

Feelings of Vulnerability

August 2009

When my chemo ended, my lessons for living had just begun. Mostly I remember that lengthy period of weakness, wondering if I was ever going to again find zest for living.

In a crowd it hurt to see those whose bodies were strong and vibrant. I wondered what down-turns life might have in store for them. How might they handle major setbacks?

How many others cope with feelings of vulnerability: the business person who faces bankruptcy, the individual whose partner is abusive, the senior fearful because of incontinence, the child who has been reprimanded by a domineering adult, the person in a wheelchair who can't get anyone to look him in the eye, the victim of racial slurs ... There are so many whose self-esteem is shattered again and again by impacts we never see. It's a lonely existence.

The mentor sitting on my shoulder during my moments of despair kept asking if it was the job of the church community to intentionally reach out to people facing these situations.

So many specifics came to mind. In the prayers, by naming some of these vulnerabilities, the silent ones no longer need feel alone. In activities, by inviting individuals to participate regardless of their handicaps, it is good to feel needed. In informative ways, by talking about the injustices people face, we search after health-building spiritual guidance.

We need to find ways to challenge the weaker ones to be sensitive to and supportive of others facing their own silent walk through the valley.

On each refrigerator there should be a reminder that says: **"Be kinder than necessary, for everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle."**

May all who are children of God know that they are loved, that their lives can be enriched, and that they can be a blessing to others. *(Written by Joyce Sasse, April / 09)*
