8 Ways to Adopt an Attitude of Gratitude

1. Wake up and give thanks.
   Make it a habit to wake up in the morning and find one thing to thank God for before you even get out of bed. Lamentations 3:23 says, *"Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning."* By thanking God for His blessings first thing in the morning, you set the tone to practice gratitude for the rest of the day.

2. Celebrate the small things.
   We tend to celebrate things such as getting a new job, having a child, or graduating from college. After all, these are big accomplishments. But we need to remember to appreciate the simple things in life. Set aside time each day to celebrate the small things you're thankful for such as:

   - Saturday morning breakfast with your family
   - A cup of coffee or tea with a friend
   - Having a healthy mind and body
   - A walk in the woods
   - The smell of freshly baked bread

3. Spend time with loved ones.
   Part of the reason we enjoy holidays is because we usually spend time with friends and family. But you don't have to wait until the holidays to have quality time with your loved ones. Set aside time each week to spend with people who genuinely love you and allow you to be yourself. If you don't have anyone like that in your life right now, find a Life Recovery Group you can meet with weekly and develop skills to have close relationships.

4. Communicate you're grateful.
   It may not be easy to let someone know you are grateful for what they've done for you. But when someone goes above and beyond the call of duty, it's important you tell them how grateful you are. William Arthur Ward put it best when he said: *"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it."* Whether it's your mentor, coworker, or pastor, let them know how much you appreciate them. Can't think of a way to thank them? It's easy! Simply tell them in person, make a phone call, or send a card.

5. Volunteer.
   For most of us, volunteering helps us to become more grateful. Look for opportunities to serve those who are lonely and hurting. Whether you volunteer in a homeless shelter or go on a mission's trip, you'll have plenty of opportunities to share God's love with others and find purpose. And, by reaching out to others in a way that's caring and compassionate, you'll increase your overall wellbeing and feelings of gratitude.

6. Count your blessings.
   It's easy to complain about our problems. Instead, do something that will benefit you and encourage others by making it a daily habit to tell someone you have a relationship with (spouse, friend, family member, etc.) 3 things you're grateful for. Even if you're going through a difficult time, focusing on the things you're thankful for can improve your overall well-being. Research shows being thankful may decrease symptoms of depression, improve self-esteem, and help you sleep better.

7. Write in a gratitude journal.
   Develop the habit of writing in a journal every day, and don't forget to include what you're thankful for. Keep your journal on a nightstand or dresser so you'll have it handy and remind you to journal. Start by writing in your journal for a few minutes every day. And aim to remember 3-5 things every day you can be grateful for. Try writing in your journal for two months and see how much of a difference it makes in your life.

8. Look for the good.
   Being grateful doesn't depend on your circumstances. No matter what challenges you face, ultimately, you decide whether you're going to look for the good in your life. Learn to shut off distractions in your busy life by setting boundaries, taking care of yourself, and spending time with the Lord. Focus on what you *do* have—not the things you *don't* have. Take time each day to remember everything you're grateful for. By making gratitude an important part of your life each and every day, you'll notice how your entire attitude has changed for the better.

Need More Help to Adopt an Attitude of Gratitude? Call 800-NEW-LIFE (639-5433).