

THE WEEK OF THE SECOND THURSDAY

Improvement

Who made my life better this year?

| The good in your life didn't make itself.

These pages follow the Guide's Improvement days. They handle the setup, so the week takes less thinking about *how* and more time noticing *who*.

The week in one breath

Monday through Wednesday, you notice. Each day has one page, and each page looks a little wider: the people in your house, then the people within your reach, then the good things no one arranged. Thursday is Thankful Thursday: brag on each other, show off something you learned this year, then print photos and cut the weekend's leaves. Friday through Sunday, you write them and hang them, and the Leaves I Gave page keeps a record of what you gave away.

Before Monday, if you have fifteen minutes

The hardest part of this week is remembering how things were a year ago. The next three pages help: first a way to sharpen what you notice, then a map of your year to notice from. On Monday, you won't be starting from a blank page.

BEFORE MONDAY

Put On Your Gratitude Glasses

Every journal entry this week has three parts: **What** got better (then and now), **Who** helped, and **How**, meaning what they actually did. The How line is where a thank-you comes into focus. Before you finish an entry, check the lens.



Blurry

"I'm thankful for my mom because she's nice."

An honest try, but it's a fuzzy shape. Add one specific.



Clear

"I'm thankful Mom sat on the couch with me every night this spring until I could read a chapter book by myself."

A real time, a real act, and what changed.



Magnified

"The mail carrier" becomes "the person who climbed our icy steps to leave the package where it would stay dry."

Name the act, not the job title. Small details count.

Try it: sharpen two blurry lines

~~"Thanks, Dad, for everything."~~

~~"Thank you to our neighbor for being so nice."~~

Stuck? Three questions that sharpen almost anything

- What can you do now that you couldn't do a year ago, and who helped?
- What's one time you saw them do this?
- Who would you miss if they stopped doing what they do?

Your Year, Month by Month

Open the photos on your phone and scroll back to last November. Move forward one month at a time. In each box, jot anything that started, changed, or got easier. Then mark it with one of three symbols. Blank months are fine.

 someone in my house helped
  someone outside my house helped
  no one arranged it

November, a year ago	December	January
February	March	April
May	June	July
August	September	October

Look for: a first time, a fix, a new routine, a hard thing that ended, a skill someone learned, a visit, a change of season.

Six Places to Look

Anything the month-by-month pass missed usually turns up here. Mark these with the same three symbols.

 someone in my house helped  someone outside my house helped  no one arranged it

Something someone learned

Reading, riding, a recipe, a new skill at work

Body and health

Healing, sleep, strength, a scare that passed

Home

A repair, a room, a routine that finally works

Work or school

A teacher, a boss, a coworker, a class

Friends and family

A new friend, a visit, someone who showed up

Out of nowhere

Weather, a harvest, a surprise, a sunrise

Only a few marks of one kind? Look a little harder on that kind's day: house on Monday, outside on Tuesday, and "no one arranged it" on Wednesday.

RECEIVE IT Who in this house made my life better this year?

The good in your life didn't make itself.

Start from your map: look for everything marked . Stick with the people under your roof today. Everyone else gets Tuesday and Wednesday.

1	What got better? A year ago... _____ _____ _____	Now...	_____ _____ _____
Who in your house: _____ How: what exactly did they do? One specific time. _____ _____			
Lens check: ☐  blurry ☐  clear ☐  magnified ☐ Make it a leaf			

2	What got better? A year ago... _____ _____ _____	Now...	_____ _____ _____
Who in your house: _____ How: what exactly did they do? One specific time. _____ _____			
Lens check: ☐  blurry ☐  clear ☐  magnified ☐ Make it a leaf			

3	What got better? A year ago... _____ _____ _____	Now...	_____ _____ _____
Who in your house: _____ How: what exactly did they do? One specific time. _____ _____			
Lens check: ☐  blurry ☐  clear ☐  magnified ☐ Make it a leaf			

What the kids said. Ask, "What can you do now that you couldn't do a year ago, and who helped you?" Write it the way they say it.

Photo hunt: Faces from your household, doing something they couldn't do a year ago. Add them to the digital Thankful Album.