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Expressions of Gratitude Go a Long Way

Filed under [COMMUNITY SUPPORT](#), [FAMILIES](#), [FLEET AND THE FLEET MARINE FORCE](#)

(NO COMMENTS)

By Lt. Jay Morrison, Naval Hospital Guam

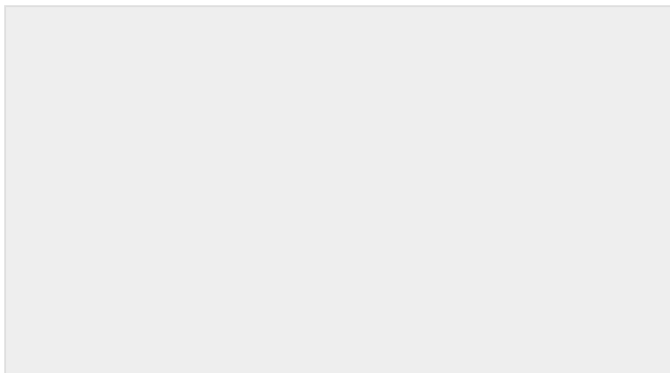


Expressions of gratitude have been linked to greater goal achievement, improved physical health, i overcome memories of potentially traumatic events. Here are some

As we move through suicide prevention month, we're reminded of the important warning signs to watch for in our shipmates, and to spot signs of trouble: increased substance use, withdrawal, recklessness, changes in mood or personality, and especially expressions of hopelessness or wishes to die.

We've heightened our sensitivity to shipmates who feel alienated, think they don't belong, or have a sense they are a burden to others.

We've pledged ourselves wholeheartedly to



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We all face adversity, and can help each other to be ready for the day that adversity rears its head. Cultivating gratitude is a great place to start.

reach out to those in distress, or those who have had setbacks in their lives. We've pledged to ACT (Ask, Care, Treat).

And we've re-qualified with our weapons to fight suicide: our connections to our chaplains, mental health providers, Fleet & Family Support Centers, Navy suicide awareness resources and suicide prevention hotlines.

Our defenses are ready – our early detection tools for trouble are calibrated and our vehicles for rapid intervention well-maintained. As we move forward, we must commit as a team to building our offense – positively building health, happiness, and resilience in ourselves and those around us. We all face adversity, and can help each other to be ready for the day that adversity rears its head. Cultivating gratitude is a great place to start.

Build Gratitude



For a limited time, give up something you take for granted. Even if underway or forward deployed, there' at least a small luxury you enjoy every day

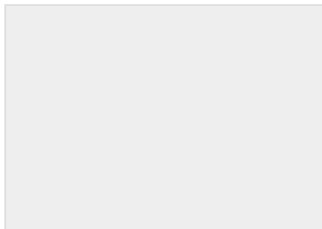
Expressions of gratitude have been linked to greater goal achievement, improved physical health, increased exercise, better sleep, and even an improved ability to overcome memories of potentially traumatic events. Here are some ideas for promoting gratitude.

1) Before going to bed, list up to five things that happened in the last 24 hours for which you're genuinely grateful. Think big (I'm

grateful for seeing a good friend) and small (my favorite galley meal today – love that meatloaf!). It can be done mentally, or you can write it down.

2) For a limited time, give up something you take for granted. Even if underway or forward deployed, there' at least a small luxury you enjoy every day. Let it go for a week and notice what happens. Do you appreciate it even more? Do you feel stronger for having gone without it at will?

3) Express gratitude to others often. Give three sincere compliments a day. We feel at our best when we help others to do the same. Express your appreciation for the actions of others. Be clear and specific. After a week, see what happens – are you more focused on people's positive qualities? Do those around you seem more motivated? Are you more enthused?



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4) Think flexibly about adversity. Bring a challenging experience from your past to mind, or a challenge you're experiencing now, and write a list of the ways in which this thought-provoking experience has helped you to grow. This is not the same as simply "looking on the bright side" or denying that a bad event was, in fact, bad. It is about looking at stimulating experiences in their totality, flexibly from all sides, and focusing energy on the lessons learned, and the muscles strengthened.

Remaining mentally tough, resilient and ready takes effort, the same way we need three healthy meals a day, and a commitment to regular exercise, psychological strength takes continuous action and reinforcement. These activities are a place to start, for you and Every Sailor, Every Day.



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For more ideas, see *The Complete Guide to Resilience* by Glenn R. Schiraldi, Ph.D.

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