



Pine Grove

Alumni Program

Forrest Health®

Fall 2019



An Attitude of Gratitude!

David Sellers, M. Divinity
Pine Grove's Spirituality Coordinator

One of my spiritual mentors had the habit of always beginning his prayers by stating let's give thanks for the good and the not so good things. I eventually asked him why he started all of his prayers in this fashion. He said it was his way of giving thanks always. He then said that spiritual maturity flows with gratitude and lack of gratitude means you have work to do. At the time I thought, well at least I'll always have something to do. Then the cynic in me kicked in. I thought, "Give thanks for all?" Seriously!?! That could get ugly. Miss a step and sprain an ankle or step in dog poo. Thanks? Rush to the bathroom only

to have your cellphone slip out of your pocket and into a dirty toilet. Thanks! And Yuck! If that's the case, thanks for nothing. Life for me at that time felt like a frustrating picture puzzle. I was constantly getting stuck. I was either looking for one more piece (especially at the edge) of the puzzle or struggling to make others or myself fit in spaces they were not designed to fit.

Yet, if we don't take time for gratitude, it becomes so easy to take people for granted. Current research shows that people with more gratitude feel gratitude more intensely when something positive happens. They also tend to have less depression, less anxiety, are more helpful to others, and are more forgiving. To maintain an attitude of gratitude requires an intentional willingness to regard life with appreciation. It involves a conscious choice to see.

A few weeks ago a friend shared an encounter they witnessed between two men. Their conversation quickly became heated and their voices grew louder and louder. Suddenly, one of them uttered, "Thank you God for this blessing." The other exclaimed, "What did you say!?" "Thank you God for this blessing." It threw the conversation off and after a second or two they began to laugh at the way they had treated each other. When my friend concluded the story I thought what an odd way to give thanks. It was also an odd way to see.

Rachel Remen in her book *My Grandfather's Blessings*, said, "The marks life leaves on everything it touches transforms perfection into wholeness. Older, wiser cultures choose to claim this wholeness in the things that they create." Zen gardeners purposefully leave something odd or out of place within the pattern of the meditation garden. Persian rug weavers intentionally include an error in the carpet. A broken bead (spirit bead) in some Native American jewelry is purposely placed into every finished piece.

So when life seems to throw us a little imperfection, may you pause and give thanks to God and may you stumble upon wholeness greater than you had dreamed possible.

If it helps, here's a prayer I found long ago. (Source unknown)

We give thanks for our variety of skills and interests;
For our different ways of thinking, moving and speaking;
For common hardships and common hopes;
For this family gathered here;
For living together and eating together;
For all our good times, and not so good times;
For growing up and growing older;

For wisdom deepened by experience;
For rest and leisure;
For the privilege of work;
For time made precious by its passing;
For all that has been,
And all that will be;
For all these blessings, we give thanks.
--Our Family Prayer



IMPORTANT DATES

PINE GROVE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & ADDICTION SERVICES

DAYS OF HOPE:

December 5-6

Please register for this event by visiting

pinegrovetreatment.com/alumni

Featuring guest speaker:
Caroline Smith, MS, LPC, CSAT-S, CMAT-S
Director of Intensive Workshops



Welcome to Pine Grove

Pine Grove's Alumni Program is proud to welcome Erin Konves and Eileene McRae as the department's Business Development and Alumni Coordinators. Both Erin and Eileene work with Pine Grove's Alumni Program organizing Days of Hope and other activities to provide continued recovery support for Pine Grove's alumni and patients. Additionally, both team members work with Pine Grove's specialty program patients, facilitating workshops, and providing support to our current patients who are future Pine Grove alumni. Please feel free to reach out to Erin and Eileene with any questions you may have about Pine Grove's Alumni Program. They always welcome feedback.

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Erin E. Konves
Business Development and Alumni
Coordinator



Eileene McRae
Business Development and Alumni
Coordinator

It seemed like only yesterday, in a moment of desperation, I pleaded for help and Hattiesburg, MS is where I landed. I was wandering around Pine Grove Women's Center questioning how I was going to live my life without mood altering substances. Recovery has been a huge challenge; however, it has been my number one blessing. It is hard for me to believe I am an alumnus of Pine Grove. It holds a special place in my heart, as this is where it all began for me. I now am able to enjoy life on life's terms one day at a time. A fun hike at the Long Leaf Trace, a walk in the park with my dogs, a night out at the movies with friends, or simply dinner at Ed's Burgers in Hattiesburg have been some of the gifts of sobriety.

Recently, I was given the opportunity to return to Pine Grove in a different role. I am happy to come back as the Alumni Coordinator. I am so grateful for this new journey in my life and am excited to get to know each of you. I'm eager to learn about your thoughts and desires for this program. I have a passion for recovery and enjoy working with people. My hope is to grow this program into something unique for the patients, the alumni, and their families. I look forward to meeting each of you. Let's do this!

"Not until we are lost we begin to find ourselves"
~Henry David Thoreau

Greetings to all! By way of simple introduction, I am Eileene McRae, and I have returned to Pine Grove to work a couple of days a week to assist with building our Alumni Program. I retired from Forrest Health and Pine Grove after nearly 20 years of service. My late husband, Dr. John McRae, and I came to Pine Grove in 1989 and at that time he was the Medical Director on the Alcohol and Drug Unit and I worked in the Family Program as a counselor. I thought I had retired TOTALLY on December 31 last year, only to realize, I DON'T LIKE RETIREMENT!! Pine Grove was kind and gracious enough to have me back, which suits me perfectly and I feel like I am home. In my beautifully blended family, I have ended up with four adult children and thirteen GRANDS—YES, TWO DAYS A WEEK WORKS GREAT!!

Recovering folks are my peeps! I am a person in long term recovery and I got sober in Boulder, Colorado in 1977. I was the only woman in the hospital on the Alcohol and Drug Unit, but I stayed and did what I was told to do - yep, "It works if you work it." I look so forward to meeting you, and I know that together we can find joy in our own recovery by supporting each other and by carrying the message to many who still suffer.

"When life gives you more than you can stand...kneel"—
Anonymous from TENDING DANDELIONS

M I L E S T O N E S

August 2019

Mark V. 2 Year
Camille H. 8 Years
Peter D. 9 Years
Blake W. 1 Years
George G. 3 Years

September 2019

Britton G. 18 Months
Julie M. 60 Days
Kevin C. 7 Years
Tanya G. 6 Months
Amanda F. 2 Years

October 2019

Dee W. 6 Months
Joey W. 18 Months
Sam E. 4 Years
Amy G. 18 Months
Josh S. 2 Years
Breland A. 1 Year
Morgan G. 90 Days
Erin K. 10 Years
Christy B. 1 Year
Ben J. 2 Years

If your sobriety date is in November or December,
please email your name and sobriety birthday to
alumni@pinegrovetreatment.com



UPCOMING INTENSIVE WORKSHOPS

Call 1-888-574-HOPE or visit www.pinegrovetreatment.com/self-improvement-workshops.com for information. *Please note the schedule is subject to change based on registration.*

NOVEMBER

- CPF - Men - November 4-8, 2019
- CPF - Women - November 18-22, 2019

GRATITUDE - COSA

All Gratitude / GP Spouses Welcome

- Family COSA Meeting
Wednesday - 8:00 p.m. CST
Conference Call-In #: 319-527-3510
Access Code: 715268

Questions: Please contact Beth A. 256-566-8554

This meeting is chaired by family alumni and is not associated with Pine Grove

1-888-574-HOPE
www.pinegrovetreatment.com

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