



TRY A NEW ATTITUDE: GRATITUDE



When we put a little energy into remembering all of the good things in our lives, the bad things don't feel quite so bad.

In fact, studies have shown that practicing gratitude can increase your happiness by 25%.

One good way to practice gratitude is to keep a gratitude journal.

Step 1 of 10

For this project, you will need:

A 4 x 6? photo

3 sheets of 8 1/2 x 11 paper (plain printer paper works great, but you can also use colorful papers)

A paper cutter, or ruler and scissors

A stapler

A pen or pencil for writing



Step 2 of 10

First, you will need a 4 x 6 photograph.

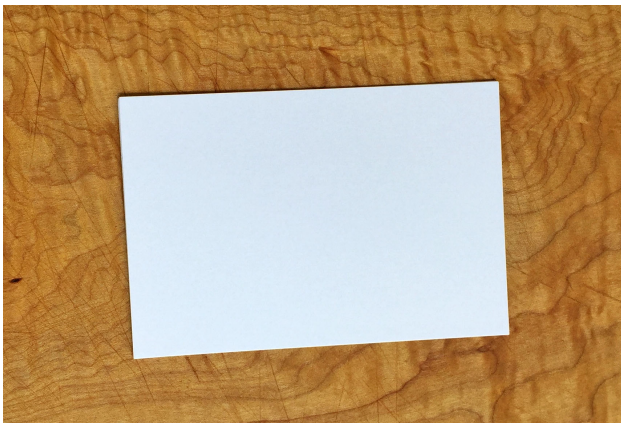
You can take a new photo or find an old one. The goal is to find

a photo that reminds you of something good in your life, or a photo that just makes you feel happy. It might be a picture of you when you were little, or you with your friends, or it might be a picture of your family, your pet, a special place, the ocean, a tree... you get the idea.



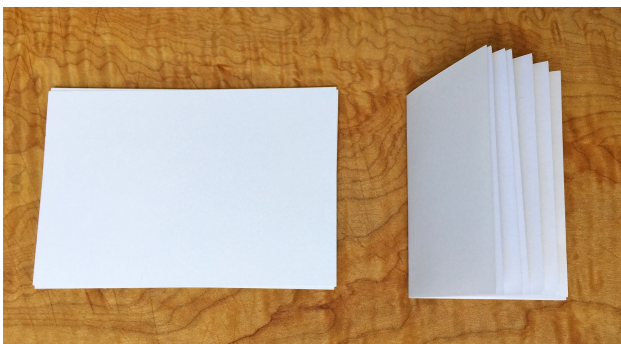
Step 3 of 10

Okay, now that you have your photo picked out, you're going to fold it in half along the 6" side. To get a nice sharp fold, just run the back of your thumbnail or a ruler along the edge.



Step 4 of 10

Using a paper cutter, or your ruler and scissors, cut your three sheets of 8 1/2 x 11 paper into 3 3/4" x 5 1/2" rectangles. Each sheet of paper will give you 4 rectangles for a total of 12.



Step 5 of 10

Now you're going to fold your paper rectangles in half along the longer side — the same way you folded your photo. If the paper isn't too thick, you might be able to fold them all at once.

To get a nice sharp crease, you can run your stapler or a ruler along the edge.



Step 6 of 10

You've probably guessed what's next.

Exactly! Slip your folded paper inside your folded photo.



Step 7 of 10

This next part is a little tricky, so you might want to ask a friend to help you:

Holding it all together so the crease of the cover and inside papers line up, open up your photo journal.

With the photo facing up, slip one side of the journal into your stapler. Place two staples on the center crease — the first one about an inch from the top and the second one about an inch

from the bottom.

Don't worry if the staples are crooked or not perfectly on the crease. You can always pull them out and try again — or just take a deep breath and say, Ah well, that's okay.

Maybe your crooked staples can be a reminder that nothing in life is perfect — in fact there is much beauty to be found in life's imperfections.



Step 8 of 10

Now that your journal is finished, it's time to add a little gratitude. To help you get in the habit, try writing one thing in your journal every day.

Writing in your journal as soon as you wake up can be a nice, positive way to start your day. Or, to appreciate the day you just had, try writing in your journal before going to bed. It doesn't matter what time you choose to write, but making it the same time every day will help you to remember.



Step 9 of 10

After a week or so, see if you notice any changes in how you feel. Does keeping a gratitude attitude help you to remember the good things in your life?

Keep going! If you run out of space, you can always make another journal.

Step 10 of 10

Want to add your gratitude journal or gratitude writing to our gallery? Oh good!