

## SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS—JUNE 2016

### Who Am I



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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.

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**G**o ahead ask yourself the question being asked in the title of this reflection. Perhaps you know the answer to this question. Perhaps you think you know the answer. I want to challenge you to stop and consider who you are at the core of your being. Let's explore this topic further.

If you were to write your own introduction for someone to read to an audience, what would you put down on paper? What would you want people to know? Perhaps you can recall meeting a stranger and the words you used to introduce yourself to them and the words they used to introduce themselves to you. Stop reading for a moment and think about the words you would put on paper to describe yourself to others. You might go the step further and jot a few things down before you read on.

From my experiences using this little exercise, I imagine you considered where you live, what kind of work you do, your membership to various clubs and service groups in your community. Perhaps you provided information about where you obtained your education. You likely included whether you are married or not, have children or not. You may

have mentioned your extended family, how many brothers and sisters you have. There are many ways to answer the question, who am I and these are the typical answers.

While on retreat at the Jesuit House in Oshkosh, WI, one summer, I felt a deep calling to explore this question for myself. "Who am I", I asked looking toward the heavens. I was feeling a bit overwhelmed by the list of things I was doing and held an overall discontentedness in the constant rush from one thing to another. Was I doing what I was supposed to be doing? Was I where I was supposed to be in life?

An artist I am not, but I felt called to draw a picture of myself and decorate myself with all the roles, obligations, titles, and commitments that defined me so I could see the answer. I drew and doodled and added and paused, added and paused. When I finished it was hard to see me. Ah ha, that was it! God was asking me to see that all that I do is not really who I am. It is simply what I do. I needed to identify the layers that needed to be removed before I would be able to discover the answer to the question, who I am?

I used this exercise at a conference recently. It is a great way to introduce the reality that

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who we are is more than what we do. Participants were invited to gently peel away the layers of roles, obligations, titles, and commitments. They were encouraged to work slowly and visit all of their vulnerabilities, which we often suppress or cover up with our roles, obligations, titles, and commitments. You see if we take on enough stuff we don't have to deal with our imperfections. The problem is we also risk smothering who we really are.

We need not be afraid of our imperfections. We are human. We can grow through acknowledging that we are not perfect. We are likely to find at the core of our being a deep desire to grow, a deep yearning for love and belonging, a deep commitment to a higher power, to God. We can embrace our life journey and

empathize with the journey of others, only after we have honestly answered the question, who am I?

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

Two great resources to check out:

**Book** by Brene' Brown,  
*The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who  
You Think You're Supposed to be and  
Embrace Who You Are*

**Song** by Francesca Battistelli,  
*If We're Honest*



## Questions to ponder:

Who do people say I am?

What are my imperfections?

How can I become more comfortable with my own vulnerabilities?

How will knowing myself help me interact with others?

## Spouse/Partner Loss Support Group

This is a five week interactive support group that seeks to provide a safe and confidential environment in which those grieving the loss of a spouse or partner can share their thoughts and feelings freely.

**Check back next month for July/August dates.**

This program will meet in the Conference Room at Reedsburg Area Medical Center.

Hosted by Michael Amberg, Spiritual Counselor, Home Health United Hospice and Tammy Koenecke, RN, BSN, MASL, RAMC Spiritual Care Coordinator.  
Call Tammy with questions, 768-6249.



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