

# *IN SIGHT* for Oregon Lawyers

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

## THE POWER OF GRATITUDE

The holidays are often laden with unrealistic expectations that can add stress, especially about families and other loved ones. When our experience doesn't match our expectations, we may feel disappointed, anxious, depressed, or lonely. The holiday season is also the time of year when people reflect on the gap between their current situation in life and where they wish they were. By counting your daily blessings, you can reduce anger, resentment, regret, and other unhappy feelings that may accompany the holiday season.

In addition to helping you ward off the "holiday blues," appreciation for the good things in your life may keep you happier and healthier all year long. People who

write down the things they are grateful for every day have stronger immune systems, more happiness, and less reaction to negative events, according to Dr. Robert Emmons, author of *The Psychology of Gratitude*. Gratitude is an appreciation of your life right now. So work on cultivating an "attitude of gratitude," an openness of heart and mind that allows you to notice and appreciate the gifts you are given each day. In this way, gratitude doesn't become something reserved for a holiday present exchange. It is a way of being each day, every day.

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