep a gratitude journal, writing down things you're grateful for and reflecting on why they're meaningful to you.
- Try gratitude affirmations to reinforce positive thinking. Instead of writing down what you're grateful for, repeat it to yourself daily.
- Express thanks to others, sharing why you're grateful for them or how they're positively impacting your life.
- Embrace mindful moments by pausing to appreciate the beauty or the good around you, such as a sunny day or a kind gesture.
- Take a walk and consciously notice things you're grateful for in your surroundings. Then, reflect on how they enhance your life.

Remember, gratitude is a journey; every small step can lead to a more positive and fulfilling life.

Combating Tech Neck

While not an official medical diagnosis, “tech neck” has become a familiar phrase. As smartphones, laptops and tablets have become everyday tools, people spend more time hunched over screens. The result is a growing number of individuals reporting stiffness, discomfort and pain in their neck and shoulders. Tech neck refers to the strain placed on the cervical spine (the part of the spine in the neck) when a person consistently looks down at a device or sits in poor posture while using technology.

The good news is that tech neck is preventable and manageable. A few small changes in daily habits can make a big difference, so consider these tips:

- **Improve ergonomics.** Set up your workstation to reduce unnecessary strain. Position your computer monitor so the top of the screen is at or just below eye level. Sit in a chair that

supports your back, with feet flat on the floor and shoulders relaxed.

- **Follow the 20-20-20 rule.** Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds. This not only eases eye strain but also encourages you to reset your posture.
- **Strengthen and stretch.** Encouraging short stretch breaks (e.g., chin tucks, neck stretches and shoulder blade squeezes) during the workday can be particularly effective in preventing long-term strain.
- **Mind your phone habits.** When checking your phone, bring the device up to your eyes rather than bending your head down.

Contact a doctor if tech neck symptoms persist or worsen. Physical therapy, massage or exercise programs can help address severe discomfort.

Adjusting to Daylight Saving Time

Most of the United States shifts between standard and daylight saving time (DST) each year in an effort to “save” natural light. Clocks will get set one hour back on Sunday, Nov. 2, when the DST period ends. Although you may be excited about gaining another hour in your day, the disruption of DST can wreak havoc on your physical and cognitive health for several days, weeks or even months.

Your internal clock regulates critical processes, including the immune system. Interruptions to the circadian rhythm, your body’s 24-hour cycle that regulates wake and sleep, can also impair your focus and judgment. If your area follows DST, consider these tips to help adjust to the time change:

- Exercise in the morning to increase your wakefulness and reset your internal clock.

- Prioritize daylight exposure to help preserve your circadian rhythm.
- Keep a regular sleep routine and aim for seven to nine hours of sleep each night.
- Remove sleep disturbances (e.g., excess amounts of alcohol, caffeine and blue light exposure) a couple of hours before bedtime.

While you may be tempted to use the bonus hour to indulge in various activities, health experts recommend using that time for sleep. To help make the DST transition easier, consider going to bed 15 to 20 minutes early in the days beforehand to help your body get used to the difference. If you have specific concerns, talk to your health care provider.



MENTAL HEALTH MINUTE

NOVEMBER 2025



Depression Rates Remain High

A recent Gallup poll revealed that over 18% of U.S. adults are currently experiencing or being treated for depression, amounting to nearly 47.8 million Americans. Depression rates have remained at historically high levels since 2024, with young adults and lower-income individuals being disproportionately affected. The poll, based on responses from over 11,000 adults across the United States, highlights a troubling mental health trend driven by a multitude of factors.

The poll identified the following contributors to the record-high rates of depression:

- **Unprecedented stressors for young adults**—Young adults are facing a unique combination of challenges that influence rising depression rates. These concerns include overwhelming student debt, the pressure to succeed in a competitive job market and economic instability that makes it difficult to plan for the future. Additionally, social media has intensified feelings of inadequacy and comparison.
- **Financial strain**—Economic hardship can be a major

driver of depression. People struggling to afford food, housing and health care often experience chronic stress, which can severely impact mental health.

- **Loneliness and social disconnect**—Despite living in an era of digital connectivity, many people report feeling deeply isolated. The lack of meaningful, in-person social interactions and supportive relationships has been strongly linked to depression. Those who feel lonely for extended periods are significantly more likely to experience depressive symptoms, emphasizing the importance of genuine human connection.

Depression can show up in many ways, and it's important to recognize the signs early. Common symptoms include persistent sadness, loss of interest in activities once enjoyed, changes in appetite or sleep patterns, fatigue and difficulty concentrating. If you or someone you know is experiencing these symptoms, seeking professional support is a crucial step toward feeling better. Consider exploring the resources available from your employer, such as an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which often provides confidential counseling and support services at no additional cost.

Why Joyspan Matters

As organizations continue to prioritize holistic well-being, a new concept is emerging that reframes how we think about aging and emotional health: joyspan.

Introduced by gerontologist Dr. Kerry Burnight, joyspan refers to the duration and depth of joy experienced throughout life. While lifespan measures how long we live, and health span measures how long we live in good health, joyspan asks a more personal question: Are we enjoying our lives as we age?

Dr. Burnight outlines the following four foundational practices to help individuals expand their joyspan:

1. **Grow.** Engage in continuous learning. Whether it's professional development, creative hobbies or personal enrichment, intellectual growth supports emotional vitality.
2. **Adapt.** Embrace change with flexibility. Adjusting to new roles, technology and workflows with a positive mindset enhances resilience.
3. **Give.** Contribute meaningfully. Acts of generosity, such as mentoring, volunteering or

simply offering support, can build a sense of purpose and community.

4. **Connect.** Foster relationships. Meaningful connections with colleagues, friends and family are essential to emotional well-being.

Joyspan is the time spent experiencing joy and fulfillment, emphasizing the quality of life. By consciously expanding your joyspan, you're not only enhancing your emotional well-being but also building a more resilient, engaged, productive and purpose-driven life, both inside and outside the workplace.

Small, intentional practices can lead to lasting improvements in how you experience each day, helping you thrive through change, connect meaningfully with others and find fulfillment in your personal and professional journey. Prioritizing your joyspan does require continuous effort, but you can start making strides today. If you need additional help getting started, consider consulting a mental health professional for further guidance.

Take Charge of Your Health



Strengthen Your Immune System

Your immune system is your body's natural defense against illness, working tirelessly to protect you from viruses, bacteria and other harmful invaders. A strong immune system not only helps you recover faster from an illness but can also reduce your chances of getting sick in the first place.

Consider these ways to naturally boost your immune system during the cold and flu season:



Eat a nutrient-rich diet. Fuel your body with a variety of fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains and healthy fats. These foods provide essential vitamins and minerals (e.g., vitamin C, vitamin D and zinc) that support immune function.



Stay active. Moderate physical activity improves circulation and helps immune cells move more efficiently throughout the body. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week, such as brisk walking or cycling.



Prioritize quality sleep. Sleep is when your body repairs and regenerates. Adults should aim for at least 7 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night. Poor sleep can reduce the production of infection-fighting cells and antibodies.



Limit alcohol intake. Alcohol weakens the immune system, suppressing it for up to 24 hours after 5-6 drinks. Over time, drinking can cause the immune system to take longer to recognize and respond to infections. If you drink alcohol, be sure to consume it in moderation.



Manage stress. Chronic stress can suppress immune function. Incorporate stress-reducing activities into your routine, such as meditation, deep breathing, journaling, laughing or simply spending time with loved ones.

Stuffed Green Peppers

November 2025 Recipe

Makes: 4 servings



Ingredients

- 4 large green bell peppers (washed)
- 1 lb. 85% lean ground turkey
- 1 cup rice (uncooked)
- ½ cup onion (peeled and chopped)
- 1 ½ cups unsalted tomato sauce
- Black pepper (to taste)

Nutritional information for 1 serving

Calories	452
Total fat	15 g
Saturated fat	4 g
Cholesterol	84 mg
Sodium	99 mg
Carbohydrate	53 g
Dietary fiber	5 g
Total sugars	9 g
Added sugars included	6 g
Protein	25 g

Directions

1. Cut around the stem of the green bell peppers. Remove the seeds and the pulpy part of the peppers.
2. Wash, and then cook the peppers in boiling water for 5 minutes. Drain well.
3. In a saucepan, brown the turkey. Add the rice, onion, ½ cup tomato sauce and black pepper.
4. Stuff each pepper with the mixture and place in a casserole dish.
5. Pour the remaining tomato sauce over the green peppers.
6. Cover and bake for 30 minutes at 350 F.