

# Surface Level: A Collection of Short Stories

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**Primary Aim:** Create two short story drafts in a projected collection of stand-alone stories that explores the theme of personhood within the general field of medicine and the circumstances that impact intra- and interpersonal relationships.

**Secondary Aim:** Learn and develop fiction craft; refine technical skills needed to make a story powerful.

## Gaps:

- Medical fiction with focus on loss of self through training
- Minority perspectives

Narrative medicine provides us with a vehicle to step into the perspective of another, thus drawing a deeper understanding of their state.

"By mobilizing the imagination, literary works engage the reader more fully than do clinical, sociologic, or historical descriptions, even when the same experiences are portrayed"

*Charon R., et. al, 1995*

## Results:

**Working Title:** To Do List

**Subtheme:** isolation, loss of self, burn out

### Critics/Edits:

- Sequence: balancing internal dialogue and action
- Create more suspense and tension throughout
- Show NOT tell

## Techniques to incorporate

- deconstruct sections of the story and rearrange to play with flow
- use voice memos to capture ideas

## Methods:



### Craft of Writing Reading List:

- Bird by Bird
- First you Write a Sentence
- Situation and the Story
- Don't Cry for Me

### Inspiration List:

- Looking After Our Own
- Tender
- The Ministry of Utmost Happiness
- In Treatment

### RESEARCH

- Legality of therapy: what can be disclosed in an open investigation?
- Expectations vs reality of different stages of medicine
- Gather personal anecdotes

### What to Explore in Other Stories

- friendship
- patient perspective?

**Working Title:** There's No I in Team

**Subtheme:** personal struggle vs. systemic issue

**Concept:** pair each section of a day in an IM team from a different perspective of someone on the team

### Conflict:

- Man v. man: difficult patient, miscommunication between healthcare team, feeling silenced
- Man v. self: difficult diagnosis, fear of failure

**Working Title:** The Death Club

**Subtheme:** external loss

**Concept:** mandated therapy from a different perspective of a member from the team

### Conflict:

- Objective of self vs that of the system
- Intentionality v. Outcome

## Potential Places to Publish

- JAMA - Bellevue - MFA Journals
- Pulse - Med Humanities Journals

## Discussion/Reflections:



## Takeaways

- Intention alone is not enough to create plot
- The first draft is only 30% of the work
- Writing, like other skills, requires maintenance



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### Courses Explored

- The Writing Salon
- Creative Writing Master Course
- Poetic Medicine for the Wounded Healer