



A Listening Presence

Foundation Principles

- God is present
- Caring not curing
- Nonjudgmental presence
- Active listening

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How Does BeFriender Ministry Make a Difference?

Here's One Program Leader's Story

By Deb Gorczycki

Being a listening presence for one another is important. It is even more important when challenged by life experiences. Within our faith communities - whether a church, care center, senior living, or other space - BeFriender Ministry is preparing persons to extend the ministry of pastoral care. To be a listening presence for another brings connection and the comfort of not being alone in difficult times.

I have been a BeFriender Program Leader since 2010. Honoring confidentiality, BeFrienders have shared with me how God showed up, impacting their visits. There have been "holy ground" moments when a BeFriender has made a visit and that person died the very next week. In a case visit, when a person noticed something uniquely special as they shared their story, because of the BeFriender who actively listened. And when a loved one's death seemed unbearable, a BeFriender provided a safe place to share grief and tears which began their process of healing.

A listener who is attentive and able to let me share without "fixing" is a gift. Not only do I feel heard, but that what I share matters. As the other helps me notice what I am saying, I find that I am better able to name the struggle, my feelings, and find clarity. Through this process, I notice myself open to new insights, inner wisdom, and a sense of peace - even if what I am wrestling with isn't resolved. In the midst of the conversation, I become aware that God is truly present.

I am so grateful for the training and support that BeFrienders receive which enables faith communities to expand the ministry of pastoral care. We are living in a unique, stressful, anxious time that BeFriender Ministry programs are uniquely qualified to respond to. Supporting each other is what it means to be a community.

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Reflection shared with permission

