

Gratitude

November 23

A gentleness not recognized comes over me and I feel grateful.

I close my eyes long enough to bring that feeling to my heart. As my eyes open, it feels as if the world before me is magically transformed.

Gratitude embraces me and I am at peace with the grace of what it feels like to breathe in and exhale blissful rest in the now. In this moment, I am aware of being as small as a blade of grass as I grow, flourish, and reach toward the sunlight of the Spirit drawing a little closer each day. This feeling is unlike any other. All encompassing, it is the anchor that holds me in profound humility like soil to a rooted blade of grass.

Blissfully, I am transformed, wrapped in a profound knowing, cradled in the arms of an all-encompassing grace.

Oh, the magnificence of gratitude!

TODAY'S MEDITATION

Dear God, gratitude takes the lead and I follow, with thanks for all you've given me.

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words but to live by them." — John F. Kennedy

Mindful Abundance

November 25

As I put pen to paper in thoughtful prayer, I create a spiritual portal in my mind that opens my heart to receive an abundance of love and faith. My capacity to receive the love of my Higher Power grows as bliss and contentment begin to wash over me in a gentle flow.

This is an energy that illuminates my psyche. It is a fulfillment. The vibration of energy travels from my head to my heart where it expands, filling me with gratitude for the effortless of my breath. The simplicity of existence, like a soft, moving cloud, engulfs me as joy radiates outward from my heart, my limbs, through my skin.

This mindful abundance of life brings a blessed joy. While still in peaceful contemplation, I rest, content in this moment that where I breathe is enough. Here, a peaceful mind and spirit reverberates an awareness that abundance is—the blessing of less.

In this moment there is nothing I need as I sit in mindful abundance in the presence of my Higher Power. This completeness of my day is my spiritual experience.

TODAY'S MEDITATION

With a deep breath, I inhale all that is given to me in the moment with quiet gratitude.

"Realize the past no longer holds you captive. It can only continue to hurt you if you hold on to it. Let the past go. A simply abundant world awaits."

— Sarah Ban Breathnach

An Attitude of Gratitude

December 7



The opportunity to look at the world through grateful eyes is there at all times, but the ability to do so is, for many, a learned process.

In the first step in this attitude adjustment we come to understand that just because we may feel like a martyr, or like we deserve to be angry and upset, we need not include others in our disappointments.

Part of our payoff for stinking-thinking is sharing our woes with others, so they could appreciate and feel sorry for us, too. We call this, “Pour Me—Pour Me a Drink, behavior.” As we become clean and sober, we realize that initial change, which is keeping pain to ourselves, is too much work. And so, we move to the next step which is letting the pain go.

While addicted we were sure if we felt something, we had to embrace it. When we were happy, we became over-the-top happy; and, when we were sad or disappointed like an actor, we reveled in playing the part to the hilt. In sobriety we discover that we have power over our feelings.

As we become responsible and aware of thoughts, behaviors, and appropriateness of our response, we see the enormous power within ourselves to change our perspective and feel better by putting the grievance down and turning toward the light.

It is only in hindsight we realize what has happened. We have become grateful.

TODAY'S MEDITATION

Thank you, God, for every breath I take. I thank you for allowing me to find gratitude in the moment.

"When a person doesn't have gratitude, something is missing in his or her humanity. A person can almost be defined by his or her attitude into gratitude."

— Elie Wiesel

A Grateful Heart

December 11

An old-timer in recovery often talked about the need to have a grateful heart. He told us how his ability to see life through an attitude of gratitude protected him from life's more challenging situations. He assured us there was nothing in life that could make it worthwhile to restart his addictions, then he told us how he kept that promise. "Our job," he said, "Is to find gratitude in everything."

Sometime later this beloved and respected member in recovery contracted cancer. Even though he could hardly remain awake and upright after his chemo regimen, he made his meetings, continuing to show others what love and acceptance looked like, and how to face, even the darkest times with an attitude of gratitude.

Today we remember this humble, gentle man and pass on his example of acceptance, his attitude of gratitude.

TODAY'S MEDITATION

I'm so grateful that as I keep coming back, I have the opportunity to learn how to live life from others who came before me. With their example I practice an attitude of gratitude.

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched – they must be felt with the heart." — Helen Keller

Gratitude's, Back-to-Basics

December 13

I am fortunate to have lived two lives: the life I suffered before sobriety, and the life I am living today in recovery.

Writing gratitude's is often the first thing suggested in early recovery and with good reason. Gratitude's have the power to transform how we feel about our world and ourselves. As we write, we see and we feel just how dark and hope-less our life was when we looked for but could not find gratitude. Hidden deep beneath years of self-loathing, shame, and self-pity is the essence of who we *still* are, but have only seen glimpses of: a curious child filled with love, compassion, and goodness. Our job is to resurrect this lost part of us ourselves from the depths of our consciousness.

We retrieve all we are as we put pen to paper and list what we are grateful for. As we write them, many of us experience an actual shift in thinking. This is our miracle of hope. We start small and keep gratitude's simple as we notice in awe, the magnificence that comes from the freedom of our arms moving, and, too, the freedom of hands and fingers as they glide over paper. As we close our eyes, we smell and feel our world, observing new gratitude's one-by-one, as the miracle of faith often begins here. We follow where the spirit leads and with each sentence, our gratitude's increase.

We are grateful because by now we're convinced if we spot it, then it's already within us. Our job is to name it, claim it as our truth, and feel the power transferred from our fingers, on to the paper, then back to our psyche.

Keeping it simple is the ritual of learning to maintain the focus on us, our breath and every spiritual gift we own. With practice, we see how much worse our life could be as we feel gratitude's reach high above our past, above our negativity, and above our hopelessness. The air is light, weightless, as our gratitude's transform us, one line at a time.

Gratitude's are the acknowledgements we make to the universe that all is well.

TODAY'S MEDITATION

I am forever grateful for the miracles and transformations that become available to me through the courage of faith, hope, and gratitude.

"Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough."— Oprah Winfrey

Gratitude in Sobriety

December 17

As I sit and begin my morning ritual of prayer and meditation, I prepare myself to receive whatever the universe needs me to hear. I light a candle that signifies the light and thoughts I hope to receive from Higher Power. This ritual helps me convey the magnitude of intention and gratefulness that, for so long, was crowded out by deep despair and sadness.

In recovery, we substitute gratitude for grief, self-pity, and negative emotions. Success in recovery depends on our ability to change our thinking in all things. As we practice rituals of positivity, we feel a profound shift in our outlook. We may not have a job, enough money, or a place to live, but those in recovery with us offer reassurance and hope that, together, we can survive anything clean and sober no matter the obstacle. And we do.

As we look at our blessings, feelings of self-worth and hope increase. This ritual of gratitude practiced each day encourages our excitement for life. As we embrace the solution instead of the problem, we become conscious of a sustaining grace that could only come from our Higher Power who walks before us. In these moments of gratitude, we realize we are loved unconditionally.

TODAY'S MEDITATION

Thank you, God, for the grace that grounds me to my world. Just for today, I will continue to keep my thinking small so I will never exclude yours.

.....
"Walk as if you are kissing the Earth with your feet." — Thich Nhat Hanh

