The bigger picture

At first, practicing gratitude is largely a mental exercise but nonetheless, infinitely more fulfilling than complaining. As we evolve in consciousness, gratitude happens naturally by itself and emanates from the heart rather than the mind. The highest state of gratitude can be described as ‘praying without ceasing’... living in a perpetual state of awe and wonder... like a child.

The Lord has promised, “He who receiveth all things with thankfulness shall be made glorious” (D&C 78:19). Gratitude is an uplifting, exalting attitude. People are generally happier when they have gratitude in their hearts. We cannot be bitter, resentful, or mean-spirited when we are grateful.

We should be thankful for the wonderful blessings that are ours and for the tremendous opportunities we have. We can be thankful to our parents, family, friends, and teachers. We should express appreciation to everyone who has assisted us in any way.

We should thank our Heavenly Father for His goodness to us by acknowledging His hand in all things, thanking Him for all that He gives us, keeping His commandments, and serving others.

We should especially thank Him for His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, for the Savior’s great example, for His teachings, for His outreaching hand to lift and help, for His infinite Atonement.
Cultivating an Attitude of Gratitude

Cultivating an attitude of gratitude is essential to experiencing more happiness, love, joy and abundance in your life. Feeling and expressing gratitude is the master key to unlocking the wonder and magic in our lives. Without gratitude we are beggars trying to make it through the day. Gratitude transforms an existence into a life.

How do we Cultivate Gratitude?

Through becoming aware of our habitual thoughts and making new choices. An excellent start is to simply notice the tendency to complain, criticize, judge, moan, and to notice how it makes you feel... heavy, powerless? Both lack and abundance exist simultaneously in our lives. In every moment we have a conscious choice to either focus on what is missing or to be thankful for the gifts that we already have. It is like tending a garden... we can water the weeds or the flowers. What type of garden we wish to create is our own choice.

Helpful tips for developing an attitude of gratitude:

- Write a letter to a person in your life whom you've never properly thanked. Deliver it in person. Read it out loud. Bring tissues.
- Keep a gratitude journal. Take some time each day to write down things to be thankful for. Carry it with you and add to it as you go about your day. Read it last thing at night and first thing in the morning.
- If the habit of complaining is deep it is easy to forget your intention to develop an attitude of gratitude. Put post-its around the house. Tell your family and friends about your intention to develop an attitude of gratitude and ask them to remind you if you forget.
- Avoid newspapers, negative people, gossip etc whenever possible. Read uplifting books, spend more time in nature, surround yourself with spiritually minded people.