

Poetry

And Yet

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Abstract

Description

As healthcare workers, invested in the wellbeing of our patients while also hoping to grow as individuals, we sometimes tend to view our jobs as a rigid duality—we are either “in love” with our practice and persevere flawlessly through all hardship, or we are “burnt out,” cold-hearted, and defeated by the heavy workload and expectations of medicine.

In reality, we all sit somewhere in the middle of a blurry spectrum, balancing out physical, mental, and emotional pain with the immense honor of saving and cherishing human life, while simultaneously struggling to reconcile our altruistic goals with realistic but necessary human incentives.

I want this open-ended work to acknowledge these challenging but critical “and yet” moments, and I hope anyone who is reading it can connect to the words personally and find new insight, regardless of where they are in life.

Keywords

professional burnout; physicians; health personnel; graduate medical education; medicine in the arts; poetry; psychological stress

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr Pallavi Aneja for her guidance in composing this work and her always reliable support of me and all of my fellow residents. I also want to thank my family, and especially my father, for their unconditional love.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares she has no conflicts of interest.

The author is an employee of HCA Florida Westside Hospital, a hospital affiliated with the journal’s publisher.

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This research was supported (in whole or in part) by HCA Healthcare and/or an HCA Healthcare-affiliated entity. The views expressed in this publication represent those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of HCA Healthcare or any of its affiliated entities.

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And Yet

Three generations of doctors, one proud daughter
A teaspoon of opaque believing, twenty something years of curt reading
One who stuttered, indeed so much was wondered
Maybe all without power, yes perhaps too many hours
And yet—gratitude

A foreign land, deserted patience, but how familiar the children
Teaching us how, reminding us when, granting divine why's
Compassion, authenticity, invigoration, altruism, excellence, brewing pride
And yet—fear, inadequacy, shame, hate, fatigue, programming apathy
And yet—home

Hope there is always hope, chase the siren's hallowed cry
A beckoning of Oslerian hymns, pray we sail through briny blues
And yet—talking to machines, rounding in full circle, we cannot say what it all means
And yet—together, silence
And yet—together, peace

The sun cannot set, who dares to sleep? Which of you were even there?
And yet—the ward finds its chapter, beloved, pondering still of mine
And yet—a family esteemed unforgotten, no spirit left unforgiven, an oath no light promise
And yet—begin, arise, reboot again
And yet—
Three generations of doctors, one proud daughter