

LIVE WELL NURSING

NURSE'S NOTES

By: Angela Mitchell, CNO



Embracing Gratitude in Nursing: A Seasonal Message of Thanks

As we approach the holiday season, it is a time for reflection, appreciation, and gratitude. It is a time to express a heartfelt thank you to our incredible nursing team who work tirelessly to provide exceptional care to our clients and their families. Gratitude in nursing is not only a virtue but also a powerful tool that can positively impact client outcomes, enhance job satisfaction, and promote overall well-being.

Gratitude can be defined as a positive emotion that arises when individuals recognize and appreciate the good things in their lives. In the context of nursing, gratitude reaches beyond personal feelings of thankfulness and encompasses the expression of appreciation for colleagues, patients, and the healthcare environment. Research has shown that cultivating a sense of gratitude among healthcare professionals, including nurses, can lead to numerous benefits, both personally and professionally (Dewar & Kavanagh, 2019).

Practicing gratitude in nursing has been associated with improved patient outcomes. When nurses express gratitude towards their patients, it can foster a sense of trust, compassion, and empathy, which are essential components of patient-centered care (Lown et al., 2013). Additionally, studies have indicated that patients are more likely to adhere to treatment plans and experience greater satisfaction with their care when they perceive that their healthcare providers, including nurses, are genuinely grateful for the opportunity to serve them (Hill et al., 2021).

Gratitude also plays a significant role in enhancing job satisfaction and reducing burnout among nurses. When nurses feel appreciated and valued, they are more likely to experience a sense of fulfillment in their work, leading to increased motivation and engagement (Ranieri et al., 2018). Moreover, the practice of expressing gratitude within the healthcare team can foster a supportive work environment, improve teamwork, and strengthen professional relationships, ultimately contributing to a more positive and cohesive workplace culture (Ranieri et al., 2018).

As we celebrate the holiday season, I extend my deepest gratitude to my nursing team members. Your unwavering dedication, compassion, and expertise are the foundation of the exceptional care we provide to our clients every day. I am truly inspired by our commitment to excellence, even in the face of challenges. I recognize and appreciate the sacrifices you make, the long hours you put in, and the emotional labor you carry out with grace and professionalism.

Gratitude in nursing is a powerful force that has the potential to transform care and enhance the well-being of healthcare professionals. As we embrace the spirit of the holiday season, let's continue to foster a culture of gratitude, recognizing and appreciating the profound impact of our collective efforts. To our nursing team, I cannot thank all of you enough for your exceptional contributions. I am so very grateful for all that you do for our community.

Dewar, B., & Kavanagh, J. (2019). Gratitude in health care: A key professional attribute. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 33(6), 661-663. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13561820.2019.1681082>

Hill, P. L., Allemand, M., Roberts, B. W., Lapsley, D. K., & Denissen, J. J. (2021). Efficacy of gratitude interventions in enhancing well-being: A meta-analysis. *Emotion*, 21(1), 175-185. <https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0000606>

Lown, B. A., Muncer, S. J., & Chadwick, R. (2013). Can compassionate healthcare be measured? The Schwartz Center Compassionate Care Scale™. *Patient Education and Counseling*, 93(2), 239-241. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pec.2013.08.008>

Ranieri, V. F., Barr, J., Natal, S., & Siqueira, A. C. (2018). Gratitude in healthcare: A scoping review. *Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem*, 71(6), 3151-3159. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0034-7167-2017-0603>

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SUBMISSIONS

Please e-mail submissions (ideas, photos, articles, trainings, dates, accolades, local or national news, etc.) to:
davina.trejo-valdez@sdcounty.ca.gov

For consideration in the next issue, please submit entries by close of business on December 15, 2023. Submission limits: 125-275 words

Gratitude

By Kaila Domingo, Public Health Nurse, East Public Health Center

Gratitude is something we often express during the holidays. Yet, how often do we express it in our daily lives? Thanks to Laura Green, Shared Governance Chair, East PHC staff have an avenue to express their gratitude on a day-to-day basis. Below you will see our Cause for Applause Shout Out Board. With a simple sticky note, we continuously acknowledge and celebrate one another.

I also wanted to take this time to say thank you to my colleagues at East PHC. I am incredibly lucky and grateful to work with such compassionate, friendly and supportive people. Thank you, Clare, Judy, Susan, Carla, Isabel, Eva, Jessica, Tere, Miriam, Alma, Barbara, Jonna, Tyler, Shena, Clowie, Linda, Andrea, Aracely, Val, Bre, Kelly, Kristine, Amy, Laura, Kirsten and Ralph.

Happy Holidays!



Access the County's [EBSCO Health Homepage](https://my.openathens.net/)
using a universal link



<https://my.openathens.net/>

Gratitude

By: Anne Forsythe RN, BSN, PHN, Public Health Nurse Manager, CCS

A grateful man counts his blessings.
An ungrateful man counts the blessings of others.

I chose this month's topic of gratitude; it is something I feel strongly about. We all have experienced a sense of being grateful, gratitude, appreciation, thanks for something positive. As I started researching what others said and felt about the concept of gratitude, I found many opinions and definitions. One that spoke to me is the idea that true gratitude is both the feeling of thankfulness and the action of thanking the source of that good feeling. And while it's true that people who practice gratitude report enhanced levels of happiness and health, there are even more benefits to having that sense of internal gratitude.

Gratitude is a way to appreciate what we have instead of always reaching for something new in the hopes it will make us happier or thinking we can't feel satisfied until every perceived desire is met. Gratitude helps us refocus on what we have instead of what we lack. For me gratitude is a quiet voice that reminds me that I should appreciate more and judge less. It points out sunsets and sunrises, my puppy dreaming, and my daughter's smile. Not measured in monetary value, more a thing that feeds the heart and soul.

As we move into the season of Thanksgiving take a moment to enjoy that sense of gratitude. Be thankful for the kindness of others and show kindness in return. Look inside and find appreciation for your daily life, your job, your friends and family... We have so much if we would only slow down and notice.



Practicing Gratitude as a Team and as an Individual

By: Mary Ho, PHN, MCH, North Coastal PHC

Whether we are providing sensitive care to STD clinic patients, visiting families in rural communities, ensuring quality treatment for TB clients, or assessing the prevalence of a new outbreak, county nurses can experience burnout. As noted in an article by the CNO of the Los Angeles General Medical Center, healthcare leaders can address nurse burnout by fostering a culture of recognition and appreciation (Blake, 2023).

During monthly team meetings, North Coastal PHC leaders (Amaya Ly, Kathryn Kerr, Kathleen Johnson, and [formerly] Jessica Gaylord) designate time for “round table,” in which any team member can share updates and other information. During this time, we often share kind words and express thanks to other staff members. I am thankful for these moments because they foster a sense of belonging, support, and goodwill. This simple yet impactful practice is like the Gratitude Huddle described in the Gratitude Practice for Nurses Toolkit, assembled by the American Nurses Foundation and the Greater Good Science Center (GGSC) at the University of California, Berkeley.

Wellness also depends on an individual’s ability to make time for self-care routines, one of which is the practice of gratitude (Heitzman & Snell, 2022). Here are some practical next steps to foster gratitude in your own life and practice. The first link is a worksheet from TherapistAid.com which briefly summarizes simple gratitude exercises that you can try today. Should you want to dive deeper into the topic of gratitude and how we can implement it in our workflow, the aforementioned well-being toolkit and implementation guide from the GGSC are linked below. Take care and be well!

Gratitude Exercises: <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/gratitude-exercises>

Well-being Toolkit: https://ggsc.berkeley.edu/images/uploads/Gratitude_Nurses_Toolkit.pdf

Toolkit Implementation: https://ggsc.berkeley.edu/images/uploads/Implementation_Guide.pdf

Blake, N. (2023). Why Meaningful Recognition and Gratitude Are Important in Addressing Staffing Shortages. AACN Advanced Critical Care, 34(2), 145–147. <https://doi.org/10.4037/aacnacc2023812>

Heitzman, J., & Snell, M. (2022). It Begins with Us: Taking Care of our Patients Begins with Taking Care of Ourselves. GeriNotes, 29(5), 7–11.



North Coastal PHC All- Staff meeting

Gratitude: Thanksgiving and Beyond

By Donna West, Quality Assurance Specialist, ONE



The words above perfectly capture the spirit of gratitude. Thanksgiving offers us all an opportunity to reflect on the role of gratitude in our lives. What helps us find the “wonderful” in any given moment? Why does gratitude matter to nurses? How can we embody an “attitude of gratitude” throughout the year?

It turns out that our brains are naturally hardwired to focus more on negative stimuli in our environment than positive. By intentionally savoring the positive aspects of our lives, we can tap the neuroplasticity of our brains and reshape our neural network to seek and hold onto the positive (Kini, et al., 2015).

A growing body of research from diverse fields suggests that simple gratitude practices can improve mood, sleep, cardiovascular health, immune function, resilience to stress, and health behaviors (Wood, et al., 2010; Wang, et al., 2023). Of relevance to nursing, gratitude interventions among nurses resulted in 28% less perceived stress and 16% less depression (Day, et al., 2020).

Although the science of gratitude is emerging, the American Heart Association finds it compelling enough to endorse “gratitude practice” as part of their [Gratitude is good medicine](#) campaign to prevent cardiovascular disease. The [American Nurses Foundation](#) in collaboration with the [Greater Good Science Center](#) from UC Berkeley has released a [Gratitude Practice for Nurses](#) toolkit and podcast series to support nurses’ social and emotional well-being.

The resources above offer a wide range of tools for cultivating the practice of gratitude at both the individual and organizational level. I invite you to check them out and make this Thanksgiving the start of a “gratitude habit” that will sustain you throughout the holiday season and beyond.

Kini, P., Wong, J., McInnis, S., Gabana, N., & Brown, J. W. (2016). The effects of gratitude expression on neural activity. *NeuroImage*, 128, 1–10.

Wood, A.M., Froh, J.J., & Geraghty, A.W.A. (2010). Gratitude and well-being: A review and theoretical integration. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 30, 890–905.

Wang, X., & Song, C. (2023). The impact of gratitude interventions on patients with cardiovascular disease: a systematic review. *Frontiers in psychology*, 14, 1243598.

Day, G., Robert, G., & Rafferty, A. M. (2020). Gratitude in Health Care: A Meta-narrative Review. *Qualitative health research*, 30(14), 2303–2315.