

# PRESENT MOMENT BUSTERS, BUSTED!



Fall in the Upper Midwest is a beautiful time of year. The scenery transforms into spectacular color. Yet, changing seasons are spectacular only if we take time to notice them. This is a beautiful reminder for staying present. Many of us in the Midwest have a love-hate relationship with Autumn. We love the cooler temps, stunning beauty, college football, and visits to the apple orchard...but because we associate it with Winter approaching and bringing all its darkness and sub-zero potential, we may not allow ourselves to completely enjoy Autumn. It's as if we're approaching a corner and are terrified by what could be on the other side.

The dread of the of Winter, anticipating the future and not enjoying the present, is a lesson in how not being in the present moment can strip us from life's joy. And, while you may not share this struggle with Winter, you certainly have other challenges where something in the future is getting in your way of fully appreciating the goodness in the present moment, e.g. next week's call schedule, a packed clinic day, or a decision that needs to be made about your aging parent's living situation. These are all potential "present moment busters," and it can take super-Jedi skills to stay present in the current world we inhabit.

Our forward focus competes for the gifts right here, right now. We confuse forward momentum, with movement toward happiness, but in fact, it only leads us away from it. Sometimes we use the future to stay safe, to detach, avoid dealing with what is uncomfortable – other times we think of it as necessary to stay on top of things. Here's the thing, there is a simple antidote to not fully enjoying the present. It is gratitude.

Over the past few decades studies have consistently found that people who practice gratitude report more optimism and happiness, stronger relationships, and many other benefits. Research also suggests that expressing and receiving gratitude at work makes people feel happier and more fulfilled, cooperative, motivated, and effective. Yet we are less likely to feel or express gratitude at work than anyplace else. Only 10 percent of Americans say they express gratitude to their colleagues every day, and 60 percent say they never or very rarely express it (John Templeton Foundation Gratitude Survey 2012). And, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, the number one reason why people leave their jobs is because they don't feel appreciated.

# November 2018

## Gratitude Calendar

Research consistently finds that people who practice gratitude report more optimism, happiness, stronger relationships, and many other benefits.

Bring gratitude into your daily life!



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Laughing with a spouse, partner, or friend	2 The smell of autumn leaves	3 Listening to your favorite music
4 A meal with family or friends	5 Someone who makes you smile	6 A beloved pet	7 Meaningful conversations	8 Getting exercise	9 A funny text from a friend	10 Going for a walk in nature
11 Playing with a child	12 Receiving help when you didn't ask	13 Sipping your favorite drink	14 Accomplishing one thing!	15 Chocolate	16 Helping someone in need	17 Star gazing
18 Staying in bed	19 A good hug	20 Your support system	21 Your favorite app	22 Dishwashers	23 Movie night	24 The weekend!
25 Comfort food	26 Dance parties	27 Finding cash in your pocket you didn't know was there	28 A good book	29 Clean sheets	30 For being who you are	