



Spiritual Reflection for  
July 2017

## Come Together

Things change. Lives get busy. People move away from their hometowns. Over time traditions fade and new traditions develop. But, oh, how hard it is for me to let go of some traditions, especially those that encourage us to come together.

I am a Rotarian and each June we come together as a club and a community to host a Fly-In/Drive-In breakfast and this year (2017) marked the 65th year of serving breakfast out of an airplane hangar. The weather had been perfect and we served over 1000 people. The positive outcome inspired several conversations about ways to improve the event even more next year. One idea was to add a drive-through option. Many other clubs in our area have done this with great success. Although, I totally understood the value in adding this option and knew it would likely increase our numbers, I could not be excited and I was surprised by the pit it created in my stomach.

I could tell my body language was not very supportive. Try as I may I could not hide my negativity. I needed to really consider why I had this sick feeling in my stomach. As the days passed I realized it was related to loss. The addition of a drive-through posed a threat to something I value. For me, the best part of a community event is the connectedness of coming together. There is an energy created when we come together that doesn't exist without the presence of others, an energy that supports, encourages and appreciates one another, an energy that bonds people together in good times and in bad.

I have witnessed the coming together of multiple service organizations as they reach out to help friends, relatives, acquaintances and even strangers when tragedy hits. I believe this ability to have compassion and empathy for others comes from getting to know each other. A deep spiritual connection develops when we come together. We learn about others, the things they prize within their circles, whether that is church, school, business, or family. We watch families grow. We celebrate accomplishments and support losses.

What happens if we continue to reduce the number of opportunities to come together, to learn about each other, to hear the stories from the past, and to share the dreams for the future? What happens if we

decide to drive through life? What happens if we lose our connection with the past, the present and the future because there are fewer opportunities to come together and share life?

I can come up with several reasons in favor of adding a drive-through option to a fundraising event, but I believe there is one negative that may have a lasting effect on our society as a whole. The more space we put between each other the greater the risk of losing our connectedness. This is what caused the pit in my stomach.

With any change there is always an ending followed by a period of grief and ultimately a new beginning. We must be mindful, however, to hold onto the things that will sustain us. I believe in order to maintain healthy relationships and a healthy community we must create opportunities to come together, eat meals together, play together, laugh together, cry together, and be together.

No matter how busy life gets, no matter how many changes we go through we must not lose sight of what is most valuable as human beings. Before any change is made identify your vision for the future, listen for spiritual guidance and then make your changes accordingly, but never dismiss the positive energy that exists when we come together.

### Questions to ponder:

- What do I like most about community events?
- What benefits do I see in people coming together for an event?
- What concerns do I have about limited opportunities for building relationships?
- How is God calling me to strengthen my relationships and my community?

May God's Peace be Yours, Tammy Koenecke, RN, BSN, MASL  
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*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.  
Hebrews 10:24-25*