

## SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS—APRIL 2016

# When Sleep Won't Come



### Tammy Koenecke

RN, BSN, MASL  
Spiritual Care

Coordinator ♦ Reedsburg  
Area Medical Center

Tammy's mission is to promote spiritual awareness in patients, families and staff, thereby facilitating healing in the presence of illness and the absence of cure from birth to end of life.

For assistance, further information or to schedule an appointment, please call:

**Tammy Koenecke**  
@ 608-768-6249



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I tossed and tossed and tossed. For several nights in a row I had been tossing back and forth in bed wanting desperately to sleep. My husband was in the same boat! We were both anxious wondering what to do when sleep won't come.

Perhaps you can relate to nights like these? When I have a sleepless night, one of the first things I do is review what I ate before I went to bed? Do you do that? Next, I think about how close to bedtime it was when I last ate? You, too? You probably follow the same pattern of questions I do as you search for reasons you are not sleeping. You may wonder if the events of the day or the events of the next day are causing the trouble.

You might consider trying something different before bed the next night like; take a soothing bath, drink a glass of warm milk, play soothing music, read a book rather than watch TV or be on the computer. These are all worthwhile strategies to encourage good sleep. Still with all the attempts to bring on sleep you might find there is really nothing troubling

you, nothing too spicy, nothing eaten too close to bedtime.

Unable to find an answer the question then becomes, what do you do when sleep won't come? Usually when I can't sleep I pray. I pray for family members, friends, anyone in need, world peace and lots of other things. Interestingly during this stretch of sleepless nights praying did not seem to be satisfy my wakefulness. What to do? What to do? What was God trying to tell me through those sleepless nights?

When I finally asked the right question, 'what are you trying to tell me, Lord?' I felt an invitation to just rest without worrying about whether I was sleeping or not. I felt the contentment of simply resting in his care. Each following morning I felt ready to take on the day regardless of how much sleep I got (or didn't get).

The Lord invites us to rest. Rest in his presence. Simply rest. We read in Matthew 11:28, "Come to me all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Maybe we don't always need sleep as much as we

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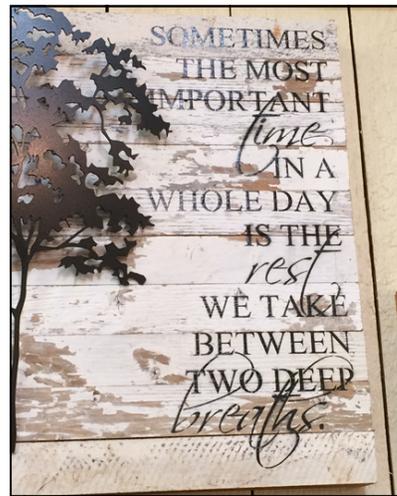
need rest.

Our lives are often in constant motion. There is an unspoken expectation that if we do more we will get ahead in the world (ahead of what I don't know). We often move from one activity to the next without taking time to rest. Sleep might come out of sheer exhaustion, but rest requires a conscious decision to pause in your day and simply be in God's presence. In the middle of the night when we are sound asleep we are unaware of God's presence. We trust God to be with us while we sleep, but we are not aware of his presence.

Those nights were a gift to me. They demonstrated God's desire to give me what I really need, rest from the weariness that creeps

into my life from time to time, a reminder of his loving presence, always. I am grateful for the message and the practice time! For now, (pretty sure I will revisit this message from time to time) I will focus on resting when sleep won't come.

May God's Peace Be With You,  
Tammy Koenecke, RN, BSN, MASL  
Spiritual Care Coordinator, RAMC



## Questions to ponder:

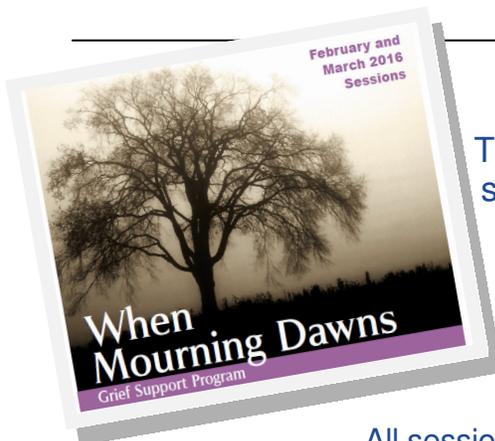
When was the last time I couldn't sleep?

What do I usually do when I can't sleep?

How does sleep differ from rest?

When do I fully rest in God's presence?

How can I change my focus in the middle of the night when sleep won't come?



## Walking together through grief and loss.

This FREE grief support program allows you to identify the seasons of your grief and assists you in your grief walk.

This 5 session video-based program will meet at RAMC. The current session is:

**Tuesdays, 6:30-8:00PM March 22, 29, April 5, 12, 19**

All sessions are in Reedsburg Area Medical Center's Conference Room

**This program is FREE and open to all types of loss.**

Please contact Tammy Koenecke, RN, BSN, MASL, Spiritual Care Coordinator for more information or to sign up for the class.

Pre-registration is not required. **768-6249**



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