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JUN 28 2021

LABOR RELATIONS



June 24, 2021

Mr. Brian J. Wagner  
President  
National Association of Postal  
Supervisors  
1727 King Street, Suite 400  
Alexandria, VA 22314-2753

Dear Mr. Wagner:

As a matter of general interest, the Postal Service plans to initiate *Wellness Wednesday's* Stand-Up Talks (SUTs) focusing on employee safety and different health topics. In conjunction with the *Wellness Wednesday's* SUTs, we plan to send a series of "pop-up" wellness messages to be displayed on the Mobile Delivery Device (MDD)/MDD-Technology Refresh (TR) devices.

The goal of the *Wellness Wednesday's* messaging is to share helpful and healthy information with our employees and to offer additional resources and material regarding their safety and well-being.

Enclosed is a copy of the *Wellness Wednesday's* SUTs that will be presented every Wednesday throughout the year and a list of *Wellness Wednesday* "pop-up" messages that will be displayed on MDD/MDD-TR devices.

Please contact Bruce Nicholson at extension 7773 if you have any questions concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David E. Mills", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

David E. Mills  
Director  
Labor Relations Policies and Programs

Enclosures

### Wellness Wednesday MDD Messaging

Improve your food choices today by adding fresh vegetables, fruit and fiber.	
Are you getting the proper amount of rest (7 to 9 hours)?	
Take some time for yourself. Meditation is an excellent way to relax.	
Heart attacks and strokes can be prevented with early detection.	
Did you know that eating healthy regularly can help reduce medical issues?	
Keep your eyes on the road and be attentive. Don't text while driving.	
Create exercises that you can do at home (chair exercise, walk the stairs, etc).	
Pay it forward today. Encourage someone and tell them that they are appreciated.	
Today is National Postal Worker Day and US Postage Stamp Day. We APPRECIATE You!	
Thanks to all employees for dedicating your hard work to the USPS every day!	
The sun may be shining, but don't forget your sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat.	
August is Immunization Month - Are you up to date with your immunizations?	
Are you interested in creating a First-Class HERO profile? Log into HERO.	
EAP resources are available to you 24/7. Call 800-327-4968, (TTY) 877-492-7341).	
Create healthy recipes and share them with family, friends and/or co-workers.	
Get involved with Employee Engagement and send your ideas to <a href="mailto:engagement@usps.gov">engagement@usps.gov</a>	
Dress warmly in layers and cover exposed areas to avoid frostbite.	

# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

## **Wellness Wednesdays Introduction**

The Wellness Team would like to spread the word of wellness throughout your day and we want to grab your attention during the stand-up talks. Wellness Wednesdays will offer short stand-up talks referencing different health topics. These topics may be familiar to you, or you may never have heard of them. The goal of the Wellness Team is to share helpful information and offer resources that are available to locate for additional information.

If you have any suggestions about topics, please email the Wellness Team at [healthandwellness@usps.gov](mailto:healthandwellness@usps.gov).

Thank you. Have a healthy and happy day!

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

**Snacking 101**

Throughout the day, there are multiple opportunities to improve the food choices that you put into your body. Everyone can eat healthier and turn small changes into regular patterns.

The Wellness Team offers a list of recommendations and some healthier snack ideas to make those changes a little easier.

**It is recommended:**

- To consume no more than 200 calories per serving when snacking
- Consume 4-5 servings per day of fruits and vegetables
- Foods that have 140 mg of sodium or less per serving are considered low-sodium choices

**Healthier Options:**

- Fresh fruit — apples, bananas, pineapples, oranges, or grapes
- Whole-grain crackers
- Light popcorn
- Raw or roasted nuts (unsalted or very light salt)
- Fresh vegetables — broccoli, carrots, celery, or bell peppers

We challenge you to make better decisions. Small changes make a big difference. You may surprise yourself and feel better with little changes.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

**Stress Less**

Everyone experiences some level of stress, which refers to how the body and brain respond to demands and challenges. Left unchecked, prolonged stress can lead to heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, and other long-term health problems.

Asking someone to stress less is easier said than done. Throughout the day, there are many times we stress about things that we cannot control. Periodically, we all need to slow down, relax, and recharge.

Take time to unwind by trying some of the following things:

- Take a walk with a friend
- Join a book club
- Try relaxing activities such as meditation, yoga, listening to music, or reading.
- Spend time with loved ones
- Laugh
- Take a vacation or some personal time

Set goals and priorities and be aware when you are taking on too much. Turn negative stress into something positive. Think about developing a vision of a healthy lifestyle for yourself and stick to your vision. Your vision can be different from others, even those closest to you.

Employees who feel stressed can also seek assistance from the [Employee Assistance Program](#) — a free, voluntary and confidential service to help USPS employees overcome challenges affecting their physical and mental health, family life, and job performance — or a health care professional.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

**Employee Wellness**

Wellness is much more than what you eat and how often you exercise. Wellness is a combination of physical, financial, social, and career health.

Here are some ideas to adjust or improve your current well-being:

**Health** - Take a breather when things are getting tough. Stress builds up and can cause mental and physical harm.

**Financial** - Increase your savings. Think about saving \$5 more a week. If you accomplish that, you could save an additional \$260 per year. Over five years, that adds up to \$1,300.

**Social** - Plan a date with your spouse or family outside of work. Social interaction creates a feeling of fulfillment and improves your emotional health.

**Career** - Are you interested in growing your career with the Postal Service? Speak with your manager about development opportunities that may arise.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk**

## **Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

### **Sleep Hygiene**

Sleep isn't a luxury—it's vital for good health. Good habits, also known as sleep hygiene, can improve your physical, mental, and social well-being.

The amount of sleep you need changes as you age. In general, adults need approximately 7-9 hours of sleep per night.

Many adults don't get enough sleep, which is connected to many chronic diseases and conditions, including heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and depression. Lack of sleep can also result in drowsy driving and mistakes at work, leading to serious injuries and disabilities.

The quality of your sleep is also important. Signs of poor sleep quality are not feeling rested after getting enough sleep, frequently waking up during the night, and having symptoms of sleep disorders, like snoring or gasping for air.

**To improve your sleep, try these tips:**

- Maintain a consistent sleep schedule throughout the entire week.
- Create a soothing room environment focusing on temperature, sound, and light.
- Incorporate relaxing bedtime rituals, such as meditation
- Keep electronic devices—including televisions, phones and computers—out of your bedroom.
- Limit food, alcohol, and caffeine before bedtime.
- Exercise regularly. Being active during the day can improve your sleep at night.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

**Nutrition**

Good nutrition can help you manage health conditions and lower your risk for serious problems. The key is making smart choices, including knowing what's in your food and how many calories you're consuming.

When grocery shopping, for example, read food labels to learn about nutrients, calories, and serving sizes. Before dining out, look up menus and nutrition information online.

You can also refer to <https://www.myplate.gov/>, an online tool from the U.S. Department of Agriculture that recommends dividing your meal plate into four sections. Fill one-quarter of your plate with fruits, one-quarter with vegetables, one-quarter with whole grains, and one-quarter with proteins. A serving of low-fat dairy, such as milk or yogurt, is also suggested with every meal.

Other tips include making your plates colorful with a rainbow of fruits and vegetables, so you have a variety of nutrients that look appetizing. You can also experiment with spices and new flavors to add dimension to your meals without adding excess calories. Keep empty calories to a minimum by choosing foods and beverages with less added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium.

The bottom line: Think about your eating habits and pick one or two ways that you can make healthier choices. Small changes matter and add up over time.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

**Physical Activity**

Being physically active is one of the most important actions that people of all ages can take to improve their health and wellbeing. A single session of moderate to vigorous physical activity can provide immediate health benefits like improved sleep, reduced anxiety, and lowered blood pressure.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), regular exercise has valuable health benefits for chronic disease prevention such as:

- **Brain Health**
- **Heart Health**
- **Bone and Muscle Health**
- **Balance and Coordination**
- **Cancer Prevention**
- **Healthy Weight Management**

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans by the [Department of Health and Human Services](#) recommends that all adults engage in at least 150 minutes a week of moderate intensity aerobic physical activity like walking, and at least 2 days a week of muscle-strengthening activities of moderate or greater intensity that involve all major muscle groups. Older adults should also include balance training, such as standing on one foot.

Those with chronic conditions should also be aware of how their conditions affect their ability to exercise safely. If you cannot complete 150 minutes of activity each week, be as physically active as your abilities and conditions permit. The loss of strength and stamina as we age is due in part to reduced physical activity. Social support from family, friends, and communities is also consistently and positively related to greater physical activity.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

## **Financial Wellness**

Sound financial principles can help you prepare for future goals and unexpected emergencies while providing flexibility to enjoy life.

According to the [Federal Financial Literacy and Education Commission](#), the five financial principles to help manage and grow your savings are:

- **Earn.** Understand your benefits. Learn how to read your paycheck, including deductions, taxes, and withholdings.
- **Save and invest.** Save each month and invest for retirement, your children's education, and other major items.
- **Protect.** Monitor your credit scores. Watch out for identity theft, fraud, and scams. Build an emergency fund for unexpected events. Purchase life, health, and home insurance.
- **Spend.** Live within your means by setting short and long-term financial goals and compare prices, quality, and necessity of purchases when shopping.
- **Borrow.** Remember, your credit history affects the annual percentage rate for car and home loans, so always pay your bills on time.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau — a U.S. government agency that ensures banks, lenders, and other financial companies treat you fairly — offers an [online tool](#) to help evaluate your financial well-being.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk**

## **Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

**Weight Management**

Reaching and maintaining a healthy weight is important throughout your life and prevents the development of many diseases. Weight management is most successful when viewed as a lifestyle behavior, not a temporary goal.

Various factors, such as family history, genetics, metabolism, environment, and habits contribute to a person's weight. Being overweight may lead to higher risks for serious health problems, such as heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, stroke, and cancer. Individuals that are underweight also pose health risks, such as malnutrition, decreased immune function, and fertility issues.

Weight management helps lower risks for disease and gives you more energy. It's part of your self-care that incorporates healthier eating, regular physical activity, getting enough sleep, managing stress, and balancing the calories you eat and drink with the calories your body uses for daily activity.

### **Try these tips to help manage your weight:**

- Move more and sit less. Limit screen time and time spent sitting. Create ways to increase steps throughout the day.
- Schedule time for physical activity and stick to it.
- Track eating habits. Include more fruits and vegetables. Start with reducing food or drink intake by 500 calories a day if your goal is weight loss.
- Set goals that are specific, attainable, and forgiving (not too strict).
- Plan for setbacks. Refocus and resume your goals.

It's never too early or too late to achieve a healthy weight.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

## **Allergies and Asthma**

Allergies are your body's immune reactions to foreign substances — allergens — that are typically harmless for most people. Common allergens include pollen, dust mites, pet dander, mold, food, medication, and venom from insect stings and bites. Food allergies — including those linked to milk, egg, fish, and tree nuts — are also common.

Symptoms include runny nose, sneezing, watery eyes, breathing problems, itching, and swelling. Some allergies are life-threatening.

Asthma is a type of allergic reaction and a chronic condition that affects the lungs. While the exact cause of asthma is unknown, genetic, environmental and occupational factors have been linked to developing asthma.

Allergies and asthma affect people of all ages. They often exist together, and the likelihood for occurrence runs in families.

Allergies are diagnosed by skin and blood tests and treated with medication, allergy shots, and avoiding substances that cause reactions. Asthma is diagnosed by reviewing medical history, allergies, and pulmonary diagnostic tests. Treatment for both conditions vary.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

## **Date**

## **Immunizations**

The Wellness team wants employees to know about the importance of getting vaccinated.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), vaccine-preventable diseases and infections, such as measles and diphtheria, can cause long-term illness, hospitalization, or even death.

Vaccines, which are typically administered orally or as an injection, produce immunity against certain disease-causing organisms in your body. Employees should consult their health care providers to discuss which vaccines are appropriate for them.

Vaccines are available for the following viruses and infections, and many more:

- **COVID - 19:** helps to protect you from getting coronavirus
- **Influenza (Flu):** recommended for all adults every year
- **Tdap:** tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough)
- **Shingles (Herpes Zoster):** recommended for adults age 50 and over
- **Hepatitis A & B:** protects against viruses that attack the liver
- **Pneumococcal:** helps prevent pneumonia

The CDC website has a [recommended vaccine schedule](#) for adults age 19 and over.

Non-routine vaccines are also available for travel situations where people may be exposed to dangerous diseases that are no longer common in the U.S. Check with your health care provider before traveling outside of the country.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

## **Mindfulness & Meditation**

Mindfulness is being actively open to the present, observing thoughts and feelings without judging them as good or bad.

Living mindfully means living in the moment rather than dwelling on the past or anticipating the future. It has two key ingredients - awareness and acceptance. The goal of mindfulness is to bring greater internal peace, and it can also be used to combat stress, anxiety, and pain.

Each person's experience is different and influenced by their emotions. Thoughts, fears, or stress can make it harder to appreciate the present.

Mindfulness can be practiced through meditation or small sessions of stillness throughout the day. Meditation is a routine process of training your mind to focus and redirect your thoughts.

- Sit and take deep breaths
- Focus on each breath and sensations
- Allow thoughts and emotions to exist without judgement

According to the [National Institutes of Health](#), meditation is a mind body practice that promotes calmness, relaxation, coping with illness, and overall health and well-being. Research suggests that practicing meditation may reduce blood pressure, anxiety and depression, and insomnia.

Anyone can practice meditation. It is a quick and inexpensive way to reduce stress. Meditation does not require equipment or space, so it can be practiced anywhere with just a few minutes a day.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk**

## **Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

**Sun Safety**

Sun safety is never out of season. Throughout the year, it is important to protect your skin from sun damage and prevent sunburn, skin aging, eye damage, and skin cancer, the most common of all cancers in the U.S.

Everyone is at risk for sun damage. The sun's invisible ultraviolet (UV) radiation can damage your skin in 15 minutes. You can reduce your risk by:

- Applying sunscreen regularly, even on cloudy or cool days.
- Seeking shade under an umbrella, tree, or shelter for relief.
- Wearing clothing to cover skin exposed to sun, including long sleeve shirts and pants, hats with brims all the way around, and sunglasses.
- Limiting your time in the sun, especially between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. when the sun's rays are more intense.

Sunscreens use a sun protection factor (SPF) number that indicate their effectiveness for blocking UV rays. Higher numbers offer more protection. Everyone should use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher.

Read sunscreen labels for proper application instructions and apply sunscreen liberally to all uncovered skin. Reapply at least every two hours and use more often if you are swimming or sweating. No sunscreen is completely waterproof or blocks all UV radiation, so reapply and take other precautions, such as wearing protective clothing.

**###**

# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk**

## **Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

**Hydration**

Drinking enough water every day is essential for your health. It prevents dehydration, which can lead to unclear thinking, mood changes, overheating, and constipation.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), water helps your body:

- Prevent infection
- Lubricate and cushion joints
- Regulate normal body temperature
- Deliver nutrients to cells and organs
- Rid waste through urination and perspiration

**Your body needs more water when you are:**

- In hot climates
- Exercising (before, during and after)
- Running a fever
- Having diarrhea or vomiting

Your body meets its fluid needs through water and beverages, however, you can get some fluids through food with high water content, such as fruits and vegetables.

**Tips to drink more water:**

- Keep a reusable water bottle with you and refill it throughout the day.
- Drink water before, during, and after exercise.
- If you are feeling hungry, try drinking water first.
- Add fruit to your water for flavoring.
- Chose water when eating out to save money and calories.

An easy way to know if you are drinking enough water is to pay attention to the color of your urine. If it is pale and clear, you are well hydrated. If it is dark, drink more water.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk**

## **Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

### **Headaches & Migraines**

Migraines are recurring headaches that cause moderate to severe pain or throbbing that is often in one area of the head.

Other symptoms, such as nausea, weakness, or sensitivity to light and sound may also occur.

Migraines are often linked to genetics, but they can affect anyone. Women are three times more likely to get migraines than men.

Many factors can trigger a migraine, including stress, hormones, noises, smells, medicine, inadequate sleep, weather, overexertion, alcohol, and food.

Migraines are more common in the morning, and some people experience them at predictable times, such as before menstruation or following stressful events.

For migraine relief, the [National Institutes of Health](#) provides these tips:

- Rest with your eyes closed in a quiet, dark room
- Place a cool cloth or ice pack on your forehead
- Drink fluids
- Try stress management techniques, such as exercise and relaxation activities
- Keep a log of what causes your migraines to help prevent further occurrences

Health care providers diagnose migraines by conducting exams and reviewing medical history. It is important to rule out other medical conditions that may be causing symptoms.

There is no cure for migraines, and treatments focus on relieving symptoms and preventing future attacks.

**###**

# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk**

## **Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

**Food Allergies**

Food allergies affect millions of American families. A food allergy is an adverse immune system reaction that occurs after exposure to certain food.

Symptoms of food allergies generally develop within minutes or up to two hours after a person has consumed food to which they are allergic. Signs include hives, flushed skin, tingling or itchy mouth, vomiting, lightheadedness, and swelling of face, tongue, lips, or throat.

Food allergies are the leading cause of anaphylaxis, which results in approximately 30,000 emergency room visits, 2,000 hospitalizations, and 150 deaths each year. If you have known food allergies and experience symptoms, initiate treatment immediately, and seek medical attention if symptoms progress.

The eight leading causes of food allergies are: milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, and soybeans. These eight foods are responsible for 90% of food allergic reactions.

The law requires that food labels identify food sources that include these major food allergens. According to the [Food and Drug Administration](#), over 160 foods cause allergies or sensitivities. Food ingredients like gluten and sesame, and additives such as food coloring, may also produce nonallergic hypersensitivity reactions.

There is no cure for food allergies. Some can be outgrown, or the severity of symptoms may change during your life. The best way to manage food allergies is to avoid foods that trigger reactions and follow your doctor's treatment plan.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

**Laughter**

Laughter provides great physical, emotional, and social wellness benefits. It relaxes your body, improves your mood and immune system, protects your heart, reduces anxiety, and even adds years to your life.

Laughter also brings people together and strengthens relationships. It helps to connect people, solve problems, and encourage creative thinking. Laughter is contagious – the more you have in your own life, the happier you and those around you will feel. The social benefits of spending time with family and friends plays a big role in the health benefits of laughter.

A good laugh works quickly to ease stress and renew balance to your body and mind.

Try these opportunities to bring more laughter into your life:

- Watch a funny movie or television show
- Host a game night
- Share a funny joke or story
- Play with children and pets
- Make time for fun activities, like sports
- Read a good book or listen to an entertaining podcast

The ability to laugh and have fun makes life more enjoyable and helps you view the world from a more relaxed and positive perspective.

**###**

# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

## **Don't Skip Meals**

It can be easy to become distracted by work and events and forget to eat or focus on healthy snacks. Food is fuel, so it is important to not skip meals, especially breakfast. Skipping meals lowers metabolism, causing the body to burn less energy. The body runs out of fuel, which makes it feel sluggish, weak, and tired.

When we forget to eat, we become over-hungry and over-eat, because our bodies are programmed to survive. This often results in making unhealthy food choices.

Eating regularly throughout the day prevents loss of energy and keeps you alert, focused, and productive. Eating at steady times of the day can help you maintain a consistent schedule and prevent blood sugar from dropping. Choosing small, frequent meals also assists with weight loss or weight maintenance. Planning and prepping meals and snacks ahead of time will also go a long way toward helping your day and body run smoothly.

Try combining protein, healthy fat (nuts, avocado), whole grains, and fiber, such as fruits or vegetables into your meals. Protein and nutritious fat can help you feel satisfied and full as well as cut down on unnecessary snacking later in the day. Whole grains and fruits and vegetables contribute essential fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

Start your day in a positive way by supplying your body with energy and keep powering your body nutritiously throughout the day.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

**Self-Care**

Self-care is not synonymous with being selfish or self-indulgent. Self-care means taking care of yourself and being balanced so that you can be healthy, care for others, perform your job, and do what you need to do each day.

Self-care includes everything related to staying healthy, including hygiene, nutrition, and medical care. It encompasses the steps you can take to manage stress in your life and take care of your health and well-being.

Making time for self-care has many benefits, including:

- Improved physical health
- Enhanced emotional wellness
- Stress relief
- Makes you a better caregiver
- Provides time alone

Care for yourself one small way every day. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) provides these suggestions for self-care:

- Take breaks to unwind through activities, such as meditation, music, gardening, or hobbies.
- Safely connect with family and friends, get support, and share feelings.
- Exercise to reduce fatigue, anxiety, or stress.
- Treat yourself to healthy foods and get enough sleep.

Every person's "healthiest self" is unique. According to the [National Institutes of Health](#), our body, feelings, surroundings, relationships, and the steps we take to prevent disease are all different. Each of these areas has bearing on our well-being, so find the best ways to improve your own well-being.

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# **Mandatory Stand-Up Talk Wellness Wednesdays**

**Date**

**Gratitude**

Practicing gratitude can considerably influence our well-being. Gratitude has been scientifically linked to the following benefits:

- Improved physical and mental health
- Greater self-esteem
- More empathy and less aggression
- Better sleep
- Opportunities for more social relationships

How often do you reflect on the good things in your life? Think about why you are grateful for your health, work, family, friends, etc.

The [National Institutes of Health](#) offers gratitude tips to create positive emotions and be thankful each day:

- Think about positive things that happen during the day.
- Write down what you are grateful for in a journal or phone App.
- Enjoy your experiences and notice the moments while they are happening.
- Relive good times with memories and share with others.
- Write a letter to someone you feel thankful toward.
- Tell individuals in person that you are grateful for them.
- Do something nice to help others, such as volunteering.

When you make gratitude a habit, it can help you recognize and appreciate the positive aspects of your life despite any bad things that may happen.

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