

St. Anthony's Catholic Church

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Dear Jeff,

I thoroughly enjoyed your presentation at the Washington County Hospice Conference, "Loss and Other Unspeakable Truths." You are a marvelous after lunch speaker: dynamic, entertaining, able to keep the audience involved. I am at a time in life when I am less likely to be caught without "Breathing Space." I am 55 years of age with two grown children and a husband close on the heels of retirement. I have grown very comfortable with recycling unwanted mail and saying "no" to unwanted commitments. I enjoy a quiet comfortable space at home that I keep clutter-free. Though we do buy more than we really need in some areas, I frequently purge the house of unnecessaries and recycle. I always get 7-8 hours of sleep with an occasional 9. I have time for regular exercise and eat three balanced meals every day. I select carefully what I am willing to spend time watching on TV – often preferring quiet and reading. I am concerned about being able to provide quality service in my work as a professional lay minister in the Catholic church but I long ago let go of "keeping up."

I have a query for you or for someone. With the aging of America, is anyone concerned about how seniors maintain meaningful and rich lives beyond retirement? I know that health issues are addressed, as are finances. If these are not a problem for the couple or the individual, they may be faced with entirely too much "Breathing Space." Not everyone can abide a constant round of bridge and golf. Some travel is fun and may be enriching – but then? Time management takes on a whole new meaning when there are 24 hours to fill and no job, no children, no rush, no pressure. Of course, there are a wide variety of areas open to volunteering and I suspect I will be as busy as I want to be. However, I think this may be an untapped area- finding richness and meaning in the retirement years.

Thank you again for your talk which was an important part of a very fine conference.

Very sincerely,



Sandy Zajdel, pastoral associate

