



Children's National™

Chaplaincy Services



SADNESS

Sadness may in some ways be the most powerful of human emotions. When we are experiencing deep sadness we often feel we have no will, no meaning, and that the value of our life and experience is diminished. That's the power of sadness – it leads us to believe that nothing can change.

And yet, if someone you love is in the hospital sick or hurt, it is very appropriate to feel sad.

Sometimes the power of sadness overwhelms us just because we somehow feel we should 'pull ourselves out of it.' Recognizing the appropriateness of our sadness can be the first step in letting it help us learn about ourselves and how we cope – how we heal.

Sad is not bad. Sadness is a response to a change in our lives that we didn't plan for or expect, a change that usually involves a loss of some sort.

When your child is hospitalized, even when you know it is for a short time –

it is a loss. Loss of freedom to choose all of your activities. Maybe the loss is having to miss an important event – for you or for them.

But being sick or injured brings other losses too. It might be that the function of a part of their body is lessened, or even gone. Certain treatments might leave them with something "extra" that is also a kind of loss – a colostomy, a broviac, even crutches!

We can let ourselves feel sad at what is happening. It's not okay that these

things are happening to us or to someone we love.

But these difficult and sad things don't diminish the wonder and power of life and love; they don't change the beauty and joy of your uniqueness, or of your child's sweetness and blessing.

It's important not to deny the sadness that comes – and just as important to deny its power to take away the meaning and marvelousness of life.

[note: if sadness is a feeling that persists, which you find difficult to find words to describe; if it continuously, or increasingly, stops you from performing daily activities, please talk to a professional. Call the chaplain or your own clergy; speak to your social worker. You may be experiencing more serious depression which can be treated.]

Dear God, this is such a sad time right now.

I do not ask You to take away the sadness, but to help me remember – and to notice – and to appreciate

the moments of peace, of laughter, of rest.

Give me enough awareness to know, and to tell, the story of my special self – the self that is not always feeling sad. Help me to recount the blessings I have and the blessing that I am.

[I ask You to help me lift up all the gifts of my child, to encourage my child as well as to remind us all that our love and life is precious.]

Let me welcome sad tears; let their warmth fall not only on my cheeks, but on my soul, to water my hope and my strength.





**For more information, contact your chaplains
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