Disclosures

- No commercial conflicts

- Cofounder of the University of Ottawa’s (BMRI) Academy of Mindfulness and Contemplative Studies (M. Sanchez-Campos)

- Education grants from University of Ottawa DOM and FM, DIME, CIHR
Objectives: By the end of this session, I will be able to ...

- Apply mindfulness practice and principles as a means of enhancing self-awareness
- Recognize narrative medicine as a method of self-reflection and expression
- Understand how mindfulness practice and reflective writing can support resilience
Minute of Mindfulness
“To cure sometimes, 
To relieve often, 
To comfort always”

- Hippocrates

“The practice of medicine is an art, not a trade; a calling, not a business; a calling in which your heart will be exercised equally with your mind”

- Sir William Osler
Physician/Medical Student Distress

✧ Burnout in 47% of specialists and GP.
  Shanafelt et al. 2012

✧ Medicine associated with burnout, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, divorce and broken relationships.
  Shanafelt et al. 2003

✧ Medical Students: 27% of depression, 11% of suicidal ideation.
  Rotenstein et al. Jama 2016
- Of 115 responding residents, 87 (76%) met the criteria for burnout (Maslach burnout inv.)
- Burnout residents were significantly more likely to self report suboptimal patient care at least monthly (53% vs. 21%; p=0.004).

- Of 7905 American College Surgeons, 700 (8.9%) reported concern they had made a major error in last three months
- Over 70% attributed error to individual factors
- Burnout and depression were independent predictors of reporting a recent major medical error. Shanafelt et al, 2009
Mindfulness

Paying Attention

On Purpose

To Presence Moment Experiences

With curiosity, compassion, acceptance
Mind Full, or Mindful?
What mindfulness is not...

- Relaxation tool to pull out only when we are stressed
- Religion
- A means to an end
- Accessible only after years of formal practice/meditation
- About striving, about goals, being expert meditators
- A panacea for suffering
  - Systems we work in have responsibility for some of our suffering
We believe

- If we can teach our trainees to be more mindful they will be more attentive, fulfilled, and have a greater sense of connection:
  - Physicians
  - Colleagues
  - Humans

- awareness, resilience, compassion within themselves and with others on a regular basis
Mindfulness Taught in Medical Schools

UGME Program

- A 30 minute Introduction to Mindfulness lecture
- Sessions approximately every 2 months for a total of 7 one-hour sessions throughout the two years of pre-clerkship
- Didactic, narrative and experiential components
- Selected readings from a course book
- Experiential assignments to practice at home between sessions
- A half-day workshop delivered in their first year of clerkship
Narrative Medicine: Definition

“Medicine practiced with the narrative competency to recognize, interpret and be moved to action by the predicament of others.”

(Charon, 2001)
Narrative Medicine

- Incorporates stories into healing
  - the patient's story is central to care and cure

- Uses stories as part of the process of understanding, diagnosing, and treating illness using the ‘active voice’

*Divinsky, CFP 2007*
Four of Medicine’s Central Narrative Situations:

- physician and patient
- physician and self
- Physician and colleagues
- physicians and society

Charon, JAMA, 2001
Two parts to Narrative Medicine:
- Close reading of literature and other written text
- Reflective Writing and Creative Expression
"…Writing improves clinicians’ stories of empathy, reflection and courage »

« Writing that affects the reader is art »

Rita Charon, MD, PhD
“Reflective writing is one established method for teaching medical students empathetic interactions with patients. Most such exercises rely on students’ reflecting upon clinical experiences. To effectively elicit, interpret, and translate the patient’s story, however, a reflective practitioner must also be self-aware, personally and professionally.”

(DasGupta & Charon, 2004)
“Reflective writing” is more acceptable than “creative writing”. No one wants a doctor who makes things up.”

Nellie Herman, 2017
« Someone I cared for »
Guidelines for Reflective Writing

- Confidentiality
- Control over content (choose what you wish to leave in and leave out)
- Write about real life, as if you were telling it to a friend
- Don’t worry about grammar, spelling etc.; let it flow
- Do a story with a beginning, middle and end

Peterkin, A. 2010
Reflective Discussion in Pairs

A. **Writer** reads piece to listener

B. **Listener** reflects to **Writer** on four questions. **Writer** listens attentively.
   1) What was the form of the piece (poem, clinical scenario, prose, etc.)
   2) What stood out or resonated for Listener in the text?
   3) Where there any images Listener liked?
   4) What was Listener curious about?

C. **Listener** then interviews **Writer**, using the following questions:
   1) What inspired your writing of the piece?
   2) Were there any surprises in the writing process?
   3) Were there challenges/struggles you encountered in the writing of the piece? If so, what were they?
   4) If another part or chapter were to be added at the end, what would it be about?
Now switch and repeat steps A, B and C – **Listener** becomes **Writer**, **Writer** becomes **Listener**.

**D. Debrief**

How was the experience for each of you as listener and as writer? What will you take away from this experience?
Mindful body and breath awareness

breathe and bring peace to your body
Conclusions

- Improved Communication
- Self-awareness
- More Empathy
- Wellness

Resilience
Questions?

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Mindfulness Resources

- www.calm.com
- www.mindfulselfcompassion.org
- http://www.modernmeditation.ca/mindfulness-resources/
- smiling mind
- https://headspace
Mindfulness References


Ronald Epstein MD. Attending. Medicine, Mindfulness and Humanity. 2016.

“Among doctors who take time for stillness, nearly all feel that the time one makes for contemplative practices – meditation, reflection, awareness – is soon recaptured in increased clarity. The goal of presence is not necessarily efficiency, but efficiency often arises from presence”.


DasGupta S Charon R. Personal illness narratives: using reflective writing to teach empathy. Acad Med 2004 Apr;79(4);351-6.


(Remember confidentiality - either written permission or patients should not be recognizable)


- Canadian Medical Association Journal : 750-1400 words under “Humanities Encounters” [http://www.cmaj.ca/site/authors/preparing.xhtml#humanitiesEncounters](http://www.cmaj.ca/site/authors/preparing.xhtml#humanitiesEncounters)
Submission of Reflective Writing


- OMA Medical Student Publication. Scrub In. https://www.oma.org/MEDICALSTUDENTS/Pages/ScrubIn.aspx

- H.E.A.L. http://www.uottawaheal.ca Medical Students Humanities Blog, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa