



Emotional Needs of Cancer Patients

Rev. Percy McCray

HEALTH, HOPE & INSPIRATION
WITH REV PERCY MCCRAY

Battling cancer is a difficult journey for any patient, not only impacting them physically, but also emotionally. Cancer patients often shoulder the burden of anxiety, fear, depression and guilt. It is vital for loved ones, caregivers and cancer care ministers to be sensitive to these needs and look for ways to meet them. By being proactive, you can bring much needed comfort and support.



Be physically present.

Imagine the anxiety and despair of a cancer diagnosis or the confusion of treatment options. Compound these emotions with the day-to-day stresses and obligations of life, and the world can seem almost unbearable. Showing support by being present at the hospital can be a source of invaluable comfort to a cancer patient.

- *Offer to go and if accepted, accompany them to appointments.*
- *Be their eyes and ears. Listen, take notes and ask questions during appointments.*
- *Stay with them during chemotherapy treatments.*
- *Partner with family members. Wait with them, especially after a surgery.*



Be a source of joy.

Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.

-Proverbs 12:25

The experience of a cancer journey can bring a sense of darkness and fear to everyone involved. While you can't change the circumstances, you can be a positive influence.

- *Laugh together. Share jokes and funny stories when appropriate.*
- *Bring beauty. Flowers, potted plants or home décor items are a great way to show you care.*
- *Share culture. Find out what brings them pleasure, such as art, music, poetry or hobbies.*



Be a reminder of goodness.

*Light in a messenger's eyes brings joy to the heart,
and the pleasantness of a friend springs from their heartfelt advice.*

-Proverbs 27:9

When enduring a cancer battle, it's easy to lose perspective. You can help a patient and their loved ones by gently reminding them of what is good in their life.

- *Help them look beyond their present circumstances towards future goals and plans.*
- *Ask them to share stories about important moments in their life.*
- *Ask them about their family and what makes them proud.*

Be a source of comfort and compassion.

Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

-Romans 12:15

Battling cancer is the most difficult trial of a patient's life. While everyone's symptoms and disease are different, the experience can be lonely and filled with sadness and grief. Frequent shifts in mood are common, and it's important to be sensitive to these changes. Don't dismiss or downplay what they are feeling.

- *Don't ignore uncomfortable topics or feelings.*
- *Don't be afraid of unexpected tears or emotions. Encourage them to express their emotions.*
- *Assure the patient and loved ones that their tears and sadness are normal. Share in their sorrow.*
- *Make contact. Hold their hand or offer a hug.*

Dear friend, as you lock arms with individuals who are in the middle of a cancer journey, remember you are helping them navigate their path with strength and hope. You have the potential to impact people at the point of their need and lift their burden.

About Reverend Percy McCray

Rev. Percy McCray Jr. has spent more than 20 years ministering to cancer patients and their caregivers at Cancer Treatment Centers of America® (CTCA).



He recognizes cancer care ministry as a special calling from God and considers faith a key, but often overlooked, component of cancer treatment. He now serves as the Director of Faith-Based Programs at CTCA® and provides leadership to the pastoral care staff at all five CTCA hospitals. In addition, Rev. McCray oversees Our Journey of Hope®, a nationwide cancer-care ministry training and support program.

An ordained minister, Rev. McCray is a member of the U.S. Chaplain Association. He has been recognized as one of the “most influential African Americans in Lake County (IL)” by the *Chicago People’s Voice* newspaper for his religious and leadership roles within the community.

Health, Hope & Inspiration is a weekly radio broadcast, sponsored by Cancer Treatment Centers of America®(CTCA), designed to help people find answers to questions about cancer, cancer prevention and overall healthy living. One of the greatest gifts a person can enjoy is good health. A well-rounded lifestyle is the product of physical, emotional and spiritual health. These three things are interdependent, and that is the message of *Health, Hope & Inspiration*, as well as the basis of the integrative approach at CTCA®.

For more information, visit our website at **www.HealthHopeAndInspiration.com**.

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