

Control Issues

By Brian Hurley, MDiv, BCC

Director of Pastoral Services and Ethics/Chaplain

I have control issues. I want everything to run smoothly, follow the schedule and be “perfect,” but I love working in a healthcare environment that is chaotic, irregular and ever changing. Sometimes it is hard to reconcile those things and some days I am better at it than on other days. Right now, we are in time of great unpredictability. Our lives are changing by the day, sometimes even by the hour. Everything is different than it was before and we long for everything to return to normal. One of the hardest things about these times is no one knows if or when we are going to return to normal.

It may seem like everything is out of control and we are not in control of anything. I recently saw an illustration of things we can control that will help us with the things we cannot control (from thecounselingteacher.com).

We can control:

- our attitude
- how we follow the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines
- how we practice social distancing
- turning off the news
- limiting social media
- finding fun things to do at home
- how we display kindness and grace

We cannot control:

- if others follow the rules of social distancing
- the actions of others
- predicting what will happen
- other people’s lives
- the amount of toilet paper at the store
- how long this will last
- how others react

I invite you to let go of the things that you cannot control and focus on the things you can. It will not be easy and it will take practice each day, but it will be worth it. Focusing on only what can be controlled will bring a greater sense of peace, calmness and acceptance of the situation.
