



Prairie Faith Parish Nurse News~~November 2022

Body

Mind

Spirit

Research shows that practicing *intentional gratitude* will affect your **physical, mental, and spiritual health** in a positive way. **Physically**, blood pressure may decrease, immune function will be stronger, quality of sleep is better, and blood glucose & cortisol levels may decrease. There is a reduced risk of **mental health** conditions such as anxiety, depression, & even substance abuse disorders. The practice of gratitude helps us deal with adversity. Gratitude reduces a multitude of negative emotions, ranging from envy and resentment to frustration and regret. **Spiritually**, gratitude strengthens faith, it may lead us to practice other spiritual disciplines, & it fosters humility & self-restraint—by expressing thanks to God, we are acknowledging that many things were given freely to us—we did not earn them. We find that we begin to focus on what we already have—rather than dwell on what we *think* we need.

This month, every day at a time that works well for you, use the calendar on the page two to list *three (or more!) things that you are grateful for—three things that were good about your day*. Writing the thoughts down, rather than just thinking about them, will actually make them more meaningful & memorable. As you write your list, express thanks to God, & meditate on or pray about things you name. Now is the perfect time to begin *cultivating a spirit of gratitude & thankfulness!* (Please contact Nancy or the church office for additional calendar copies.)



"To be grateful is to recognize the love of God in everything He has given us -- and He has given us everything. Every breath we draw is a gift of His love, every moment of existence is a grace, for it brings with it immense graces from Him." –Thomas Merton



9-8-8 is a new, nationwide, three-digit hotline that anyone can call anywhere in the country and be connected to a crisis counselor. The number is new, but the service is not-- it is essentially taking the place of the 1-800 suicide hotline number (although this number will remain in effect as well), the idea being that 9-8-8 will be much easier for people to remember. It is designed to be like 911, which is ingrained in all of us so that no matter where we are, if we need the police, fire, or ambulance, we know to dial those three numbers.

9-8-8 responds 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, to calls, chats or texts from anyone who needs support for suicidal, mental health, and/or substance use crisis, and connects those in need with trained crisis counselors. The service is anonymous, in that the caller does not have to identify themselves or provide any specific information about themselves. Community Mental Health Centers, such as High Plains Mental Health Center which serves northwest Kansas, will continue to operate their crisis lines, which may still be used by clients of the mental health centers or people just looking for help who are not currently in services.

- **9-8-8 is available to help anyone in a mental health crisis.** The phone is answered by highly trained crisis counselors who are prepared to deliver supportive and individualized counseling to people experiencing mental health related distress, including thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress. Compassionate emotional support, thorough risk assessment, collaborative safety planning, resource navigation, and referrals to local providers and human service agencies are key to providing quality support.
- **9-8-8 is available to support those who are concerned about a loved one.** The experience of a mental health or suicide crisis can be confusing, scary and difficult for all of those involved. Crisis counselors are available to provide support and guidance to navigate resources in the community and to communicate with loved ones who are at risk.
- **9-8-8 reduces the need for law enforcement to respond to mental health crises.** Over 90% of phone calls can be resolved without the need to activate a law enforcement response. In the majority of cases, when law enforcement is involved, it is with the expressed permission of the caller.
- **9-8-8 helps reduce the need for Emergency Department visits.** Far too many persons have had to spend hours or even days waiting in hospitals for appropriate help to be identified. Since 9-8-8 counselors are properly trained to de-escalate crises and connect people to ongoing services, many people can avoid an expensive trip to the emergency department.

Sources of information: David Anderson, Director of Clinical Services--High Plains Mental Health Center

<https://www.ksphq.org/988-2/> (Kansas Suicide Prevention HQ--the organization which serves northwest Kansas)