

The Phoenix

Red Ribbon Parade

We had such a great time getting involved with the community for Moore's Red Ribbon Parade in October.

We gave away over 600 bags of candy with information about our services.



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Gratitude

by Kirsten Lee

As summer releases its grip and the crisp fall temperatures slowly roll in, we finally enter the season of thanksgiving. By definition, thanksgiving is "the act of giving thanks or the grateful acknowledgement of benefits." (dictionary.com)

I am certain that if given enough time, everyone can think of at least one thing to be thankful for. It could be something big like a new house or new job or something not so extravagant such as the ability to see or hear.

Working in the mental health field, I have acquired a greater appreciation for what I have. I am not saying that I have everything that I want, but I am saying that I am grateful for what I do have. As an LPC Under Supervision, my current caseload is pretty heavy. As I visit with my clients and see the things that they endure daily, I have found myself becoming even more grateful.

When my kids were growing up and I would pick them up from school, I would inquire how their day went. Sometimes they would say, "Terrible." I would then proceed to ask them, "Were you able to breathe today? Did you have to go to the hospital? Did anybody die today? Are you still alive?" After they answered each of my questions with an emphatic "No" I would proceed to give them the correct assessment of their day: "It was a good day." The truth of the matter was that some days my kids could not breathe due to asthma, and some days we were in the hospital, and some days we did have loved ones to die. So, if we were able to make it through a day without some of those things happening, it was a good day.

According to Psychology Today, there are seven benefits to gratitude:

1. Gratitude grants you access to more relationships. When we show appreciation by saying "thank you," it can help us to make new friends according to a study published by Emotion in 2014. The study found that when we thank someone we recently met, they are more inclined to want to pursue a relationship with us. When we acknowledge other's contributions such as holding the door or sending a thank you note, these things can lead to new opportunities.

2. Gratitude improves physical health. A study published in Personality and Individual Differences in 2012 revealed that people who are grateful experience fewer aches and pains and report feeling healthier than people who are not grateful. Those who are grateful are more likely to exercise, attend regular check-ups, and take care of their health which all contribute to their longevity.



Mrs. Jeannie Lentz is shown carrying the Life Recovery Services banner in the Red Ribbon Parade on 10/26/19. Mrs. Lentz serves as the English 8th Grade / PRE-AP English 8th Grade Teacher & Native Pride Club Sponsor at Central Jr. High School in Moore, OK.

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Upcoming Community Events

Please make plans to attend at least one of these events.

Veterans Day Celebration
November 11 @ 10:00am
45th Infantry Division Museum
2145 NE 36th St. | OKC
Free

Retro Video Game Tournament
November 30 @ 1:00pm
Downtown Library
300 Park Ave | OKC
Free

End of Year Celebration & Awards Ceremony
December 21 @ 6:00pm
Feast Buffet
5735 SE 15th St. | MWC
\$20.00 / Free to Staff

Office Closures

Please be aware that the offices will be closed for the following holidays:

November 11
Veteran's Day
Closed all day

November 28-29
Thanksgiving
Closed all day

December 24
Christmas Eve
Closes at Noon

December 25
Christmas Day
Closed all day

January 1
New Year's Day
Closed all day

3. Gratitude improves psychological health. A leading gratitude researcher, Robert Emmons has studied the link between gratitude and well-being and has confirmed that gratitude reduces depression and increases happiness. Gratitude also decreases several toxic emotions such as frustration, regret, envy and resentment.

4. Gratitude enhances empathy and reduces aggression. According to a 2012 study by the University of Kentucky, grateful people are more likely to behave in a prosocial manner when others behave unkindly towards them. Participants in the study who ranked high on gratitude scales were more sensitive and empathetic towards others with a decreased desire to seek revenge even when given negative feedback.

5. Grateful people sleep better. A study published in Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being in 2011, indicated that writing in a gratitude journal by noting a few grateful comments 15 minutes before bedtime may improve sleep and help the person to sleep longer.

6. Gratitude improves self-esteem. The Journal of Applied Sport Psychology published a 2014 study which revealed that gratitude increased athletes' self-esteem which is a crucial component for maximum performance. Other studies have shown that gratitude reduces social comparisons. Instead of resenting people who have more money or better jobs - which contribute to reduced self-esteem - people who are grateful are able to appreciate the accomplishments of others.

7. Gratitude increases mental strength. Over the years, research has revealed that

gratitude not only reduces stress, but it may play a major role in overcoming trauma. A 2006 study published in Behavior Research and Therapy found lower rates of post-traumatic stress disorder in Vietnam War veterans who had higher levels of gratitude. The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology published a study in 2003 which found gratitude to be a major factor in resilience after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Being able to recognize the things that you have to be thankful for, even during difficult times, fosters resilience.

Gratitude Quiz

Are you curious about your level of gratitude? Go to this website to see how thankful you really are.

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes/take_quiz/gratitude



How to Increase Your Gratitude

If you want to increase your level of gratitude, you can implement these exercises into your daily life:

1. Reflect on the positive. Establish a gratitude journal and take time out to write about at least three good things that happen to you every day. This will help to highlight the positives in your life and assist you to not take things for granted.

2. Write a gratitude letter. Writing and delivering a truly heartfelt letter expressing your gratitude will boost your sense of gratefulness and strengthen the bond you have with the recipient.

4. Imagine a different life. Imagine what your life would be like without the things that we take for granted like food, clothing, and shelter. In Mental Subtraction of Positive Events or Mental Subtraction of Relationships, you call to mind a certain experience such as meeting a friend or graduating from high school and then you imagine how things might have turned out differently had that thing not happened.

5. Deprive yourself. Abstain from something you find pleasurable and you will find that when you return to it, it is even better than it was before.

It does not take a lot of time, energy, or effort to be grateful; but the rewards of doing so are priceless!

"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

Handling Anxiety

by Shelley Evans

Coping skills for anxiety are actions we can take and ways we can think in order to keep going despite anxiety. Sometimes, anxiety is strong in a particular situation. Coping skills help us get through these difficult moments. Anxiety can be a long-lasting experience; so coping skills give us ways to move forward while we are learning ways to decrease the stress.

Anxiety interferes in our thinking, making our thoughts race and causing us to overthink almost everything. This impacts our outlook, putting a negative slant on how we view ourselves, others, and life in general. Because this is unpleasant, we naturally tend to fight our thoughts, but struggling against them only feeds them and increases anxiety. Rather than struggle with yourself, your thoughts, and your anxiety, accept things as they are in the moment.

- Gently give yourself permission to have your feelings.
- Replace harshly negative self-talk with acceptance of who you are as a human being.
- Be a passive observer, noticing your anxiety symptoms without fighting them; resistance increases anxiety while just observing induces calm.
- Use positive affirmations to remind yourself of your positive qualities and your accomplishments.

Think of anxiety like a Chinese finger trap. When you put your fingers into the trap and then try to remove them by struggling and yanking hard against it, the trap tightens. However, when you relax, accept the trap's presence, and calmly slide your fingers out, you get rid of the trap's hold on you.

Anxiety causes tension and can make us feel agitated and unsettled. Some ways to cope with anxiety include soothing yourself to feel calm in the moment. Try these techniques:

- Get out into nature; take a walk.
- Appreciate beauty.
- Get lost in something you love such as reading, crafting, running, etc.
- Keep a positivity journal to acknowledge the good in your life and enhance a sense of gratitude.
- Slow down.
- Practice mindfulness, a way of reigning in your anxious thoughts and centering yourself.
- Use coping skills that you love; they'll be more effective than things that don't grab you.

The ways to handle anxiety are endless. But to be successful, you must use what works for you.

- Don't choose a coping skill because you think you "should" like it.
- Avoid comparisons; focus on what works for you without worrying how it measures up to what others are doing.
- Pair your coping skills with your life goals to give them greater meaning and purpose, and thus effectiveness.
- Choose anxiety coping methods that suit your personality.

Services Available

We currently offer individual, couples, family, and group sessions.

Our staff members provide trauma-informed services both in the office and in various confidential settings within the community.

We have staff who speak English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Group options include Anger Management, Cognitive, Coping Skills, Parenting, Peer Recovery Support, Relapse Prevention, Substance Abuse, and Victims of Domestic Violence.

We offer urine testing, ADSAC assessments, pre-marital counseling, and the co-parenting course for those getting a divorce.

Please call the office to schedule an appointment or visit us on Tuesdays from 9:30am – 3:30pm for walk-ins.



Please join us on
December 21 @ 6:00 pm for our 2nd Annual
End of Year Celebration and
Awards Ceremony

Life Recovery Services will pay for staff members and special guests (plus 1 guest). Friends of the agency are invited to attend for a cost of \$20.00 per ticket.

Feast Buffet
5735 SE 15th St.
Midwest City



Professional Development

Managing Pain in Opioid Addicted Clients
November (Ongoing)
Life Recovery Services
\$30.00 / Free to Staff

Opioid Use in Pregnant Women
November (Ongoing)
Life Recovery Services
\$30.00 / Free to Staff

The Neurobiology of Opioids
November (Ongoing)
Life Recovery Services
\$30.00 / Free to Staff

Effective Treatment Approaches for Opioid Users
November (Ongoing)
Life Recovery Services
\$30.00 / Free to Staff

ASI, ASAM & ODASL
November 12 - 14
ODMHSAS - OKC
\$405.00

Wellness Coach
November 19 - 20
ODMHSAS - OKC
\$25.00

Teen ASI (T-ASI)
November 25
ODMHSAS - OKC
\$135.00



Hearty Vegetable Soup

Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 1/2 cups chopped yellow onion (1 medium)
- 2 cups peeled and chopped carrots (about 5)
- 1 1/4 cups chopped celery (about 3)
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 (14.5 oz) cans low-sodium chicken broth or vegetable broth
- 2 (14.5 oz) cans diced tomatoes (undrained)
- 3 cups peeled and 1/2-inch thick diced potatoes (from about 3 medium)
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 cups chopped frozen or fresh green beans
- 1 1/4 cups frozen or fresh corn
- 1 cup frozen or fresh peas

Instructions

Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add onions, carrots, and celery and sauté 4 minutes; then add garlic and sauté 30 seconds longer. Add in broth, tomatoes, potatoes, parsley, bay leaves, thyme, and season with salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a boil; then add green beans. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and simmer until potatoes are almost fully tender, about 20 - 30 minutes. Add corn and peas; cook 5 minutes longer. Serve warm.



Staff Spotlight

Shanae Stoner, MS, CM 2 Case Manager

- Member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.
- Member of Chi Sigma Iota, International Honor Society of Professional Counselors
- Favorite Color is Pink
- Graduate of Langston University
- "Yah-Yah" to a beautiful granddaughter
- Loves to bake and craft
- #LOVE in MOTION

