



How to Help Seniors Cultivate an Attitude of Gratitude

Older adults are often thought to be in a stage of life where they can pursue rest after retirement, reflection, and hobbies that careers and raising a family prohibited them from practicing. Unfortunately, growing older is not always picture perfect. This is often a result of an overall decline in health, loss of abilities, loss of family and friends, and financial hardship. According to the [American Psychological Association](#), these, and other concerns give way to negative emotions, such as anxiety, loneliness, and sadness.



While aging is an inevitable part of life, sadness and depression need not be a part of it. There have been numerous studies that link practicing gratitude to greater happiness. So whether you choose to write a few sentences in a gratitude journal, or simply take a moment to acknowledge your blessings, giving thanks can transform your life. Here are just a few ways to help the senior in your life cultivate an attitude of gratitude.

Morning Coffee Gratitude

Start the day off right with a cup of coffee and a moment of reflection. When you sit down with your aging parents to enjoy the day's first cup of coffee, spend a few minutes counting your blessings. As you all hold your coffee cups, feel gratitude for the warmth of the mug, the aroma of the coffee, the first sip, the quietness the morning holds, and the new day full of hope and possibility. Starting the day in a moment of gratitude can change the outlook a senior has on the entire day ahead.

Write a Gratitude Letter

Give the gift of appreciation by writing a gratitude letter to the senior in your life. Often, older adults feel lonely, isolated, and unwanted. Share with them why they are important to you and include specific examples of how they have touched your life. Remind them that they are important and that their life matters. Your letter will be cherished and will most likely be reread often.

A Year of Gratitude

Encourage and assist your aging parents to write one thank you card a day, a week, or a month. The point of this exercise isn't about accomplishing a task as much as it is about changing perspective. Spend the upcoming new year looking for people your parents can thank and prompt them to do the same. Then, once a day, week, or month, sit down and write the thank you card. By the end of the year, you'll notice this gratitude exercise will have transformed your aging parents' lives, and perhaps your own as well.

Gratitude Dialogue

If you're looking for a way to bring positivity to the conversation you're having with the elderly, steer the conversation by asking them questions that change the focus from negative to positive. Ask what made them happy or what brought a smile to their face today. When something negative is brought up, listen and then ask if they can see the silver lining.

Visualize Gratitude

Purchase visual cues to add to your loved one's home decor that will remind them to be thankful. This time of year, stores are filled with plaques, frames, wood blocks, and paperweights with words and phrases of gratitude. Fill picture frames with family photos or pictures their grandchildren drew for them. Place a few objects in places where your loved one is sure to see it throughout their day, reminding them of their many blessings.

Gratitude Journal

Provide a journal and prompt your loved one to spend a few minutes at the end of the day reflecting on that day's blessings. Encourage them to list at least five things that they are grateful for that happened that day. Focus on life's littlest blessings, such as hearing the birds chirp in the morning or the sweet taste of a brownie at lunch. Blessings can be big too, such as hearing from a long-distance relative or the warm embrace of a grandchild's hug. The purpose of a gratitude journal is to keep your mind attuned to what's happening throughout the day and finding joy in each moment.

We, at [Visiting Angels of Boulder County](#), would like to take a moment to thank those who readily share their Visiting Angels reviews. Because of your feedback, we can continue to provide the best possible senior care. We strive to ensure that each of our clients receives the special treatment they deserve by customizing our services to fit their specific needs. When you schedule a consultation, we meet with you and your loved one to determine which services would best meet the needs of your loved one. We then create a customized care plan that can be adapted as your loved one's needs change, ensuring they always receive the care they need. Contact [Visiting Angels of Boulder County](#) today to find out more about how our senior care services can help your loved one live safely and comfortably at home.

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