

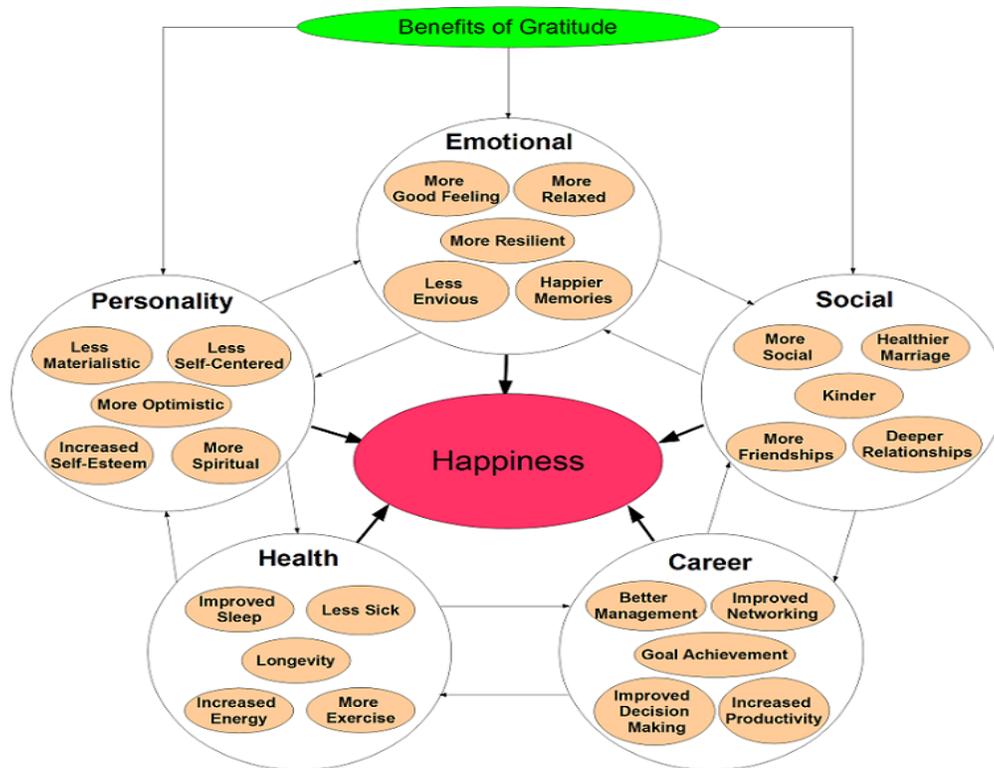


# Gratitude

Anthony F. Vicari, NAAP Vice President

*"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it."*

~ William Arthur Ward



[www.happierhuman.com/the-science-of-gratitude](http://www.happierhuman.com/the-science-of-gratitude)

The above-printed diagram “Benefits of Gratitude” ([www.happierhuman.com/the-science-of-gratitude](http://www.happierhuman.com/the-science-of-gratitude)) expresses my sentiments as I write this article for the NAAP website.

The past nine years (April 2010 – April 2019) have been some of my most rewarding professional times ever experienced. Serving as NAAP’s Professional Development Trustee (3 years) and Vice President (3 years) was both challenging and rewarding. Most importantly, I learned many things throughout my tenure on the board; gaining knowledge, skills and life-long friendships from all across this world! Starting with the 2013 National Conference in cultural and historic St. Louis, Missouri; to glamorous, glitzy Las Vegas, Nevada (2014); to the beautiful, blue beaches of Daytona Beach, Florida (2015); each one of these National Conferences was a great moment in time for me as Professional Development Trustee. Being able to plan, organize and deliver keynote/closing and breakout sessions with the dedicated Activity Professionals from the Professional Development Team is something that I will always treasure. As Vice President, serving with the Ethics and Regulations Teams broadened my understanding of federal policies and procedures along with ‘tapping into’ my love for research and writing. I would like to extend a special thank you to each person that I served with on the above-mentioned NAAP Teams; your talents and dedication to our profession are noteworthy and recognized by many. In addition, a *shout of gratitude* to this year’s NAAP Awards Team. As I am writing this article, each member is reviewing and making final selections for our Grand Awards’ Banquet at this year’s National Conference in Charleston, South Carolina. Thank you for your service!

I would also like to express my gratitude to current and past board members: Alisa Tagg, Carolyn Hoff, Colleen Keegan Knudson, Amy Laughlin, Vanessa Emm, Cindy Tewalt, Jackie Laskee, Michael McCann, Gail Buckner Rone, Lisa Ost-Beikmann, Linda Amoroso, Myrtle Klauer, Nancy Williams and Susan Rauch. Working with each one of you has been an extraordinary and worthwhile journey.

I close this writing with an old familiar parable; The Chicken and the Pig:

*The farmer and his wife were preparing for a “hearty” breakfast with family and friends, so they went out to the barn looking for the chicken and the pig. The chicken willingly offered her finest eggs to the farmer; “Here are twelve of my finest eggs for your breakfast table.”*

*Next, the farmer and his wife made their way to the pig sty looking for the plumpest pig possible. They finally made their selection and prepared the way for their table’s finest bacon ever. The pig turned to the chicken and quickly said, “You, chicken, are only making a contribution to the farmer’s breakfast. I, on the other hand, am taking a total sacrifice.”*

I urge each member to continue faithfully supporting and offering their special talents and skills to NAAP; the premier educational association for the Recreation/Activity Professional. As a NAAP member since 2009, I have such gratifying and tremendously fulfilling experiences to share with others. One of my fondest memories will always be that **“very first”** NAAP Conference, I attended, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (2010). Three things that will stay with me for all time:

- 1). I finally got to hear Susan Newell in person; 3 ninety-minute sessions!
- 2). I presented my very first national breakout session: Making Magical Music Moments.

3). Dancing at the evening's "Sock Hop" was a musical experience of a lifetime!

The words from one of Dale Evans' famous songs rings in my head..."Happy trails to you, until we meet again." I look forward to seeing many of you in historic Charleston, South Carolina in March 2019! Safe travels and get ready for a fabulous time of learning and fun!

***"When I started counting my blessings my whole life turned around."***

~ Willie Nelson