

FM REVIEW 2018 29 COMMENTS

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: This well-written essay contrasts the transitions to medical school and residency with the transition to attending, and concludes that the latter is the hardest. Reviewers liked the essay and had only minor suggestions. However, it seems to me that the author is not really clear on what she is saying. She makes a variety of points - how as an attending the learning is not so much about knowledge as about self; how there is much less direction as an attending compared to medical student or resident; and how she must learn to balance multiple personal and professional roles. But in my read the most interesting aspect of the essay is that it implicitly critiques the highly regulated, structured and demanding nature of medical school and residency in which the student/resident has little control, little choice - and likes that! The relative freedom and opportunity of life in the real world can be enticing, but overwhelming. This intriguing point is somewhat lost in the essay. I'd like to see it instead become the organizing spine of the piece, and suggest below that the author undertake a rewrite with this focus.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: This well-written essay contrasts the transitions to medical school and residency with the transition to attending, and concludes that the latter is the hardest. However, the essay's organizing theme is not really clear. You make a variety of points - how as an attending the learning is not so much about knowledge as about self; how there is much less direction as an attending compared to medical student or resident; and how you must learn to balance multiple personal and professional roles. But none of these emerges as the overarching theme.

In my read, the most valuable and unique aspect of the essay is that it implicitly critiques the highly regulated, structured and demanding nature of medical school and residency in which the student/resident has little control, little choice - and likes that! The relative freedom and opportunity of life in the real world can be enticing, but overwhelming. This intriguing point is somewhat lost in the essay. I'd like to see it instead become the spine of the piece.

We would like to consider a revision that brings this point to the fore and organizes the rest of the essay around it. You are an excellent writer and with some reworking we think this will make a very worthwhile contribution to the journal.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: The main problem I had with this essay is that it didn't seem to have a clear message and rambled from point to point, although it was quite well-written. The author has done an excellent job of focusing on a single theme: how becoming faculty means she has more options and is no longer being told exactly what to do - a situation which alarms her as much as it intrigues her. The minor revisions I am recommending are purely stylistic, suggested only to improve the readability and flow of the narrative.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: Thank you for this excellent revision, which really focuses the essay on the contrast between roles in which you were told in detail what you had to do and becoming faculty, where you have more options and choices. The repetition of the line "where to be, when to be there, which patients to see" was very effective in tying the essay together. I was also intrigued by your

insight that you'd learned to love a life that was inherently unbalanced. Now the task becomes rebalancing in a way that makes sense primarily to you.

The minor revisions I am recommending are purely stylistic, suggested only to improve the readability and flow of the narrative. Please consider them, and use your judgment as to whether to accept them or come up with your own new turn of phrase.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR III: This author really knows what she's about. Her rewrites carefully considered editorial suggestions, and often improved upon them. When she did not agree, her well-reasoned arguments were completely convincing. The essay makes a very clear point that, while training is difficult, its structure is a sort of safety; whereas becoming an attending is like walking on a tightrope without a net. Interestingly, she is not talking so much about the medicine as about the choices she must make personal and professionally. I definitely recommend publication.

One small note for copy-editing: page 4, line 10 - should read "there is yet another..." ("a") should be deleted.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR III: Thank you for this terrific revision! Your edits were elegant, and often surpassed editorial suggestions. In the few places you disagreed, your thoughtful arguments were completely compelling. This is an original, honest essay that I think will make many faculty realize that their junior colleagues are experiencing a new sort of challenge - deciding what their lives are going to look like. You are a really strong writer, and I hope you continue to share your experiences in this form.