

Living With Gratitude



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“Thankfulness is the beginning of gratitude. Gratitude is the completion of thankfulness. Thankfulness may consist merely of words. Gratitude is shown in acts.” — *Henri Frederic Amiel*

As we approach 2022, we look back and reflect on all that 2021 gave us. We revisit the good and the bad and all that came in between. This was supposed to be a rallying year—one that remembered the pandemic of 2020 but experienced a rebound, ready to focus on growth. However, we did not need to remember the pandemic in 2021 as it continued to rage on and put the world through more testing—testing of patience, of resilience, of humanity, and of common courtesy to our fellow human beings.

The entire veterinary healthcare team continued to work long hours, often with fewer team members, to ensure pets were receiving the care they needed. Stress, fatigue, and anxiety were hallmarks of many of my colleagues across the country. However, I then began to see a groundswell of compassion for all veterinary healthcare team members from ... fellow healthcare team members. Yes, we look out for one another. But this was different. Unappreciative clients taking out their anger on a veterinary team member were fired by the practice. Practice owners and managers, themselves under a great deal of strain, supported and protected their team members. Hospitals' social media platforms started highlighting individuals on the team and what they bring to the care and wellbeing of pets and owners. These acts of support and gratitude resulted in pet owners responding positively and thanking veterinary team members for taking care of their beloved pets.

John F. Kennedy once said, “As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.”

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Gratitude is a virtue that many in veterinary medicine did not feel applied to their work. But they kept on giving and working—and saw the appreciation from their teammates, leadership, and clients. This is what I will remember about 2021. Through all the difficult days, veterinary teams stood together, served their patients and clients, and were grateful for one another.

I am grateful to each and every veterinary team member for all that you do and all that you withstand, day after day, and month after month. I am truly grateful that you provide the best medicine and care for the patients you see every day. Your skill and compassion are unparalleled and aim to keep our companions healthy to help all of us through the difficult days. I appreciate you! **TVN**