



Fence Post of Faith May-2017

Being Thankful

After work today I spent some time visiting 3 people I can call friends. Something I been so fortune to have is a lot of friends. My mom said I had never met a stranger and she was right. My dad use to say treat people like you want to be treated. Those words are still something I live by today.

But how do you talk to someone who is seriously ill? Really no different than any other time you're with them, maybe a little more listening. But really one of the most important things is to focus on what they need. It could be as little as just reading to them, sharing a funny

story or something that happen that you remembered.

Although it may difficult for your friend or relative to answer. After all, most of us are taught not to burden others with our problems. It may surprise you to learn that, most often, what the person needs is for someone to listen sympathetically, thereby sharing the burden of their suffering.

When someone is ill and cut off from their daily life, a visit or call or note from someone reminds them they are remembered, part of a community and are cared for. Dealing with friends or relatives who are very sick — or fear they might be — can be a challenge. They and their condition are always changing and often they do not know what is ahead of them.

Most people want to know what to say to them. Do you try to cheer them up? Reassure them that things will be all right? Pray with them? Tell them about your own experiences with something similar? Should you ask them for details of their condition? Is it okay to ask questions? Or is it better to ignore the whole matter and act as if nothing serious has happened?

What is important is that the person who is ill not lose his or her dignity. Illness carries with it a whole gamut of feelings: fear, anger, disappointment, hopelessness, sadness, grief, perhaps guilt or even shame. When you are conscious of these issues, you will more likely respond in a sensitive way. If the person who is ill feels alone, they will likely feel more despondent. Healing the body is linked with healing the soul and it is the soul that also suffers when people do not treat them as viable, important parts of the family

or community. Someone who can be a loving witness to all of the feelings a person who is ill has will be greatly appreciated.

Visiting a person in the hospital or someone ill and homebound for a short period of time can lift someone's spirits but not if they have to "entertain" you or "fix themselves up in anticipation of your visit" which uses up much of their needed, and often, diminished energy. Be sure when you visit someone that you are "in tune" with how they are reacting to your visit. Better to leave while your friend has energy than to exhaust them so that they need to recover from your visit.

Physical and emotional touch can bring great comfort. Whenever it seems appropriate, give a hug or extend a hand, touch someone's arm, if they like, gently apply body cream or scented oil to the person's hands, arms or feet. For many people who are ill, they wonder whose body they are in. They feel unattractive and wonder if they are still desirable. By touching someone — if appropriate — you can help a person to feel acceptable.

*Just like the verse from **Luke 6:31 said:** And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.*

Jeff Metcalf

Ps: Please consider this Barrel Bash is tentatively planning to give one Scholarship away for the fall 2017 Semester. For those of you that want to donate you can make checks to the Mike Menn Barrel Bash Scholarship. FOR THOSE WANTING TO MAIL SEND TO Kaylee Krekel 1426 N Cty Rd 1900 Carthage, IL 62321