

CROSSTALK

NOVEMBER 2017

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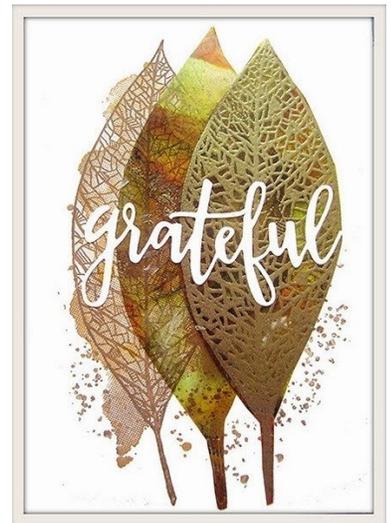
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- Tom M

I have had so many blessings on my journey through sobriety and I find that I forget just how awesome my life is today.

I sometimes take for granted all the gifts I have been given. Having the opportunity to be of service on the board here at Anona Center East is one of them and allows me to be part of giving back to a place that has saved so many lives and continues to do so on a daily basis. I was sitting at Steak Night recently, watching all the fellowship and seeing people

who normally wouldn't mix, enjoying each others company and it struck me how fortunate we all are to have a safe place to go and enjoy moments like this. I get a special amount of joy witnessing positive scenes like this and I hope I never forget all this club has done for me and so many others, and that I stay grateful for those who came before me and made the Center what it is today.



SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Weekly: In the kitchen on Sunday mornings**
- **Monthly: Once a month on Steak Night**
- **On Occasion: For club activities and events throughout the year**
- **Leadership Opportunities: Board nominations begin in January and last a full year**

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL IS AROUND THE CORNER

Membership is the gift you can give yourself!

Remember too, that your paid membership is also a gift to others and supports the club to be there for the new comer. Anona Center East is host to 38 different meetings a week and a multitude of sober activities. The club continues to be a place for sober fellowship.

Renewal notices will be mailed the end of November and club

membership runs calendar year from January 1st to December 31st. Renewal is easy and can be done by checking the renewal box on the membership application form and dropping the application and dues in the safe at any time. While electronic payments can be taken during various club events, such as Steak Night, payment by card is not available unless done in person. Please do not put credit or debit card num-

bers on membership application forms that are placed in the safe.

While a brief grace period exists in January, ensure there's no disruption in your access by fob and submit your dues before the start of the new year. Remember that your membership is a gift to yourself and others.



5 STEPS TO CULTIVATING AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE IN ADDICTION RECOVERY

"I'm different from everyone else." This belief lies deep in the hearts of most addicts. Believing that we've been wronged and viewing the world as a harsh, unfair place allows us to continue our destructive behaviors. And while addicts have faced a number of obstacles that others have not, we are more helpful to others and to ourselves if we choose to be thankful for all that we do have.

It has been said that, "Our lives are not determined by what happens to us but by how we react to what happens, not by what life brings to us, but by the attitude we bring to life."

Psychiatrist and death camp survivor Viktor Frankl said it another way: "Everything can be taken from a man or a woman but one thing: the last of human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."

Gratitude changes the way we interact with the world and promotes the thoughts and behaviors that are supportive of addiction recovery. Here are five steps you can take to cultivate an attitude of gratitude this holiday season:

Shift Your Mindset

Focusing on what you're grateful for is more than a daily task to check off your list; it requires a shift in mindset and a new way of being. In early recovery, we make choices every day to give up one way of life and embrace another. If we get quiet for a few minutes

each day, gratitude can help us choose a mindset of abundance.

Rather than dwelling on the things that addiction has taken away, think about the opportunities your recovery has opened up. Through drug rehab and the 12-Step program, you have learned critical life lessons and fundamental skills that help you live honestly and consciously. You have learned about yourself and what you have to offer. You have empathy and compassion for others who are suffering from addiction and other chronic illnesses.

Appreciate the Simple Things

Mindfulness is an important component of some of the most effective forms of therapy, and it can help people in recovery appreciate the simple things that bring joy to life. Rather than wanting bigger and better things, rushing through each day, or feeling sorry for yourself, try relaxing and taking time to concentrate on what makes your life great. Assume you are entitled to nothing and that anything, including a laugh with a friend or a beautiful sunset, is a blessing that makes another day of sobriety worthwhile.

Make a Gratitude Journal

Once you become aware of the simple things that make life worth living, write them down each day, whether you

feel like it or not. Even if it feels awkward at first – and even if the list is made up of seemingly insignificant things – many people find that within a few weeks, this approach gradually shifts their mindset in a positive direction.

Some days, your expression of gratitude may be as simple (yet significant) as being alive despite your struggles with addiction. Other days, life may seem so tough you don't feel grateful for anything. But if you get quieter and breathe deeper you can always find two or three people, places, things or experiences you wouldn't want to be without. If nothing else, you can be grateful for recognizing that you need to work on gratitude. Soon enough, gratitude will become second nature whether or not you continue to keep a list.

Do Something for Others

In active addiction, people are typically narcissistic and self-absorbed. Humility is an essential part of every recovery program because it promotes gratitude and stimulates the desire to do for others, which in turn rewards the addict with a feeling far better than any drug can offer. For many, gratitude is also a direct path to their Higher Power.

Some ways to take the focus off of yourself and find a sense of purpose are to volunteer, help a newcomer in your 12-Step group and give generously

without expecting any form of repayment. These opportunities to serve are plentiful, especially around the holidays. In addition to being a positive force in the world, you will bolster your own recovery.

Cultivating gratitude is a process that, like recovery itself, can be threatened by relapse. It's easy to fall back into old patterns of self-pity, resentment and negativity, particularly when life gets stressful or things don't go your way. Left unchecked, these feelings can lead to isolation and a return to addictive behaviors.

Embrace Imperfection

As part of the 12-Step program, you likely explored the concepts of powerlessness, openness and honesty, and began to recognize that you do not have all the answers. People are constantly growing and learning, and these are some of the blessings of life without alcohol or drugs. When you don't numb out feelings and instead face obstacles head on, knowing that you will never achieve perfection but can learn from your mistakes, you can grow on a deep emotional level.

While negativity fuels the disease of addiction, gratitude nurtures recovery. We all experience moments of gratitude, but it requires a conscious effort to cherish those moments and watch them multiply. With awareness and effort, gratitude is a skill that can be practiced on a daily basis and can turn around even the darkest of days.

ANNIVERSARIES

AUGUST

Jason B	1
Lora B	13
Paul D	8
Patrick F	19
James G	19
Jim H	29
Tom M	20
Rob N	20
Paul P	17
Domingo R	24
Joe R	17

SEPTEMBER

John B	6
Andrew G	2
Tom H	9
Robert H	44
Richard M	26
Ron N	32
Craig P	1
Jim V	21
David W	6

OCTOBER

Ellyn C	1
Sheryl E	21
Wayne H	35
Henry H	21
Gennine J	15
Carol S	40
Maree S	3
Mildred S	33
Jennifer S	19
Dan W	10



DID YOU KNOW?

The symbol of the circle and triangle is an ancient spiritual symbol meaning mind, body, and spirit together as one. In AA, this symbol represents the three parts of the program (recovery, unity, service) which are the solutions to the three-part disease of alcoholism (physical, mental, and spiritual).

BY THE NUMBERS

23 children attended the Kid’s Halloween Party on October 18th and more than 100 trick or treaters visited the club from the neighborhood.

500 dollars was donated to the Houston Intergroup Association to help assist over 500 groups that lost meeting materials in hurricane Harvey.

95 people laughed their way through Comedy Night on November 4th.

11% growth in club membership in the last five months.

38 meetings are held weekly at the club.

108 Hits on Facebook in one week (Oct. 29–Nov. 4)

CLUB CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

4	Comedy Night
9	Operating Board Meeting
12	Veterans Day Breakfast
23	Thanksgiving Day Dinner

DECEMBER

2	Steak Night
14	Operating Board Meeting
15	Holiday Decorating
16	Kid’s Holiday Party
25	Christmas Day Dinner
31	New Year’s Eve



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