

## Are You Thankful for Your Health?

by Carol Sullivan

“Why, no,” some might reply – “I have diabetes and heart disease and my arthritis is killing me!” Someone else might say, “Of course I am thankful, my blood sugar was right on target this morning and my new heart medication lets me go for a walk every day. Walking helps my arthritis a lot.” I’m sure we all know people in both categories. It is the old adage, *Twixt optimist and pessimist, the difference is droll – The optimist sees the donut, while the pessimist sees the hole.*

Being stuck regretting what we do not have robs us of the joy of celebrating what is present. This is just as true for health as it is for material possessions. It also illustrates how tightly mind, body, and spirit are bound together. Who is happier of the above pair? Who is more spiritually well? Who would you rather spend time with? The second person is no more “cured” than the first, but is more “healed.” Being healed is not necessarily the same as being cured. It is learning to find joy in what is and peace in acceptance. Sometimes, healing even takes the form of moving to the life where pain and sorrow are no more. Thankfully.

What is your thankfulness scale? Are you able to concentrate on the positive? Here is a Thanksgiving test. Ask someone close to you to write down three or four things they feel that you have to be thankful for. Look at the list. What is your first thought? Say the first item is, “you should be thankful for your naturally curly hair.” Is your first thought, “Yes, it has saved me a lot of time and trouble”; or do you immediately think, “BUT... and something like, “it is often frizzy and hard to style.” This can be called the BUT test. How many BUTs did you have?

In November we are also thankful for our churches and the various ways they support us and our community. (Try not to say, BUT... I didn’t like the sermon last week!) It is a time to celebrate what ministries, including health ministry, are present and following Christ’s footsteps. It is also a time to explore what new directions might be taken next year. If you would like to know more about increasing health ministry in your parish, contact Carol Sullivan, the Diocesan Liaison for the National Episcopal Health Ministries at 410-827-6907, or [songofjoy@dmv.com](mailto:songofjoy@dmv.com).

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