

REFLECTIVE WRITING SESSION INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE ORIENTATION 6/27/13

Introduction

Read and discuss poem “Magic”

Writing Prompt

Reflective writing is a way for us to look back on and deepen our understanding of significant events in our lives. Many medical schools and residencies have integrated reflective writing into their curricula to help learners better process and make sense of the many profound events and experiences that occur on a daily basis in medicine. These experiences may be good or bad, distressing or enriching, but in the press of ongoing demands and responsibilities, too often they are forgotten before we have had a chance to learn anything from them.

We hope to use reflective writing on an occasional basis in this residency to give you space to reflect on issues such as physician wellness and its relationship to patient care; challenging patient-doctor interactions; providing care across cultures; and the death of a patient.

Today we are going to reflect together on a more uplifting topic: a patient encounter that inspired you to become a family physician. You’ll have about 10 minutes to write on this topic. Don’t worry about the quality of your writing – this exercise is not about good writing, but rather about good reflection. Try to not only describe what happened but what it meant to you; how it affected you emotionally and even spiritually; and what you learned from the experience. If you get stuck, just keep writing, keep moving fingers on keyboard or pen on paper. We will give you a reminder when you have a couple of minutes left. At the end of the 10 minutes, we will ask you to share what you’ve written. Many people feel self-conscious at this point, but remember this is an opportunity to share something of who you are with people with whom you’ll be spending a good part of the next three years. If you do not wish to read your writing, of course you do not have to.

Group Questions

- 1) (To author) What made you choose to write about this incident?**
- 2) (To group) How did this story affect you?**
- 3) (To group) What did this story say about family medicine?**
- 4) (To group) What did you learn from this story?**
- 5) Listen for and highlight an important theme from the story and ask for comments (“One thing I heard in this story was XX... What do others think about this?”)**