

Strengthening the Spirit

Cancer may cause you to turn to your spiritual side to help you to cope. Or, you may begin to question your faith. This fact sheet discusses the role of spirituality in your cancer journey:

- **Your spiritual side**
- **Questions of meaning and purpose**
- **Ways to make your spirit stronger**



Everyone Has a Spiritual Side

We are all spiritual in some way. Everyone holds certain beliefs about what they value and hold dear. Many of us have experienced moments when we connect to a deeper meaning about life.

For some, religion and attending their place of worship is what matters. For others, connection is found by spending time in nature, reading philosophy, listening to music or exploring the arts.

Whatever your spiritual beliefs, these forms of connection often become more important when we face major challenges in life such as our own mortality or the loss of a loved one.



Organizing and Negotiating Your Bills

Some studies show that people who feel spiritually connected can feel less anxiety, depression and pain when they are dealing with cancer. Spirituality can help you to put your problems in perspective. Prayer, meditation and worship can help you calm and restore yourself.

In some cases, other members of spiritual communities can be a great source of emotional help. Or you may look inward for a stronger connection to what is most meaningful and sacred. You may find it helpful to speak with a spiritual leader, or you may wish to spend time alone in your own thoughts.

A cancer diagnosis can start a process of looking for a deeper connection to the meaning of your life or the life of those you care for. These connections can give you strength.



Tips For Strengthening Your Spirit

Take time regularly to meditate or pray. Spending quiet moments with yourself can bring a sense of calm and stability during difficult times.

Read spiritual writings. The Bible, the Koran or other faith-based texts can put you in touch with ancient traditions of wisdom. Books by recent writers can also provide spiritual insights.

Seek the help of others. You might begin an ongoing dialogue with your clergy or counselor, or join a group for meditation, prayer and support.

Retreat to spiritual spaces, natural settings, concerts or museums. Visiting such places may help you cultivate a sense of peace and personal perspective.

Keep a journal to express your feelings, thoughts and memories. Writing down your thoughts can make them feel like they have stronger meaning and power.



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