

The Triumph of Being Human

Category: Gratitude

written by Frances Smalkowski | November 1, 2022

It was five years ago, but I remember it as if it were yesterday. The anesthesiologist who approached me looked very tired. He introduced himself and explained more or less what I could expect as I was getting ready to go into the operating room for spinal surgery. I was feeling calm, but was not exactly expecting what he said at the end of his talk.

“You know,” he added, “because you will be turned on your abdomen face-down for a while, there is a possibility you could come out of the surgery blind. We are required to tell this to all our patients.”

His words felt abrupt. Now I had a new inner distress.

However, unbeknown to me, my surgeon was standing above my head. He bent down and kissed my forehead. How did he know how meaningful that gift would be? The distress I felt dissipated. I, a nurse for over fifty years, felt like I was once again in my first day of nursing-school classes, learning old lessons anew.

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