Voices of Sisters
Spirituality



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The other day I was thinking about sobriety and so I went to the Sobriety Calculator (a calculator that figures out sober days) and put in my sobriety date of July 25, 1976. It says that I have been sober for 18,061 days as of the day I'm writing this. Or on July 25, 2026, I will be sober for 50 years.

It gave me a chance to think about the past and present. I am able to achieve sobriety on a daily basis through my faith in God. If I did not exercise faith in God, all would be lost. It has been a mixture of sweet and sour times during these years, but as of today, I am still sober. Daily, I am moved to thank God for my sobriety. Today I am moved to write a few words of gratitude from my 50 years of abstinence and sobriety.

My heart is full of gratitude. My being today is able to rejoice in the simple things in life that normal people experience. It is time to thank God and to praise him. I thank God for the work of his hands in my life. One woman I came in contact with told me, "What a wonderful gift God has given you, to be able to be used by God to help others. You know what it means."

For me, gratitude is not optional; it is necessary. Having a grateful stance helps me to unlock the fullness of life. It turns what I have into enough, and more. It turns my denials into acceptance, chaos into order, confusion into clarity.

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Bill W., co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, describes this practice clearly:

> *Another exercise that I practice is to try for a full inventory of my blessings and then for a right acceptance of the many gifts that are mine — both temporal and spiritual. Here I try to achieve a state of joyful gratitude. ... I try hard to hold fast to the truth that a full and thankful heart cannot entertain great conceits.*

My gratitude can turn abstinence into sobriety, a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend, a small gift into a treasure. It can transform my transgressions into forgiveness. Gratitude makes sense of my past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for me for tomorrow. It can turn a recovering addict like

me into a grateful person and one who is "in progress" of becoming a humble person.

Gratitude is a moment for me to express appreciation on a daily basis for the abundance that surrounds me and to acknowledge the hard work that goes into reaping the rewards of a sober life.

Expressing my gratitude on a daily basis is a way to honor the gifts I have received and also a powerful spiritual practice. Gratitude opens my heart to God and aligns me with the flow of abundance that permeates every part of our universe. This I await with purpose. And in gratitude I continue to include God in all seasons of my sober life.