



caring for the spirit at nrgh

## The Rest of Us

Most of the world's religions set aside days, months and seasons to rest and focus on the life of faith. These sacred times have many names. In Judaism one such sacred day is the Shabbat. One day a week, from sunset to sunset, followers of Judaism stop their work and rest. The word Shabbat literally means to cease and so Jews stop their regular daily routines to focus on the depth of life. They focus on the reality that they are not slaves to their work but free human beings.

As we near the summer season many of us will set aside time for rest and relaxation as well. We'll enjoy our own sacred time as we head out in our campers, fly somewhere new or simply relax in familiar surroundings. These are great times but sometimes we come back from such holidays needing a holiday! The reality is that simply taking time off work does not always equate into finding rest. We can be so busy on our holidays that we cannot find time to rest!

The great artist Vincent Van Gogh once said that he wanted to "grab life at its depth". To do this he needed to slow down enough to see what was going on all around him. Part of living deeply involves being able to stop and be attentive to what is around us. It is in slowing down, maybe even in stopping, that we can grab life at its depth.

I read a story recently about a woman who watched a young boy and his father at a park. The boy played while his father sat and watched. Finally it was time to go and the father called for his son to come. The boy called back and said, "Dad, can I have five more minutes, pleeeeeease?". The father agreed and gave him five more minutes. Awhile later he called his son but the boy responded with another request for five more minutes. This interchange happened a few more times and finally the lady who was watching approached the man and told him what a patient father he was. The man explained that it was not about patience. He went on to say that his older son had died a few years before and to this day he would give anything to spend even just five more minutes with him.



Because of that whenever this son asks for five more minutes it is not five more minutes for him to play but rather it is five more minutes for him to watch his son play.

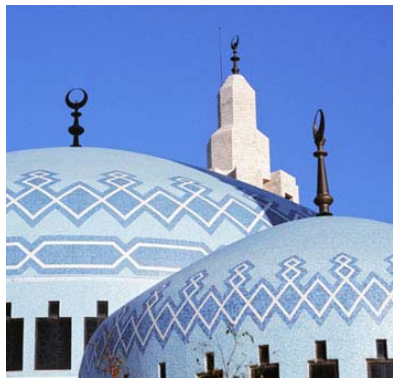
Perhaps we feel like we don't get enough vacation time. But in reality an attitude of rest is vastly more important than the amount of time we have off from our work. An attitude of rest can transform even the most mundane moments and help us grab life at its depth.

I must grab life at its depth.

Vincent Van Gogh

## Faiths In Focus

ISLAM is a monotheistic religion that began in the mid-seventh century in what is now Saudi Arabia.



Founded upon the teachings of the prophet Muhammad Islam is the prevalent religion in the Middle East, North Africa and Southeast Asia. Muslims (members of Islam) have five duties in this life:

faith, prayer, charity, fasting and a pilgrimage to Mecca.

The Qur'an is the sacred text for Muslims and Imams are the religious leaders. The family is the basis of social life with seniors being respected and cared for, especially by their children. Islam provides a complete code of behavior on all aspects of life, from birth to death. Worldwide there are over one billion Muslims.

Practices that may affect nursing care include the need to pray regularly, ritual washing and diet. Sacred days include Fridays and the month of Ramadan during which no food or drink are consumed from dawn to sunset. A dying patient may wish to sit or lie facing east. Relatives and family may recite prayers. Autopsy is generally forbidden except where required by law. (Next issue: *Buddhism*)

## Accessing Spiritual Care

Spiritual Care is available 24/7 for patients, families and staff. The NRGH Chaplain is on site Monday – Friday from 830-1630. After hours contact the hospital switchboard for an available on-call chaplain. If anyone requires assistance from clergy from a particular faith tradition consult the *Faith Community Directory* available on each unit.

## A Place of Rest @ NRGH

The NRGH chapel is a quiet place for reflection and is open to all. You can access the chapel by going down the stairs across from the cafeteria and turning right. Alternately, you can go down the elevator near the cafeteria and turn left.

*numa* is the quarterly newsletter of Spiritual Care Services at the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital. To contact the NRGH chaplain call 250-755-7691 (54022), 250-713-3883 or email [Darren.colyn@viha.ca](mailto:Darren.colyn@viha.ca)

When the rhythm of the heart becomes hectic,  
Time takes on the strain until it breaks;  
Then all the unattended stress falls in  
On the mind like an endless, increasing weight.

The light in the mind becomes dim.  
Things you could take in your stride before  
Now become laborsome events of the will.

Weariness invades your spirit.  
Gravity begins falling down inside you,  
Dragging down every bone.

The tide you never valued has gone out.  
And you are marooned on unsure ground.  
Something within you has closed down;  
And you cannot push yourself back to life.

You have been forced to enter empty time.  
The desire that drove you has relinquished.  
There is nothing else to do now but rest  
And patiently learn to receive the self  
You have forsaken in the race of days.

At first your thinking will darken  
And sadness takes over like listless weather.  
The flow of unwept tears will frighten you.

You have traveled too fast over false ground;  
Now your soul has come to take you back.

Take refuge in your senses, open up  
To all the small miracles you rushed through.

Become inclined to watch the way of rain  
When it falls slow and free.

Imitate the habit of twilight,  
Taking time to open the well of color  
That fostered the brightness of day.

Draw alongside the silence of stone  
Until its calmness can claim you.  
Be excessible gentle with yourself.

Stay clear of those vexed in spirit.  
Learn to linger around someone of ease  
Who feels they have all the time in the world.

Gradually, you will return to yourself,  
Having learned a new respect for your heart  
And the joy that dwells far within slow time.

From "To Bless the Space Between Us" by John O'Donahue  
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