**Gratitude:**

**By Assaad Mounzer, M.D., MA, ACC**

**Gratitude is an affirmation of goodness.**

**Think of someone to give thanks to?**

**Review the blessings in your life.**

**"Happiness is not what makes us grateful. It is gratefulness that makes us happy."**

 **David Steindl-Rast

The very nature of gratitude is a deep sense of well-being and resiliency that is a genuine happiness.

Father David Steindl-Rast is a Benedictine monk, has a Ph.D. in psychology, and has dedicated much of his life to understanding and teaching about the transformative powers of gratitude.**

 **In addition to the proven benefits of gratitude, one of its best attributes is that can be available to us at any time if we learn how to cultivate it.

There are many techniques that people use to develop gratitude in their lives. One of the most accessible and universal is to keep a gratitude journal. This is not simply a daily list. In fact, researchers have shown that journaling once a week, with specifics and detail, is more effective than long lists written daily. The key is quality over quantity - taking some time to truly reflect deeply upon a few things has more impact than going through the motions with a superficial list.**

**Gratitude has the power to heal, to energize, and to change lives.**

* **1. Gratitude improves your immune system.**
* **2. Gratitude improves your sense of well-being.**
* **3. Gratitude makes you more resilient to stress.**
* **4. Gratitude blocks toxic, negative emotions.**

**Check: The science of a meaningful life by**

**Robert Emmons (prof. of physiology at U C Davis)**

**Robert A. Emmons, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at the University of California, Davis, has conducted numerous studies over the years on gratitude and found that people who practice gratitude consistently demonstrate higher levels of positive emotions, more optimism and happiness, stronger immune systems, and feel less lonely and isolated.**

**People are more successful at achieving their goals when they keep a gratitude journal.**

**Gratitude journal:**

1. **Count your blessings.**
2. **Gratitude for what we have.**
3. **Send a gratitude letter.**
4. **Thing outside the box, for ex. Gratitude jar.**
5. **Gratitude for what we give.**
6. **Gratitude for what we receive.**
7. **Gratitude about what others are doing.**
8. **Gratitude about nature, solar power, the environment, animals, birds, flowers, etc…**