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Serving San Mateo County since 1979



IT'S ABOUT LIFE

A Peaceful Mind,



A Peaceful Heart

*"...for all that is delicate and comes into its own
as the days warm and lengthen
is a mystery..."*

Life is a spiritual journey,

Inspired by the search for meaning and a peaceful mind and heart. When the journey includes a terminal illness, we grapple with our limitations and mortality. We move through a wide range of conflicting feelings, questions, and insights about this mysterious passage—all of which create a crisis of the spirit and may lead us to wonder, “*Why me? Why now?*”

Everyone has a spiritual dimension and each person’s spirituality is unique. Some people express it through religion. Others express it through nature, the arts, or in ways that expand their sense of the universe and their place in it.

Our culture, values, and spiritual orientation affect how we live, respond to, and find meaning in life-threatening illness. Many feelings we have on this journey – such as fear, anger, powerlessness, and despair – are signs of spiritual distress. Yet, even when facing death, we can find solace in feeling appreciated, sharing our life stories, and expressing gratitude and hope.

Our chaplains offer spiritual care to those from a broad range of cultural and religious traditions, as well as those with no religious or spiritual beliefs. Knowing we are one human family who are more alike than different, these spiritual counselors’ calming presence and gentle concern create an environment in which spiritual healing can occur.



Spiritual care encourages reflection on successes and failures, hopes and sorrow, and values, goals, and wishes. Accompanying you through this intricate web of thoughts and emotions, our chaplains will:

- help you identify sources of spiritual nourishment;
- support your culture and beliefs;
- explore the meaning and purpose of your life;
- assist with healing relationships, facing fears, and overcoming regrets;
- guide you through the mystery and awe enfolding you;
- offer music, meditation, visualization, blessings, or prayers to soothe the soul, when appropriate;
- arrange for religious sacraments, if desired; and
- officiate at funerals and memorial services, as requested.

Your spiritual well being is vital to dying peacefully and dying well. For that reason, we will never proselytize, condemn, or judge you. Respecting your wishes and ways of viewing life, we will not manipulate or push, but sensitively accompany you during this most sacred and mysterious part of your journey.

Do Not Turn Away Any Sweetness

Do not turn away any sweetness.
Take all ripe fruit offered, even if bruised.

Sleep in the sunny grasses,
where bugs are singing of warmth.
Listen for lavender-scented sheets
snapping in the wind as they dry,
even if it is all in dreams
and memories of dreams.

Do not turn away any sweetness,
for all that is delicate and comes into its own
as the days warm and lengthen
is a mystery.
The hands hold out to our hearts
for healing.

Dr. Taun Relihan, R.N., M.A., Ph.D.

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