

How Gratitude is a Powerful Tool in Addiction Treatment

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Sometimes people imagine what rehab will be like and visualize a pretty mundane conception of what it will be like. They picture therapy sessions and support group meetings but think about the great changes in how they will *feel* along the way. A good [drug addiction recovery program](#) helps clients cultivate a sense of gratitude. Research indicates the importance of gratitude in recovery for long-term relapse prevention and leading a happy, satisfying life after rehab. Let's look at what we now know about how feeling grateful can make a recovery easier and more sustainable and how to develop gratitude.

What is Gratitude?

Feeling grateful means experiencing thankfulness or appreciation for something or someone that you recognize as having afforded some form of benefit to your life. It's easy to forget about being grateful and expressing gratitude. That makes it even easier to believe there's nothing worth being grateful for. That thinking can make addiction recovery harder. But, when we just stop and think about it for a moment, we realize that there are things for each of us to be thankful for.

How Gratitude Helps Recovery and Relapse Prevention

Recovery from drug addiction or Alcohol Use Disorder requires building healthier habits. Improving your overall well-being is a major part of overcoming addiction. Fortunately, practicing gratitude is very easy. It's also highly effective, according to the many, many people who use it as a method of making the process of recovery easier with these effects:

- Reduced risk of relapse: Helps redirect focus away from the negative and onto the positive things in your life.
- Mental health improvement: Feeling grateful is a healthy outlook, a much-improved perspective that can help improve emotional and psychological well-being.
- Improved coping with stress: Experiencing gratitude can help reduce stress, which leads to increased energy levels, improved sleep, and a stronger immune system.
- Increased self-confidence: Feeling thankful can lead to a better attitude about oneself. It can strengthen self-confidence for meeting life's challenges in rehab and beyond.

Neurological Research in Gratitude

A body of widely cited research is published in the paper *Counting Blessings Versus Burdens: An Experimental Investigation of Gratitude and Subjective Well-Being in Daily Life*. The report features an array of fascinating findings by scientists regarding the apparent general mental and physical health benefits of gratitude in recovery for the study participants.

In the gratitude study, the subjects were split into several groups for testing. In the test, one group was instructed to write daily about whatever they wanted to write. Another group was told to write complaints, and the third was told to list things they're grateful for.

reported experiencing a number of significant positive changes in their mental and emotional, and even physical condition. The research participants reported experiencing:

Greater optimism	Sharper alertness
<u>Less stress</u>	Stronger <u>motivation</u>
Higher enthusiasm	Reduced depression
Increased energy	

Ways to Practice Feeling Gratitude

Accomplishing the self-improvements described above is naturally motivating, and motivation is, of course, the key to success in a drug addiction recovery program as in any other endeavor in life. Make a routine of doing these things to develop an attitude of gratitude:

- Write in a journal each day to list one or more things you're grateful for.
- For the whole day, try to stop yourself each time you start to criticize or complain.
- Add a new small monthly donation to your budget.
- Adopt a reminder token to help you keep in mind what you're grateful for.
- Say thank you to someone or write a thank you note.
- compliment someone.

Best Rehab Program – Renaissance Ranch Ogden

Rehab is not only about stopping substance abuse. It's about building a fulfilling life. An essential for that achievement is cultivating a sense of thankfulness for the good things in your life. At Renaissance Ranch, our outpatient rehab team of specialists is here to help as you regain balance and control of your life and a greater sense of happiness and inner peace.

To learn more about the benefits of gratitude in alcohol and drug recovery, call Renaissance Ranch Ogden at (385) 222-3737, or contact us [here](#) online to set an appointment today!
