
Gratitude: Its Positive Impact

The Greater Good Science Center and Osher Lifelong Learning at UC Berkeley Spring 2018

Purpose of the Course

People who experience gratitude cope better with stress and enjoy more robust physical health. AND gratitude can be cultivated and practiced. Based on “The Science of Happiness,” a globally popular class taught by Berkeley’s Greater Good Science Center, this course blends online and in-person learning and uses articles, video, and class discussion to help you develop a gratitude mindset. Learn gratitude practices and discuss the challenges of consistency.

Specific Objectives

- Frame gratitude within the field of positive psychology
- Explore current learning about gratitude and its effects on people and relationships.
- Practice gratitude in three or more experimental ways.

Text

The Science of Gratitude

Schedule of Topics

4/3/18	Bring your laptop or tablet for technical advice and assistance Be prepared to answer: Three things you are grateful for, and Your own definition of gratitude Instructor will give overview of positive psychology
4/10/18	“Gratitude is the feeling of reverence for things that are given. They are gifts that come to us.” R. Emmons Word document: Roman numeral I-II Homework requirements: Intro to Gratitude, Dacher Keltner video, Robert Emmons video, Robert Emmons essay, Pay it Forward, Take Gratitude Quiz and bring results to class, Emiliana Simon-Thomas video about gratitude letter, worksheet for gratitude letter Questions for discussion in class: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What do you see as the difference between gratitude as the habit of saying Thank You and gratitude as a deeper, abiding sense of thankfulness for life?2. Why is gratitude good?3. How can gratitude be an antidote to depression?4. Results of Gratitude Quiz5. Discussion of Gratitude Letter
4/17/18	Word document: Roman numeral III Your Mind on Gratitude Homework requirements: Emiliana Simon-Thomas video about benefits of gratitude, Robert Emmons essay Why Gratitude is Good, Sonja Lyubomirsky video, Catherine Price essay Stumbling toward Gratitude, Robert Emmons essay How Gratitude Can Help You Through Hard Times Questions for discussion in class: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What do Phil Watkins and Alex Wood tell us about the benefits of gratitude? Have you experienced any of these benefits before or during this course? Can you describe?2. What are some psychological, physical and social benefits of practicing gratitude?3. What are the challenges of gratitude?

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. What lessons can a negative experience teach us? 5. Can you find ways to be thankful for a negative experience NOW even though you weren't THEN? 6. What abilities might the experience have drawn out of you that surprise you? 7. How am I now the person I want to be because of a negative experience? 8. Did that experience remove a personal obstacle that previously prevented me from feeling grateful?
4/24/18	<p>Word document: Roman numeral IV-VII</p> <p>Gratitude, the Body, and Relationships</p> <p>Homework requirements: Watch Gratitude Shorts (optional), Emiliana Simon-Thomas video about Gratitude and the Body, Berry Mendes video on psychological effects, Phil Watkins video on cognitive effects, Dacher Keltner video on challenges of gratitude, Tom Gilovich video on enemies of gratitude, Emmons articles What gets in the way of Gratitude and 5 Myths about Gratitude, Happiness Practice #2, Gratitude Journal</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does gratitude enhance well-being? 2. Have you experienced any challenges to gratitude? Explain. 3. How or when has gratitude been hard to practice? 4. Which reservations have YOU had about gratitude? 5. Give an example of a recent material purchase (car, new drill) and one of an experience purchase (trip, day at the beach). Talk about the anticipation of each purchase, its acquisition and the feeling of having the thing or having the experience. What does Gilovich say about these different kinds of purchases? 6. Discussion of Gratitude Journal
5/1/18	<p>Presentations of Gratitude Letter by class members</p> <p>Debrief, questions, appreciations for presentations</p>
5/8/18	<p>Word document: Roman numeral VIII-X</p> <p>Cultivating Gratitude, Gratitude in Schools, Gratitude in Romantic Relationships, Gratitude at Work</p> <p>Homework requirements: Watch Emiliana Simon-Thomas video Cultivating Gratitude, read Smith's 6 Habits of Highly Grateful People, watch Giacomo Bono's video Gratitude in Schools, read Froh and Bono's article Gratitude in Schools, watch Sara Algoe's video Gratitude in Romantic Relationships, read Amie Gordon's two articles Gratitude is for Lovers and 4 Ways to Make the Most of Gratitude on Valentine's Day, read Smith's Cultivating Gratitude at Work</p> <p>We will have a second self-assessment, a debrief and assessment of the course in this session.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What Gratitude boosting practices have you tried? What seemed to you to have the most impact? 2. What do you see as factors in girls having more prosocial behavior and being more grateful and boys getting greater benefit from prolonged prosocial behavior, being increasingly grateful? 3. What did you learn, or what was reinforced for you by Algoe and Gordon as a romantic partner in strengthening the bonds of your relationship?
	<p>Supplemental readings:</p> <p>There are many other articles on Gratitude at greatergood.berkeley.edu (Greater Good Magazine)</p> <p>Mentioned in the course are:</p> <p>Emmons, R.A. (2007). Thanks! How the new science of gratitude can make you happier. New York, NY; Houghton Mifflin.</p>

	<p>Gordon, A. (2013). Five Ways Giving Thanks Can Backfire. (Apr. 29). Greater Good Magazine. greatergood.berkeley.edu.</p> <p>Another winner:</p> <p>Sacks, O. (2015). Gratitude. New York, NY; Alfred A. Knopf.</p> <p>4. We mostly don't/didn't say thank you at work. Why is or was this true for you (not true)?</p> <p>What are some ways in which we are grateful to OLLI? Who should we thank that doesn't ordinarily get thanked?</p>