



**Sullivan**  
**+ Associates**  
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

*Presents:*

# 25 Ways To Feel More Grateful In Your Daily Life

One of the most under-appreciated factors in improving mood and feelings of well-being is becoming more grateful. Below is a list of **25 different strategies** you can use to help develop feelings of gratitude in your daily life. We hope that you will be able to **weave a few of these strategies into your daily life**, as studies have shown that feeling more grateful has far-reaching effects, which include **increasing feelings of happiness, improved mood, stronger motivation and even better self-control!** Let's get started!



## 1. Make time to be grateful on a daily basis

Like anything in life, the only way to turn something into a habit is to prioritize a consistent time each day to do it. **5-10 minutes** a day should do the trick!

A woman with blonde hair is smiling and looking at a card that says "Thank you" in cursive. She is sitting at a wooden table with a glass of white wine and a bowl of fruit. The card is white with the words "Thank you" written in black cursive. The background is a warm, indoor setting with a wooden table and a bowl of fruit.

## 2. Thank people

When you think about it, there is no shortage of people you could thank in a typical day. The **friend or family member** who does something supportive, the **stranger** who holds the door open, the person who smiles and gives you a warm greeting... are all examples of people you could genuinely thank. And just in case you needed more incentive to thank people, studies show that **thanking someone makes it more likely they'll reciprocate and help you** (which should leave you feeling even more grateful!).



### **3. Don't fall into the trap of materialism**

There is nothing wrong with wanting more in life or having nice things. The problem comes when you **struggle to feel grateful for the things you already have**. How can you feel grateful about having more stuff if you don't feel grateful for the things you already have.

A photograph of an elderly couple sitting on a sandy beach. The man, on the left, has white hair and is wearing a light-colored sweater over a blue collared shirt. The woman, on the right, has white hair and is wearing a white sweater. They are both smiling broadly and embracing each other. The background is a bright, overexposed beach scene with sand and a hint of the ocean.

## 4. Be grateful for the “big things” in life

Often times, we take the “big things” in life for granted such as **physical and mental health, family, friends, career, freedom, etc.** However, when there is a significant challenge or loss with one of the “big things” in our life, we are quick to realize how grateful we would be if we could just have life the way it was before the crisis or loss occurred.



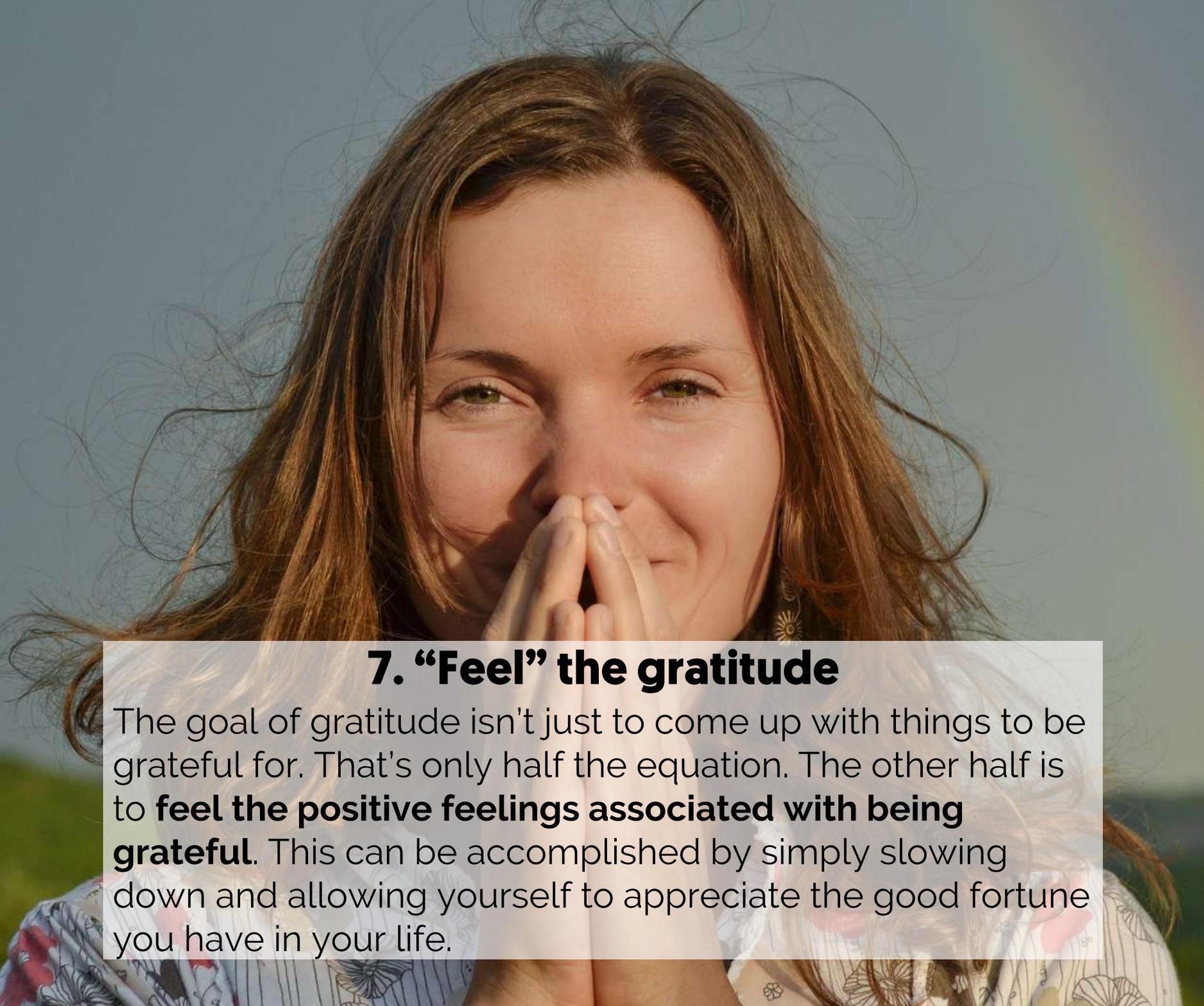
## 5. Be grateful for the “little things” in life

The number of “little things” we can be grateful for in life is truly endless. The **sunshine on your face, fresh air, the beautiful scenery** we enjoy in the north, a friendly greeting from a stranger... you name it. We just need to notice these things and take a moment to appreciate them.

Gratitude journal 

## 6. Use variety with gratitude

If you are going to prioritize time for gratitude every day, you don't want to fall into the pattern of being grateful for the same things. It won't be long before you **habituate to the list** and it becomes a routine task for you to complete. If this happens, **you are likely to stop doing it**, or at the very least, gain minimal benefit from taking time out of your day to be grateful.

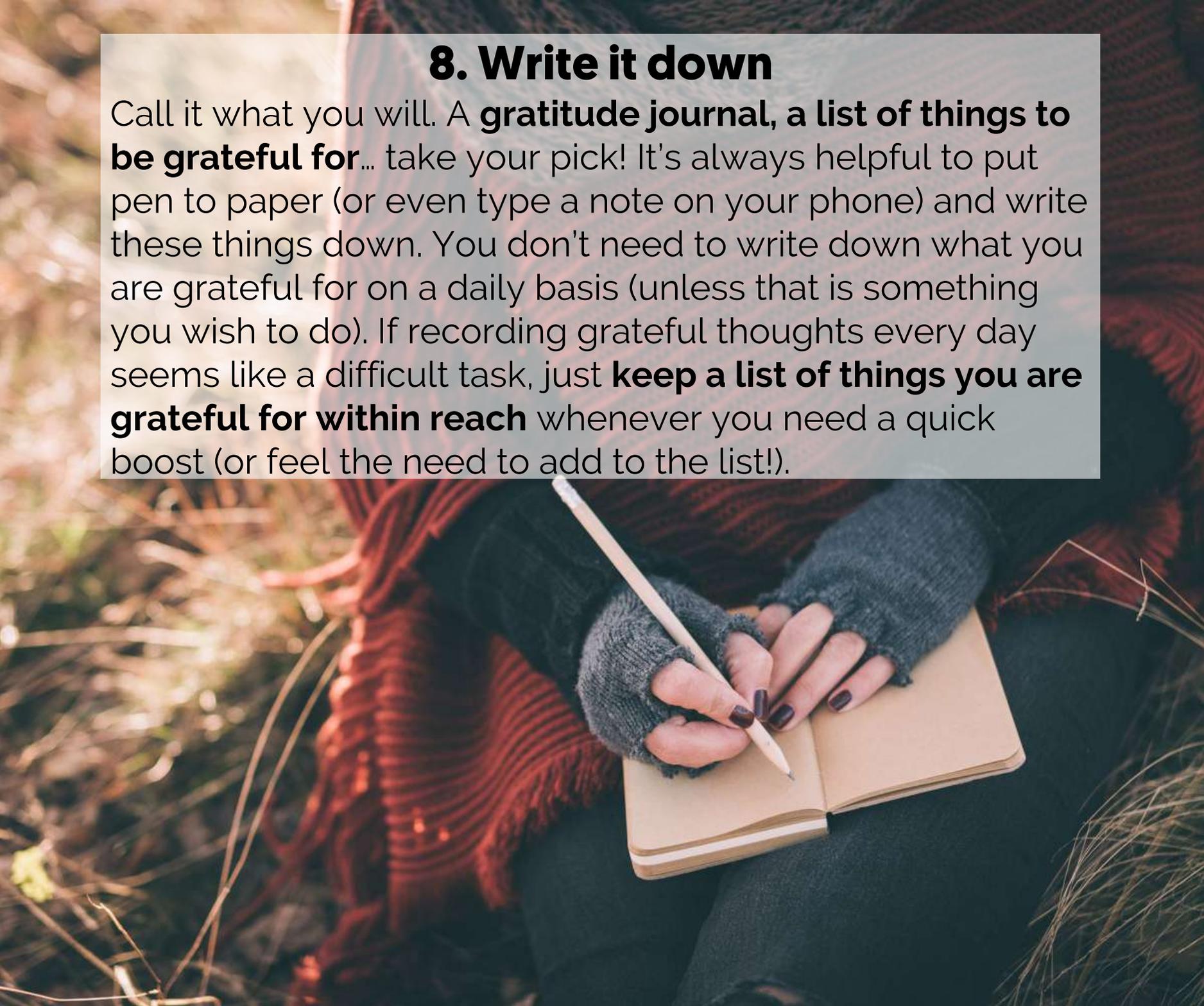


## 7. “Feel” the gratitude

The goal of gratitude isn't just to come up with things to be grateful for. That's only half the equation. The other half is to **feel the positive feelings associated with being grateful**. This can be accomplished by simply slowing down and allowing yourself to appreciate the good fortune you have in your life.

## 8. Write it down

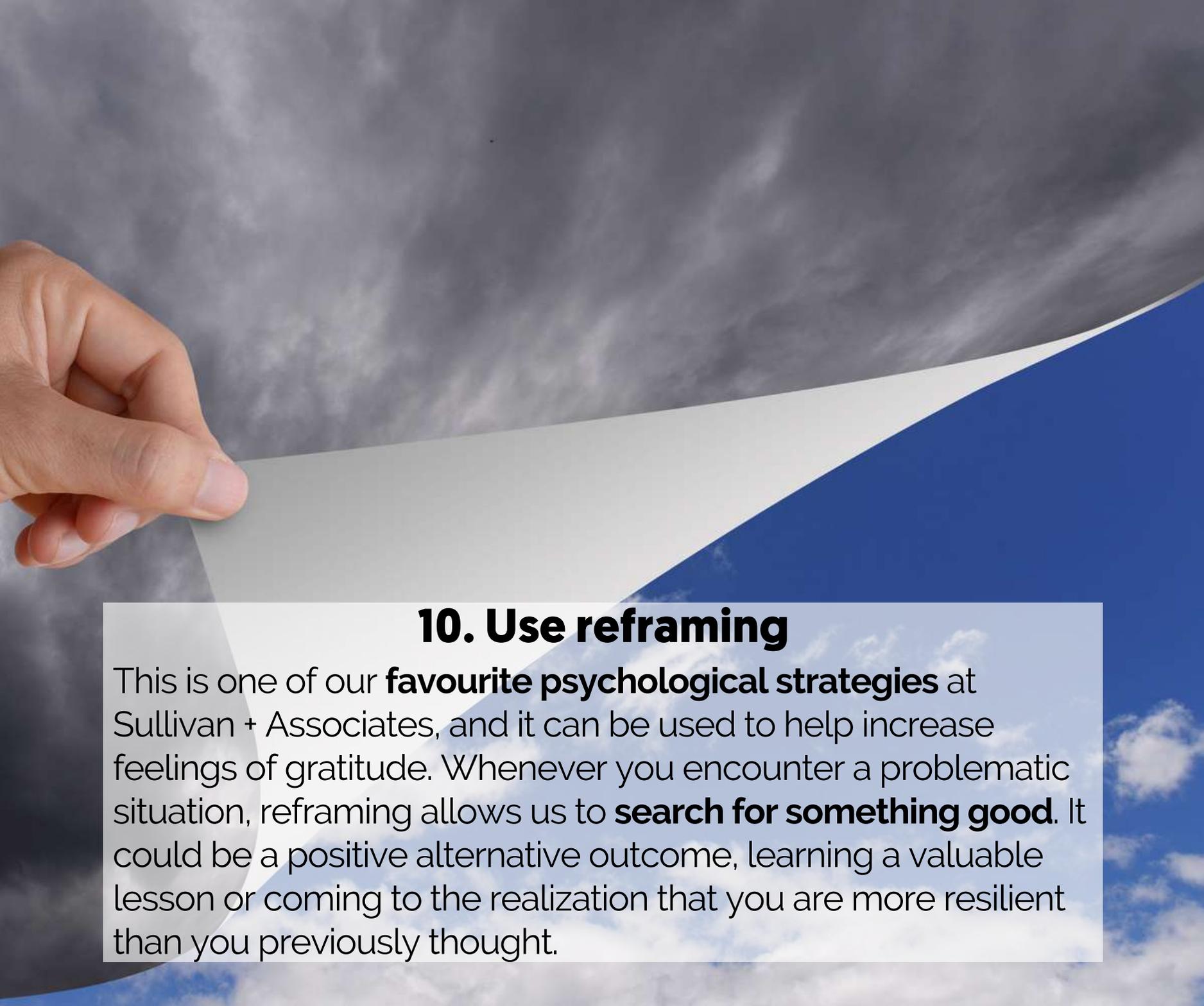
Call it what you will. A **gratitude journal**, a **list of things to be grateful for**... take your pick! It's always helpful to put pen to paper (or even type a note on your phone) and write these things down. You don't need to write down what you are grateful for on a daily basis (unless that is something you wish to do). If recording grateful thoughts every day seems like a difficult task, just **keep a list of things you are grateful for within reach** whenever you need a quick boost (or feel the need to add to the list!).





## 9. Use your senses

If you truly want to tap into gratitude, use your senses. **Sight, sound, smell, touch and taste** help to provide a vibrancy to your day that would otherwise be impossible. Merely taking the time to **focus on how each of your senses enhances your daily life** is an excellent way to promote feelings of gratitude.



## 10. Use reframing

This is one of our **favourite psychological strategies** at Sullivan + Associates, and it can be used to help increase feelings of gratitude. Whenever you encounter a problematic situation, reframing allows us to **search for something good**. It could be a positive alternative outcome, learning a valuable lesson or coming to the realization that you are more resilient than you previously thought.



## **11. Be grateful for things while you can**

Time stands still for no one, and the reality of life is that there is a **time-sensitive nature to things**. Some examples include **enjoying your children** while they are young, appreciating your **good physical health**, enjoying **time with your parents**, etc. It's essential to be grateful for things while you have them.



## 12. Recall the bad from time-to-time

There are **2 poles** to many things in life: North-South. Up-Down. Good-Bad. Happy-Sad. It seems to be one of the many laws of nature. One way to notably increase feelings of gratitude is to **recall a difficult time in your life**, allow yourself to feel those uncomfortable feelings, and **then return to focusing on the present** with the realization that the bad time has passed and there are better feelings in the current moment.

A woman in traditional Balinese attire, including a white lace kebaya and a green sash, is kneeling on a stone path outdoors. She has her hands clasped in a prayer gesture and is looking down. In the foreground, there is a small incense burner with lit incense sticks. The background features a red fabric structure and lush greenery.

### 13. For the spiritually-minded, pray

Regardless of someone's spiritual preference, prayer is essentially a **ritualized form of giving thanks**. If prayer is part of your daily life, you are already investing some time each day being grateful.

## 14. Use visual reminders

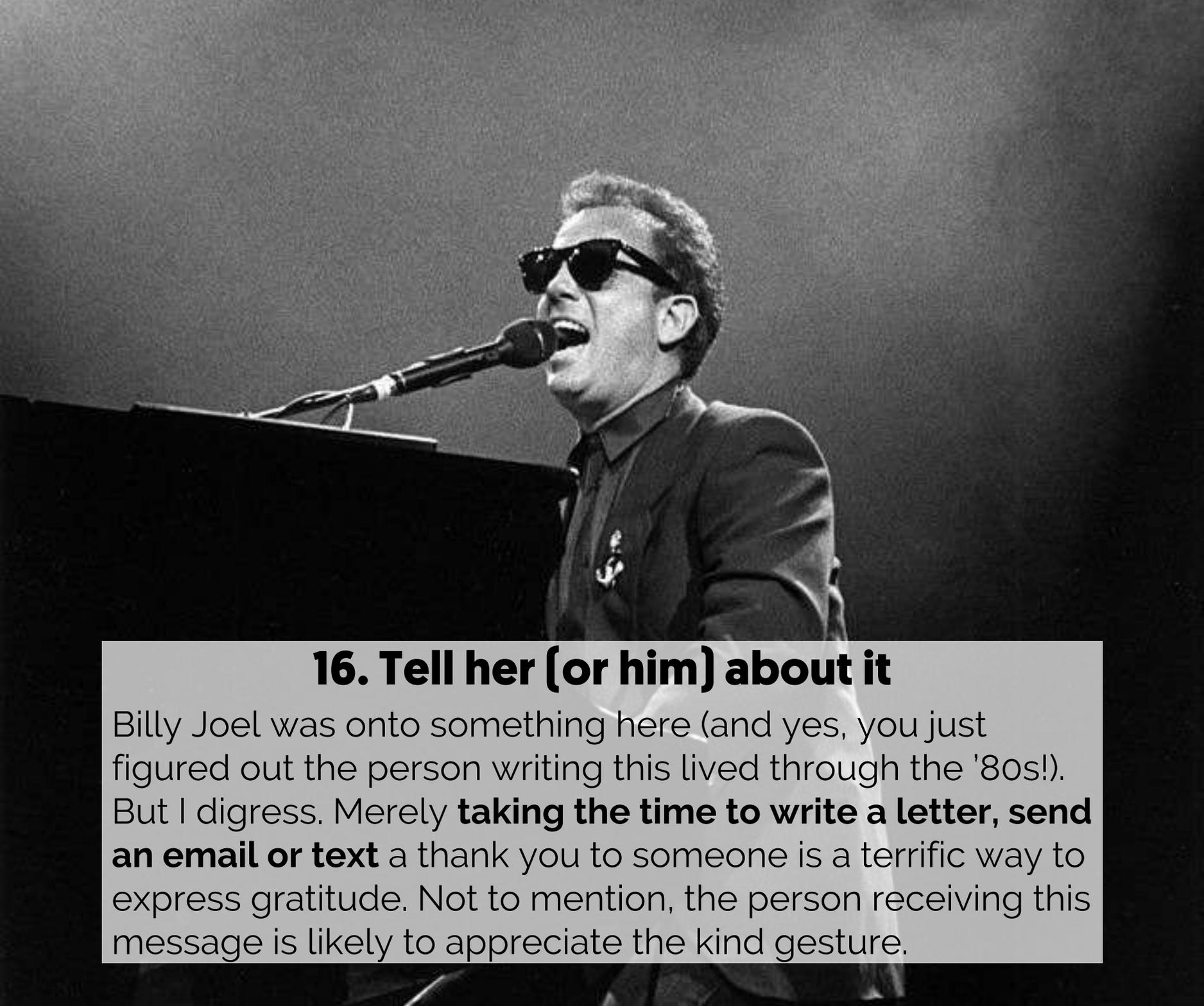
Most of us find it **easier to remember things** when we set visual cues as reminders. For instance, many people keep pictures of their children at work as a reminder of the sense of connection they have with them. If there is something you would like to express gratitude for regularly and tend to forget, this could help. **Another quick tip** - remember to **change up the visual cue periodically**; otherwise, you'll likely habituate to it and rarely notice it. So, to all of you folks with pictures of your children at work, consider switching it up and bringing in different images of your kids, or perhaps a photo of your pet. And to all of you pet-lovers, maybe bring in a picture of your kids from time-to-time!





## **15. Be aware of automatic, negative self-talk**

This happens to all of us. You're going along, living your life and **automatic, negative thoughts are going to pop into your head**. Not much you can do about that. But there's a lot you can do about **catching these thoughts and challenging them**. If a stream of negative thoughts becomes the norm for you, it becomes significantly more difficult to feel grateful.



## 16. Tell her (or him) about it

Billy Joel was onto something here (and yes, you just figured out the person writing this lived through the '80s!). But I digress. Merely **taking the time to write a letter, send an email or text** a thank you to someone is a terrific way to express gratitude. Not to mention, the person receiving this message is likely to appreciate the kind gesture.



## 17. Use mental subtraction

What's that you ask? Mental subtraction involves merely taking a moment to **imagine losing something valuable in your life**. Please take a moment to do this without rushing through it. Now, take a moment to **enjoy the contrast in emotion** and feel grateful for that special someone or something in your life.



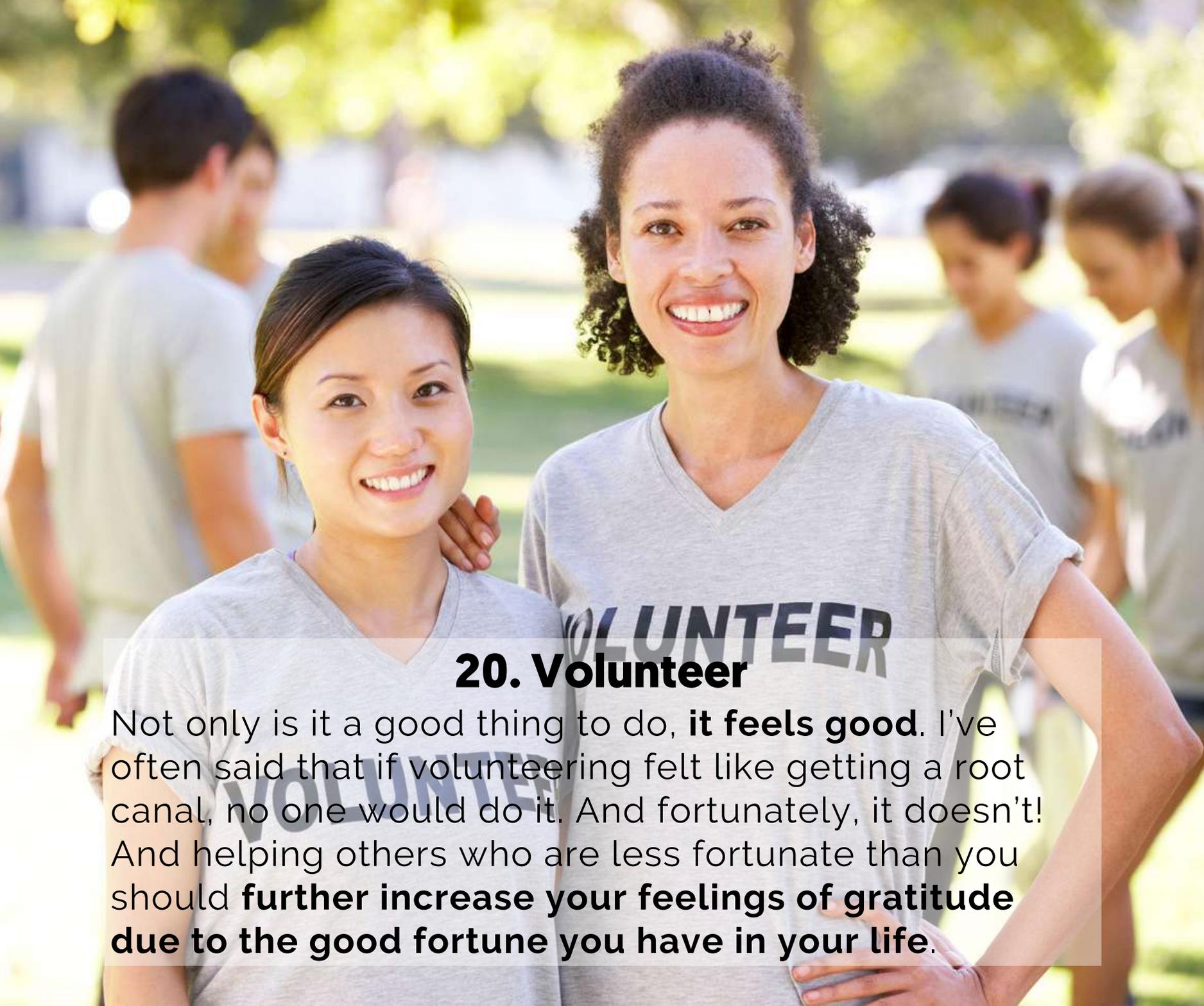
## 18. Use hedonistic adaptation

There is a much simpler way to say this, but it isn't nearly as fun as saying "hedonistic adaptation." So, what does it mean? It means **we tend to adapt to a pleasurable activity and lose enjoyment for it over time.** For example, have you ever gotten on a roll eating junk food and come to a point where it doesn't taste that good anymore? That's a hedonistic adaptation. And the best way to combat this problem is to **give up something pleasurable for a little while.** When you reintroduce it later, it will be more enjoyable, and you'll have yet another thing to feel grateful about.



## 19. Cut down on complaints

Pretty self-explanatory here. What we think about (and talk about) is what we become. A lot of **complaining just makes us negative, and it's hard to be grateful** when you are negative. A **quick tip** comes to mind here. If you are venting to someone, keep it short and sweet. There's new research which shows that **venting tends to make us feel worse** as we tend to blow up the problem, focus on it and have others validate us for feeling miserable.



## 20. Volunteer

Not only is it a good thing to do, **it feels good**. I've often said that if volunteering felt like getting a root canal, no one would do it. And fortunately, it doesn't! And helping others who are less fortunate than you should **further increase your feelings of gratitude due to the good fortune you have in your life.**

A photograph of two women with curly hair, one in a light blue shirt and one in a bright green shirt, smiling and talking to each other. They are holding white coffee cups. The background is bright and slightly blurred, suggesting an outdoor or well-lit indoor setting.

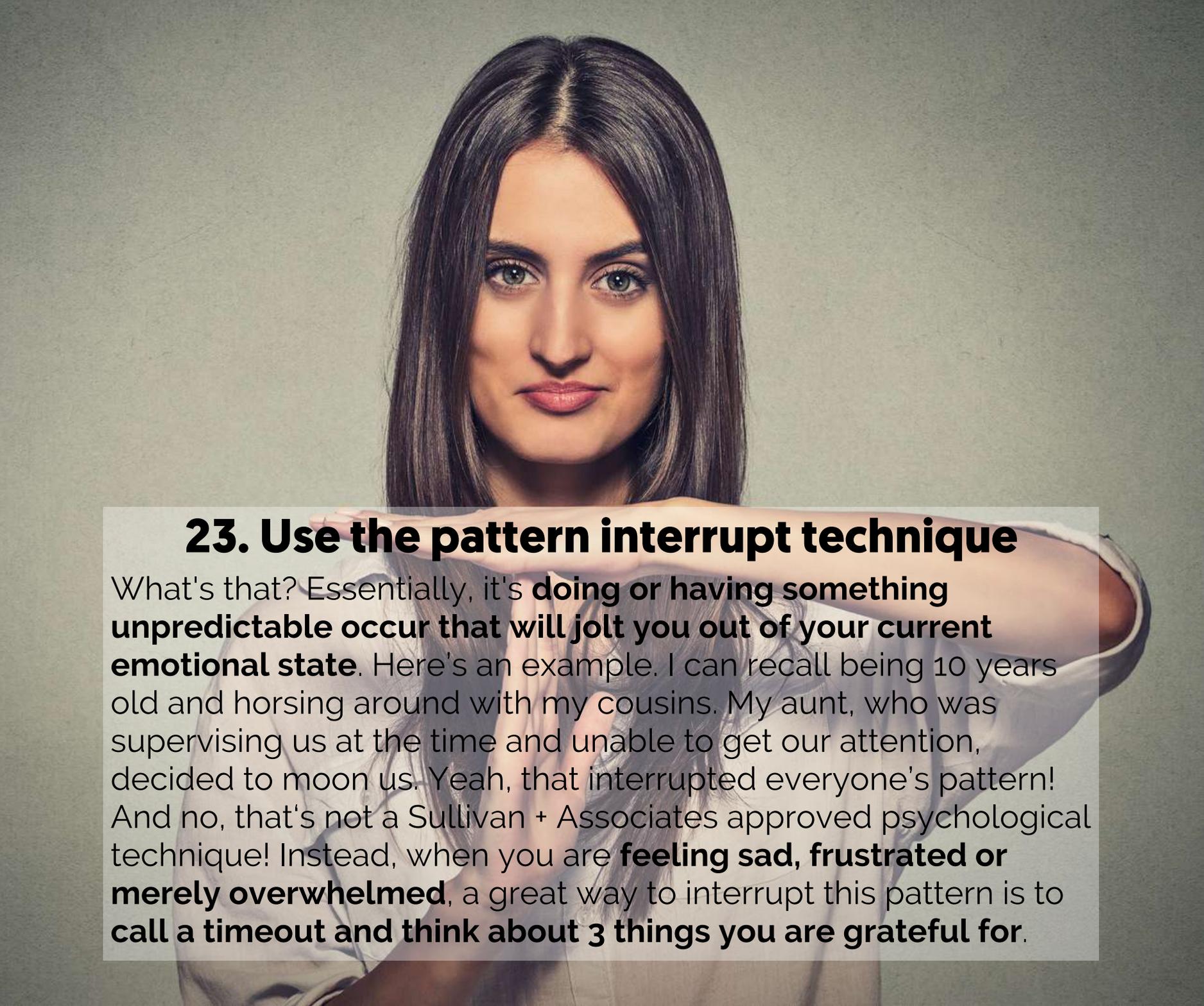
## 21. Share good experiences with others

You've probably noticed an internal desire to share good news with the people closest to you. This is a concept known as "shared enjoyment" that helps to make good experiences even better. So, the more you can **highlight good experiences** and **share them with friends and family**, the more grateful you will feel.



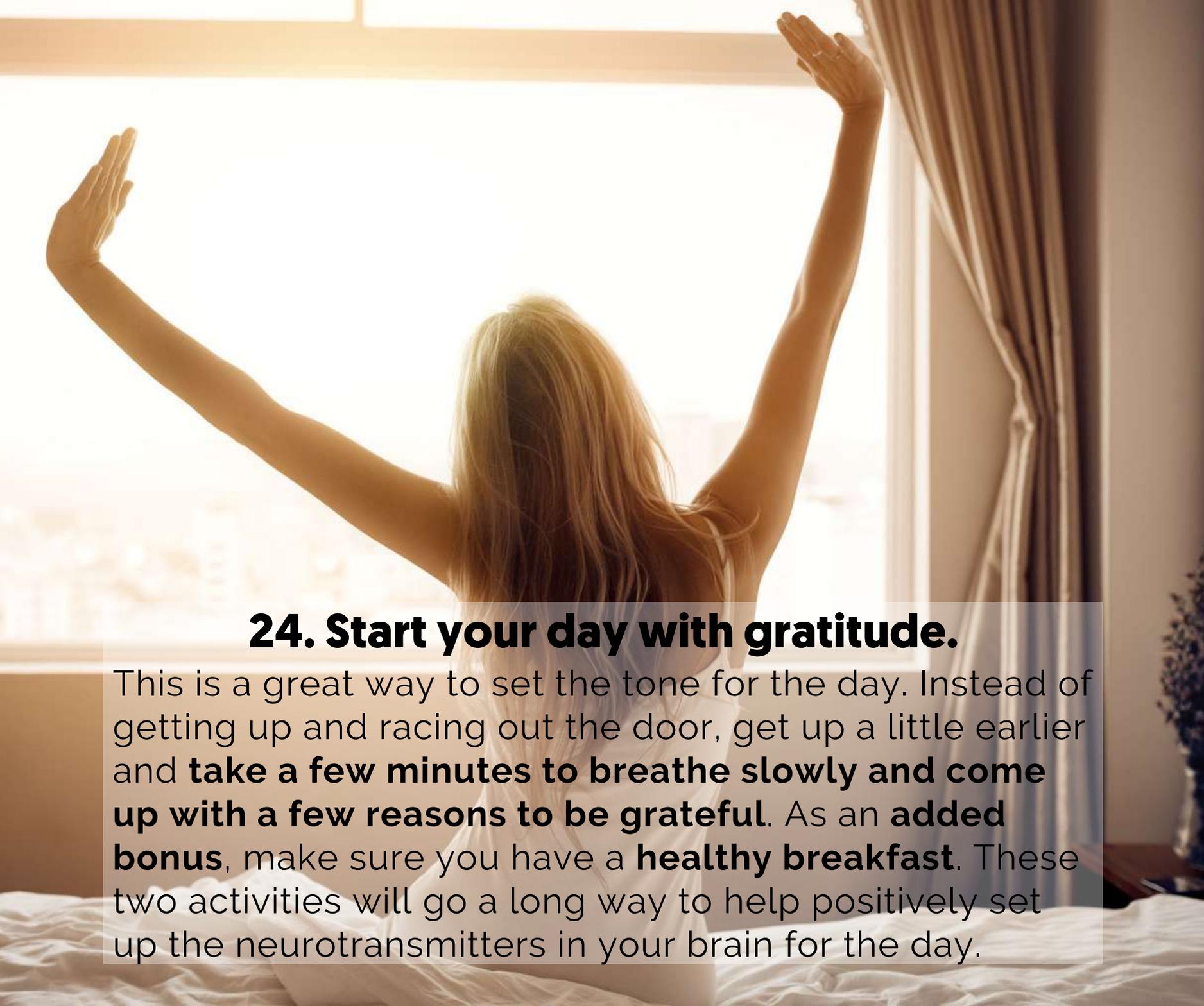
## 22. Become more mindful

It's easy to get caught up in your own head and get lost in the daily grind of life. An excellent habit to get into is to **stop and "take in" your surroundings with as many senses as possible**. Remember to do the best you can to enjoy life each day. Because unfortunately, there is a set window of time to enjoy life and we don't know how long it will be.



## 23. Use the pattern interrupt technique

What's that? Essentially, it's **doing or having something unpredictable occur that will jolt you out of your current emotional state**. Here's an example. I can recall being 10 years old and horsing around with my cousins. My aunt, who was supervising us at the time and unable to get our attention, decided to moon us. Yeah, that interrupted everyone's pattern! And no, that's not a Sullivan + Associates approved psychological technique! Instead, when you are **feeling sad, frustrated or merely overwhelmed**, a great way to interrupt this pattern is to **call a timeout and think about 3 things you are grateful for**.



## **24. Start your day with gratitude.**

This is a great way to set the tone for the day. Instead of getting up and racing out the door, get up a little earlier and **take a few minutes to breathe slowly and come up with a few reasons to be grateful.** As an **added bonus**, make sure you have a **healthy breakfast.** These two activities will go a long way to help positively set up the neurotransmitters in your brain for the day.

A young woman with brown hair and blue eyes is lying in bed, smiling broadly. She is wearing a white tank top and has her head resting on a white pillow. The background is a bright, out-of-focus white, suggesting a clean and comfortable bedroom environment.

## 25. End your day with gratitude.

For most of us, we end our day by shutting off a screen, lying down, try to think about nothing, start to think about what we have to do tomorrow or start worrying about what isn't going well. A great alternative is to **take a few minutes and think about what you are grateful for.** You need to think about something if you can't fall asleep right away, so you might as well think about something positive that will help to **lay the foundation for a better quality sleep.**



Thank you for taking the time to read our **Gratitude Checklist, 25 Ways To Feel More Grateful In Your Daily Life**. As mentioned at the start, we hope that you will be able to weave a few of these strategies into your daily life. Making the effort to **form a habit of being grateful** in your daily life can have a tremendous impact on how you feel each day. And the best part... becoming more grateful **only needs to take a few minutes a day**, but the rewards for your mental health are long-lasting!