

It's All Inside

Category: Behind Closed Doors

written by Esther Pottoore | April 6, 2021

My patient walked into the exam room, expressionless, her shoulders hunched. Her last blood pressure reading had been high.

I gently closed the door. "Good morning," I said. "My name is Esther, and I am an RN. How are you today?"

"I am OK, I guess."

"You are here for a BP check. May I check it?"

"Sure, why not."

"Any dizziness, chest pain, headache, shortness of breath, fatigue, or blurry vision?"

"No."

"OK. That's good. Tell me a little more about yourself. Not about your medical history. What is important to Lucille Grant, the person?"

She thought for a minute. "My family."

"Tell me more."

"I have a son and a daughter who stress me out. My daughter and grandchild live with me."

"Tell me about the stress."

"My daughter always attracts the wrong type of men. They don't treat her well."

"What about your son?"

She spoke hesitantly. "Jason just came out of prison. He drinks too much, lives in a room, and has no job."

"Maybe AA could help him?"

"Yes—I think so."

"Both your kids are adults who make decisions you don't control. Right?"

"Yes. That is true."

"You sound like a typical mother."

Her eyes pooled with tears.

"Is there anyone you can trust and talk to?"

"No."

"You have been carrying this burden, huh?"

"Yes," she whispered. Tears poured down her cheeks.

"Ms. Grant, do you believe in God?"

"Yes! I talk to him constantly."

"So do I, especially with problems I can't control. It gives me peace of mind and clarity. May I pray with you?"

"Oh, please—would you?"

"What faith are you?"

"I am Pentecostal."

I gently held her hands and prayed for and with her. Her sobs grew louder as years of stress flowed out.

"Oh, nurse! How I needed that!"

She wiped her eyes, smiling. "I feel like a weight lifted off my chest!"

"Good! Let's check your BP now."

It was 116/70, her pulse a regular 72.

We both laughed.

I reviewed her meds and diet and made a follow-up appointment in a month.

"Remember to trust and speak to the Lord daily. Cast your burdens on Him, and he will give you rest."

"I will!" She smiled.

She walked out with a spring in her step, looking ten years younger.

I opened the door to call in the next patient.

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