

PHYSICIANS' EXAMEN

When our minds and bodies are pushed to their limits, our attentiveness to our spiritual well-being also quickly wanes. We invite you to use this brief tool of the Examen at the end of shift or end of the day to replenish, regroup, and prepare for what's ahead.

1 Preparation

Close your eyes for a moment and focus on your breath. Relish in the fullness of your lungs, and the ability to breathe and move freely — without a mask, shield or other personal protective equipment. After a few deep and replenishing breaths, prepare to review the day.

2 Review

Beginning with when you entered the doors of your facility and ending with where you are in this moment, review the events of the day. Consider the face of each patient you interacted with, of the many consultations with colleagues. Who did you see? What did you share with them?

Inevitably, feelings will arise: recognize them, name them, honor their existence. Did a patient try your patience? Did you feel deeply for the painful experience of a coworker? Did you inwardly dance joyfully as you presented good news to a patient's family?

3 Gratitude

Whatever the feelings are that arise, be they negative, positive, somewhere in between, what in your day calls for gratitude? Perhaps a moment of personal connection amid an otherwise sterile feeling day. Perhaps a moment of rest amid hours on end on your feet. Whatever it is, sit in gratitude for a moment.

3 Forgiveness & Healing

Having taken time to offer thanks, consider where you might need forgiveness and healing. Where in your work did you neglect to see God? Did you lose patience and express frustration cruelly? Were you mistrusting of a patient experience? Perhaps you responded in exasperation to support staff? Whatever might have gone wrong, express to God your desire for forgiveness and healing.

5 Look to the Future

Are there learnings from the day you hope to bring with you into tomorrow? What are you hopeful for? What gives you pause? What else do you have to look forward to? Name a few of these for yourself and express any other intentions on your heart before closing in prayer.

6 Close in Prayer

God of all Wisdom,

We offer to you wholly our experience of this day — the painful and the joyful, the exhaustion and the hope. Grant, we pray, that we might continue to see your face and your goodness in our work. Where we are in need of healing, offer us your strength. Where we are in need of forgiveness, offer us your courage. Walk with us, always, O Tender One, that we might offer your tenderness to those in our path.

Through your name, we pray: Amen.