Expanding Focus
By Chaplain Jane Fryda

When problems arise and we are feeling stressed, our focus can narrow. The struggle can become all consuming and push out the rest of life. When we notice this, it is good to take a break and reclaim a larger perspective.

One of my professors, many years ago, taught me the importance of taking a break and doing something different. I have learned that when I find myself stuck, I need to take a break and think about or do something completely different. My professor taught me that creativity happens in these pauses and the transitions between activities. There are studies which back up the power of taking a break and the effects it has on our brains. I have not read these studies in detail, however, over the years, I have found truth in his words for myself.

A simple way to take these breaks is to find a window and look outside. Even better if you have the time, actually go outside. Remind yourself there is a bigger world than the four walls surrounding you. There are greater things happening than the problem at hand. Expand your focus allowing yourself to see things outside the box. While you are doing this, take a deep breath and expand your lungs. Allow some fresh air to cleanse your thoughts and oxygenate your brain.

Once you have learned to do this for yourself, help others to do it as well. We often meet patients and families at the worst times of their lives. They too can be consumed by the crisis at hand and sometimes all they can do is focus on it. This can be okay for a little while and may be the only thing they can handle at the moment. Then as time passes, they may need to expand their focus to see a bigger picture. It helps put life into perspective.

Take some time this week to expand your focus and help others to do so as well. Look outside the box.

---

Photo by Jane Fryda taken outside CHW Corporate building.

When life feels too big to handle, go outside. Everything looks smaller when you’re standing under the sky.

~ L.R. Knost