

It Takes Strength

By BRIAN HURLEY, MDiv, BCC

Chaplain/Director of Pastoral Services and Ethics

“Confronting our feelings and giving them appropriate expression always takes strength, not weakness. It takes strength to acknowledge our anger, and sometimes more strength yet to curb the aggressive urges anger may bring and to channel them into nonviolent outlets. It takes strength to face our sadness, to grieve, and to let our grief and our anger flow in tears when they need to. It takes strength to talk about our feelings and to reach out for help and comfort when we need it.”

- Mr. Rogers

Mr. Rogers hosted a television show for children, but his wisdom is for all of us at any stage of life. In the above quote, he gives us permission to express our feelings in nonviolent outlets. He acknowledges that to do this is a strength, not a weakness.

Many of us in healthcare think we need to be strong or brave and that we are superhuman and the sad, difficult experiences we have in our job should not affect us or cause us to be emotional. That is not true and to tell ourselves that is to lie to ourselves.

Are you letting yourself experience emotion? Are you allowing your emotions to come out in positive, helpful ways? Have you had a meltdown yet, maybe more than one? Are you angry, sad, frustrated and just plain over it? Well guess what, if you have, that is expected. We are living through times that make our emotional state more uncertain, uneven and uncontrolled.

Whom are you talking to? Who brings you comfort when they listen to you? Seek out people who not only hear you, but also truly listen to what you are saying and acknowledge your feelings.

To acknowledge our feelings and express them in appropriate ways is healthy and will take strength and courage. Find ways to do this and you will feel more at peace, more at rest and able to cope with what each day brings.