

How prayer kindles my hope

I was browsing through a book recently when a picture I must have tucked away safely fell out.

It was a picture of my son the first time I had ever seen him, a black and white X-ray shot from the doctor my wife had playfully left on my desk to discover. As I held this picture six years later, the memory of that day swept in, and I could sense the tears coursing their way.

And yet, it is precisely in moments like these that my mind quickly races to pray.

Ever since my son was diagnosed with autism three years ago, I have made a certain discovery about prayer.

If we allow it, prayer can kindle our hope, heal us and make us whole right in the moments when we seem to be breaking apart. Prayer has kept me sane and given me a refuge from my own negative thoughts about my son.

Prayer is my safe space.

By now, it has almost become a reflex for me to pray to God the moment I feel bogged down by my son's health challenges. I pray not just because it helps replete my hope, I also pray because I can see it working for my son.

Prayer is my strategy.

I have seen my son go from a completely non-verbal child to someone who can now string a few words together. I have seen him break from his self-absorbed cocoon to run, dance, laugh, love and share things with us.

Of course, he has an amazing team of therapists helping him, but I know there are other mysterious forces at play here.

The last few years of unflinching faith in prayer has also made the idea of God very real to me. I no longer think of God in abstract terms, but as an ever-present protective field of energy around my son.

Modern science and research tells us there is no medicine or cure for autism. My experience tells me otherwise, even though unprovable in a lab.

My son's journey has made me believe that healing is indeed possible with the right dose of faith and hope.

- *Gagandeep Ghuman is the publisher of the North Shore Daily Post.*

