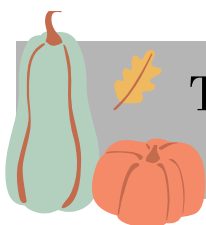




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## THE 11TH HOUR OF THE 11TH DAY OF THE 11TH MONTH Why Veterans Day and the Number 11 Go Hand in Hand

Veterans Day comes every Nov. 11. It's a national holiday that recognizes veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces and honors those both living and deceased. Historically, the day marks Armistice Day and the end of the great war: World War I. But what is the significance of the number 11?

The armistice was signed at 5:45 a.m. in France, but it took effect at 11 a.m. that same morning — which happened to be Nov. 11, 1918. The armistice originally lasted 36 days but was extended month after month. This led to the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919, when peace was officially declared.

Later that year, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed that Nov. 11 would be known as Armistice Day to honor those who fought in the great war. This lasted until 1954, when President Dwight Eisenhower

signed a proclamation turning Armistice Day into Veterans Day.

The change was made in order to recognize all veterans who had honorably served their country. By 1954, the U.S. had fought in more wars — specifically World War II and the Korean War — and hundreds of thousands more Americans had served.

Unsurprisingly, there was some political drama surrounding the day. In 1968, Congress made Veterans Day a federal holiday under the Uniform Holiday Bill. The idea was to increase the number of three-day weekends in the year. Veterans Day became a holiday that would fall on the fourth Monday of October, a far cry from Nov. 11.

However, in 1978, Veterans Day was restored to its original Nov. 11 date. But why?



The answer is simple. It's a number that sticks with you. When the clock strikes 11:11, you always take notice. By that same notion, we all remember the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. Because of this, we'll never forget the end of the great war, nor will we forget those who served.

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November 2020



## How Gratitude Can Transform Our Everyday Life

### One Simple, Effective Habit to Make Every Day a Little Happier

During the pandemic, statistics concerning depression have been catching my attention. Some are saying that depression might become the next pandemic after this one, especially as the distancing continues.

It's hard when depressive emotions can start to take control. People are missing other people, which is completely understandable. But we can reclaim our control. Even if you aren't experiencing depression, you might start plenty of mornings with coffee, grumbling to yourself about the mess you have to deal with for the rest of the day (like I have), but focusing on everything going wrong (or that could go wrong!) isn't the best way to approach the tasks ahead.

Luckily, there is a scientifically proven, inexpensive way to start your day feeling happier — with more optimism and drive — and even improve your blood flow while you're at it. Unfortunately, it may come with a symptom of making people's eyes roll when they hear it: practicing gratitude.

How do we define gratitude? Scientifically speaking, that's an interesting question. Some researchers have tried to be as comprehensive as possible. One study, through Emmons and McCullough, defined gratitude as "an emotion, an attitude, a moral virtue, a habit, a personality trait, or a coping response." Others (such as Wood, Froh, and Gerghy) would say that the "psychology" of gratitude is about noticing the beauty and virtues in life.

Gratitude has been studied for decades, and the discoveries have been profound. For example, gratitude can reduce envy, facilitate positive emotions, and make us more resilient to periods of transition in our lifetime. Also, people who practice gratitude tend to be more likable and have a wider social network, more friends, and better relationships.

One of the best ways to practice gratitude is to not just keep those grateful feelings in our minds and hearts, but to also write them down. Regular gratitude journaling has been shown to increase our optimism by 5%–15%. And, according to two studies, journaling for about five minutes a day can improve our long-term happiness by over 10%.

That's all it takes: five minutes. I've discovered this through my own experiences, too. I've referred a lot of people to a little journal called "The Five Minute Journal." It has a great introduction and gives you daily instructions to go along with it. There are unique



gratitude questions for the morning and a few questions in the evening. It really doesn't take long, costs little, and inspires me to keep my head held high.

To end this topic, I'll share the story of an inspirational client of mine. She had a serious injury, and despite operations, she had to deal with a certain amount of pain for the rest of her life. That can be a very depressing thing to deal with. I hadn't talked to her in a while, but one day, we ran into each other and caught up. She told me, "I have great news!"

"What?" I asked.

"I discovered a great way to start my day," she said proudly. "I don't get out of bed until I can think of 5 great reasons why I should get up." It was, in effect, a gratitude journal or habit that really helped her deal with the pain. Even when her neck hurt the worst, she reminded herself of everything she had to enjoy in life. Then, it didn't hurt so bad.

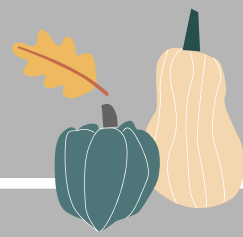
Another client of mine takes gratitude walks every day, where they take the same path but notice different birds, flowers, and people (perhaps more distantly than usual now) to appreciate.

Whatever you think your gratitude practice should be, know that it really makes a life-changing difference. I see it in clients' lives all the time, and especially lately, I've been seeing it make a change in mine too.

*-Bill Steffens*

# ICE, ICE, LAWSUIT

## Woman Sues Starbucks Over 'Too Much Ice'



Sometimes, there is such a thing as "too much ice." You're sipping your cold beverage when suddenly, it's gone far quicker than you expected. All you're left with is a cup full of ice. It's disappointing, for sure, but is it so disappointing that you would want to file a lawsuit against the company that supplied the beverage?

That's exactly what Stacy Pincus did in 2016. She ordered an iced coffee from Starbucks, only to find "too much ice" in her drink. The lawsuit, filed in Chicago, alleged that the drink was advertised as a 24-ounce beverage, but once the ice was factored in, Pincus and her lawyers claimed the drink was really only "14 fluid ounces."



"Starbucks' advertising practices are clearly meant to mislead consumers when combined with the standard practice of filling a cold drink cup with far less liquid than the cup can hold," the suit claimed. NBC News reported that Pincus sought damages to the tune of \$5 million against the coffee chain.

"The plaintiff would not have paid as much," her lawyers stated in a court document, "if anything, for the cold drinks had she known that they contained less, and in many cases, nearly half as many, fluid ounces than claimed by Starbucks. As a result, the plaintiff suffered injury in fact and lost money or property."

Starbucks' response: "Our customers understand and expect that ice is an essential component of any 'iced' beverage. If a customer is not satisfied with their beverage preparation, we will gladly remake it." The company also reaffirmed that you can order any iced beverage with "light ice" and receive half the ice normally included.

Interestingly, a *second* lawsuit against Starbucks popped up in Los Angeles a few months later, but both cases were thrown out. Pincus never saw a cent of that \$5 million, nor did she recoup her attorneys' fees. The case went on to be called "one of the most frivolous lawsuits of 2016."

## Election!

### The Presidential Election of 1828 Turned Politics Personal

It's election season! But don't worry, we're not here to talk about *this* election season, a season full of emotion, strong feelings, and plenty of mudslinging. Rather, this is a look back at one presidential election that upset an entire country — an election that makes 2020 look tame!

#### 1828: Andrew Jackson vs. John Quincy Adams (Incumbent)

Two new political parties entered the scene: the Democratic Party and the National Republican Party. These parties were established following the dissolution of the Federalist Party and the Democratic-Republican Party just a few years prior.

Both Andrew Jackson and John Quincy Adams were formerly of the Democratic-Republican Party. However, Jackson joined the new Democratic Party, while Adams joined the National Republicans. After the split, historians note a newfound level of polarization in national politics. Politics had

always been polarizing, but in 1828, things really heated up.

Jackson had already lost to Adams in 1824. That election ended with no candidate winning the majority of the electoral vote. As a result, Speaker of the House Henry Clay had to cast a tie-breaking vote. (Clay had also been a candidate for president in the 1824 election.) Clay sided with Adams. And then Adams appointed Clay his secretary of state. Naturally, Jackson was not happy and accused the two of corrupt bargaining.

Even Thomas Jefferson remarked on the events of 1824, writing that he was disappointed in the results. (He had supported William H. Crawford.) Even though Jefferson died in 1826, the Jackson and Adams campaigns used Jefferson's words both to attack one other and praise themselves in the 1828 election.

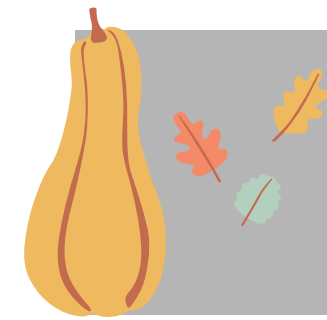
Mudslinging defined the 1828 election with both Jackson and Adams making



it personal. They started going after one another's wives and families, which the newspapers at the time loved. The Cincinnati Gazette called Jackson's wife, Rachel, a "convicted adulteress." She was in the process of getting a divorce when she married Jackson; however, the divorce had not been finalized when the marriage took place in 1794. This became a talking point for the opposition.

It got to the point where Jackson gave up on talking about the issues and moved personal attacks to center stage. Adams tried to stick to the issues, more or less. However, the public sided with Jackson and Adams lost. But the drama didn't end there. Days after the election, Rachel Jackson died. President-elect Jackson blamed her death on the mudslingers, saying, "May God Almighty forgive her murderers as I know she forgave them. I never can."

## TAKE A BREAK



## MEDITATION ALTERNATIVES

*For People Who Don't Like to Meditate*

Meditation is lauded for its health benefits and is often suggested as an effective way to clear the mind, organize thoughts, and reduce stress. Realistically, however, it's not for everyone. In fact, some people don't experience any benefits at all from meditating.

In a recent study published in New Scientist about the effectiveness of meditation, researchers confirmed that some people do not benefit from meditation and that about 8% of people who try meditation experience an "unwanted effect," such as an *increase* in anxiety.

If you're not interested in meditation, or it just doesn't work for you, here are some alternative ways to clear your mind and reduce stress.

**Get serious about physical activity.** Aerobic exercises — like walking, jogging, running, cycling, and swimming — are great for clearing your mind and getting your body moving. Really, any exercise that gets the heart pumping and increases your respiratory rate will do. Research supports that aerobic exercise is a great alternative to meditation that yields many of the same benefits.

Exercising outdoors or in nature — especially in new places — enhances these benefits. Because your surroundings are going to be unfamiliar, your mind is more focused, which can help if you're searching for clarity.



**Stay mentally engaged.** Many people achieve clarity, focus, and stress reduction through simple but engaging tasks, such as immersing themselves in an adult coloring book, doing brain teasers, or assembling LEGO sets, which proves they can be effective therapeutic tools or alternatives to meditation. The LEGO Company has actually been developing more products for adults with this sort of research in mind.

But why LEGO products specifically? In addition to being objects you touch and push together, LEGO products come with clear, step-by-step instructions, which make them easy to put together and allow you to focus more on the task at hand. Even if you don't complete the piece in one sitting, working on a project a few minutes a day can be a beneficial way to find a little clarity.



## CINNAMON-SPICED CANDIED SWEET POTATOES



*Inspired by FoodAndWine.com*

*These candied sweet potatoes will make your family beg for more!*

### Ingredients

- 4 lbs orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, peeled and cut crosswise into 2-inch pieces, then cut lengthwise into 1-inch wedges
- 1 cup light brown sugar, packed
- 1 tbsp kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp ground cloves
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, cubed
- 4 (2-inch) cinnamon sticks

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Place sweet potato wedges in a 4-quart baking dish.
3. Sprinkle sugar, salt, and cloves over sweet potatoes.
4. Dot with butter and place cinnamon sticks around sweet potatoes.
5. Bake, turning every 15 minutes, until sweet potatoes are tender and the liquid is syrupy, about 1 hour and 15 minutes.
6. Remove from the oven and let stand for 10 minutes.
7. Discard cinnamon sticks and serve.