

FSH DECISION LETTER 2019 9

I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to review the manuscript. Overall it is well-written and has a unique voice that is funny and honest. The essay addresses an issue, parenting, that obviously affects many of the professionals who are readers of this journal. I have now received the reviews of your manuscript and am able to make an editorial decision.

Based on my review and on reviewer comments I am not able to accept your submission in its present form. However, we would like to invite you to submit a revision. Specifically, we would like you to consider the following points.

- 1) While I do not want to ask you to write an essay entirely different from the one you have written, I believe that the theme of patience/presence in parenting has a natural parallel to patience/presence in the clinical setting. Since our readers are professionals as well as parents, strengthening this aspect of the essay would enhance its relevance in what, after all is a professional journal. I think with a more expansive introduction (see below) you could draw at these parallels, and rework your clinical advice to make it relevant to both parenting and clinical encounters.
- 2) As reviewer 3 suggests, the essay could benefit from an introduction (much like your letter to editors) that provides an orientation for the reader. This would be a place to highlight the value of patient and presence in dealing with both children and patients. Consider introducing presence as a complement of patience here.
- 3) As Reviewer 3 notes, sometimes the writing becomes excessively colloquial and could be tightened. Look for ways of keeping the focus on patience and presence.
- 4) The final couple of sentences are a bit too cutesy and could be deleted without detracting from the general good humor and insights of the essay.
- 5) Please pay attention to Reviewer 3 extensive comments about revising your submission. While we encourage you to use discretion in which suggestions you choose to accept or reject, these will help you consolidate and focus segments of the essay.

DECISION LETTER II

Thank you for these revisions, which begin to develop the parallels between parenting and therapy, the personal and the professional. You are an excellent writer, intimate, personal, and funny. You have a distinctive voice which I love and I think readers will as well. However, when you write really well, it is easy to overlook a message that remains a bit muddled. Nothing needs to be changed about your writing, but I'd like to push you one more round on the message.

You say that it is easier to find patience at work than at home, which I believe (and understand!). Yet fundamentally I think the essay makes the point that both patients/clients and kids can teach us a lot about patience and being in the present moment. As written, the essay leans too heavily toward the parenting, and insufficiently toward the therapy. There are intriguing hints that patients have taught you similar lessons to your son - of entering their reality, going with their flow. I hope you can elaborate on this insight further.

Also, I'm curious about why it is easier to find the middle of patience with patients than with kids. Maybe you can speculate on this disparity a bit more.

Finally, is the thrust of the essay a one-way or a two-way street? In other words, is the learning from clients and kids only to be applied to parenting? Or are some of the lessons learned from your kid's spontaneity applicable to your professional life?

Please see if you can resolve these concerns.

DECISION LETTER III: I am pleased to inform you that your work has now been accepted for publication in *Families, Systems, and Health*. This version is very successful in identifying a problem many professional parents recognize - i.e., that we are often our better selves at work than at home. It contains intriguing insights about the parallels and divergences of these two environments that might explain the difference; and also includes valuable suggestions about how we can learn patience by being more receptive to the spontaneity, creativity, and play of our kids. Thanks for your patience in working your way through a couple of revisions to make these points with both humor and clarity.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: Thank you very much for all the effort you've put into this essay. I hope we have "muddled" our way to a clearer essay. Despite your doubts, at least for me, your essay does make its point with greater clarity. It is now clear that you are exploring the interesting (and to many professionals, familiar) phenomenon of being a patient professional at work and an impatient out of control parent at home. You also offer some intriguing ideas about why this might be the case. Your second point is how to appreciate the lessons about patience - through spontaneity, curiosity, and flexibility - that our children can teach us, and this suggestion comes through as well.

I continue to savor your writing, it is truly a pleasure to read!

I am going to suggest two tiny edits, but if you do not wish to make them, we will publish the essay as is:
1) Please consider deleting the word "Enjoy" in the introduction. I still think it is a little controlling of the reader. Let them decide if they are enjoying your essay (they will). 2) Please consider deleting the words "If anything" on the last page, para 3, line 5. I don't think this is quite the right phrase. It usually means a tentative suggestion, and you seem quite confident about what follows. Again thank you for your patience with this process. Your essay will make a highly enjoyable read will providing food for thought to our subscribers.
