



Spring: the season of renewal
by Josie Padro

As Spring makes its appearance, many of us feel a sense of relief. Longer days, warmer weather and the appearance of flowers can revive our spirits.

While we can't control the seasons, we can learn ways to revive our own spirits and create bright moments in our day.

The following suggestions have been shared by caregivers in our network groups:

Keep a gratitude journal—taking note of and writing down the things in your life that you're grateful for is actually good for you. Studies found that those who recorded five things they were grateful every week felt healthier and more optimistic than those who recorded five things a week they were unhappy about. The positive effect increased when people kept a daily gratitude journal. There is also some evidence that keeping a gratitude journal can improve sleep and heart health. To find out more, see *Thanks!: How the New Science of Gratitude Can Make You Happier* by Robert Emmons.

Take a walk – it's no secret that walking is a great exercise. It puts much less stress on joints and muscles than higher impact activities, while still improving health and fitness. An outdoor stroll allows us to take note of what's going on around us – a shrub or tree in bloom, children playing a playground, a new coffee shop or book store. It also brings us into contact with our neighbours and people in the community who we may enjoy getting to know.

Interact with young folk—many caregivers point out that spending time with grandchildren brings them joy.