



## **Chaplain's Corner**

### **Caring for Ourselves and One Another Through Grief**

This has been an extraordinarily difficult week for our San Antonio Regional Hospital family. Many of us are carrying shock, sadness, confusion and heartbreak after the deaths of beloved members of our community. In healthcare, we are accustomed to walking alongside patients and families through grief and loss, yet when the loss touches our own coworkers and friends, it can feel profoundly personal and disorienting.



Grief is not a sign of weakness. It is a normal human response to loss. As several grief experts note, grief affects the whole person—not only our emotions, but also our concentration, memory, physical energy, sleep, appetite and sense of stability. It is common to feel distracted, numb, anxious, tearful, exhausted or even emotionally “off balance” after loss. Different people grieve differently, and there is no single “correct” way to grieve.

In the workplace especially, many people feel pressure to “hold it together,” but grief does not neatly separate itself from our professional lives. We carry it with us into meetings, patient rooms, hallways and break rooms. Sometimes the most meaningful thing we can do for one another is simply to be present. We do not need perfect words. Often, “I’m so sorry,” “I’m here,” or quietly sitting with someone in their pain can provide more comfort than any explanation ever could.

#### **As we care for ourselves and one another during this difficult season, a few gentle reminders may help:**

- Give yourself permission to grieve in your own way and in your own time.
- Maintain simple routines when possible—eat regularly, rest, hydrate and ask for help when needed.
- Understand that concentration, memory and emotional energy may temporarily be affected.
- Reach out to coworkers instead of withdrawing completely.
- Avoid clichés or trying to “fix” someone’s grief. Listening and presence are often the greatest gifts.
- Check in on coworkers who may be struggling quietly.
- Remember that grief often comes in waves; difficult moments may arise unexpectedly days, weeks or months later.
- Most importantly, please remember that you do not have to carry this alone.

The Spiritual Care Department is available to support any employee Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. We are also able to arrange times outside of those hours as needed for grief support and emotional care.

Please reach out for yourself or encourage a coworker to do so. One of the greatest strengths of the SARH community has always been the way we care for one another, especially in moments of suffering. May we continue to extend compassion, patience and grace to ourselves and to each other in the days ahead.

Blessings,

**Rev. Alexander J. Aaron**

Staff Chaplain

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(Request a consult 24/7)