

Healthy Futures News + Views

An Educational Newsletter Covering Eating Disorder Treatment and Other Mental Health Issues ~November 2013~ Vol. 2, Issue 6

Getting to the bottom of gratitude

With Thanksgiving happening this month, many of us find ourselves thinking more about gratitude than we might normally.

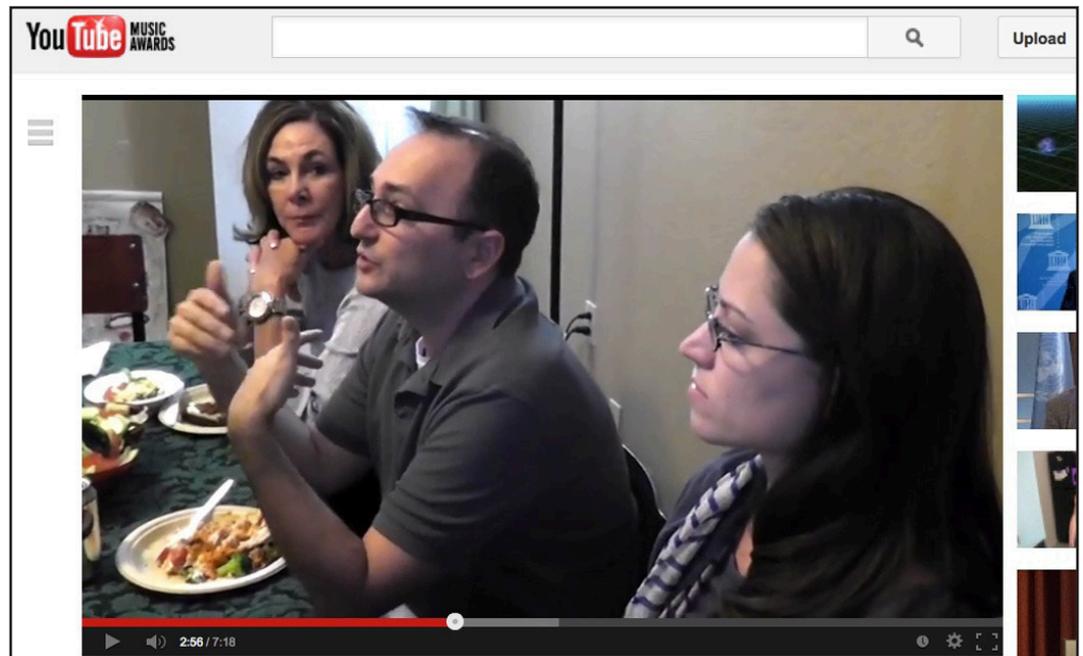
Recently several of the professionals at Healthy Futures shared a roundtable discussion about being thankful, concluding that perspective is important, as are life's small reminders of one's own fortune.

The professionals also agreed that, at times, gratitude isn't easy.

"As far as skills go, it is an active thing that you have to do to think to give gratitude," said Sheri Robenstine. "For a lot of us it doesn't come naturally, so we have to purposefully create that gratitude in our lives, and think of how things could be different."

Dr. J. R. Evans said he is purposefully acknowledging gratitude. In fact, he had just texted a note of thanks to his husband for a fun weekend.

"I'm really making a conscious effort to do more of that," he said, "and I found that it actually makes me feel better



From left, Jeanne Phillips, Dr. J.R. Evans and Jessica McCall talk about gratitude. The discussion can be seen on Healthy Futures' Youtube channel.

knowing that it makes him feel better. It's a really good process."

Jeanne Phillips agreed, saying gratitude is healthy for those who express it, and for those receiving it.

"You have to have gratitude," she said. "You have to be able to have empathy, sympathy, going out and touch another human being's life. And I say that maybe in a selfish way. I do that as much for myself as I do for someone else."

Heather Henderson

said a recent visit to an under-privileged neighborhood reminded her to be thankful.

"A way to find gratitude is to step outside your box and visit places you maybe normally wouldn't and see how other people live outside of what you're used to, and realize how privileged you are and how many things you have to be grateful for," she said.

Remembering difficulties in our own lives is also a way to become grateful,

said Mia Elwood.

"You never appreciate a non-toothache until you have a tooth ache," she said. "Just noticing pains and trials you've gone through, and realizing when you're not having those (brings about gratitude)."

Lorin Clinkenbeard talked about how a recent minor inconvenience brought about gratitude for something substantial.

"Someone nearby was
Please see Thanks on page 2

Good vibrations

Stuck? Try bringing gratitude into your face

In the movie *Home Alone*, an 8-year-old boy named Kevin is accidentally left behind while his family flies to France for the Christmas holiday.

After realizing he's home alone, one of Kevin's first acts of his newly discovered independence is shaving and then splashing his face with aftershave.

Aaaah!

Kim DiRé suggests you try the same thing.

Well, you can skip the stinging aftershave, but if done correctly, it can be just as powerful.

The hands-to-the-face exercise is designed to help people who are "stuck" free themselves with gratitude.

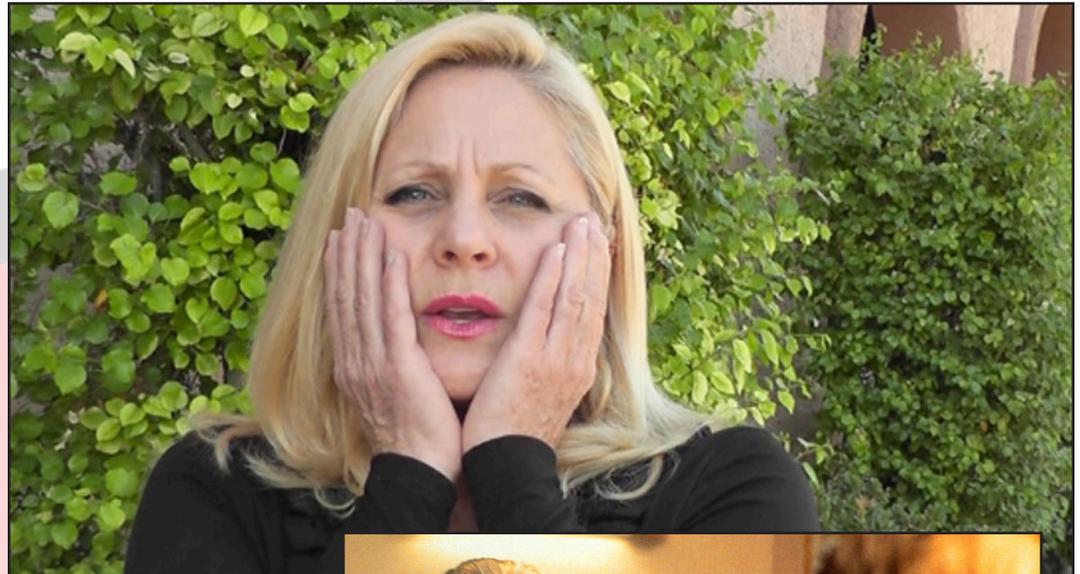
"Gratitude is an emotion that actually has a vibrational energy," says DiRé.

In the exercise, a person literally holds out his or her hands as though holding something in life he or she is grateful for.

"If you just hold something that you're grateful for in your hands and really concentrate or use kind of a meditation or mindfulness with it, ... you'll find a vibrational energy happens," she says.

Once the good vibrations are connected to the outstretched hands, the person can bring the hands to his or her face.

"You can bring that gratitude in to shift some of the physiology that



Like *Home Alone's* Kevin (right) Kim DiRé (above) knows how powerful hands-to-the-face can be!

happens when you are down, or when you feel stuck, or when you feel scared," says DiRé.

The exercise is effective, according to DiRé, because emotions have energy, and gratitude is one motion that's extremely uplifting.

Literally bringing that to your face, and feeling the touch, can be powerful.

"So next time you feel stuck or down, use gratitude in a way that's going to be really helpful for you to move forward and feel really hopeful," says DiRé.

To see a video of DiRé demonstrating this exercise, please visit Healthy Futures' Youtube page at Youtube.com/HealthyFuturesAZ.



Thanks continued from page 1

smoking," she said. "I realized I'm not around a lot of smokers, and I instantly was so overwhelmed with gratitude because of this healthy support system that I have."

Kim Guenther said being kind is another way she reminds herself of blessings.

"Giving in any sense, whether it's a text message or giving of time or giving of financial resources, or whatever it might be, being kind is part of being

grateful," she said.

"Giving in any way helps you feel grateful."

To see a video of this round-table talk, please visit Healthy Futures' Youtube page at Youtube.com/HealthyFuturesAZ.

Healthy Futures, at 9449 N. 90th St., suite 210, offers the the Valley's longest-running intensive outpatient eating disorder program.

For details, call (480) 451-8500 or see www.HealthyFuturesAZ.com.