

THE EUDAIMONIA

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PHYSICIAN, HEAL THYSELF

Primary care medicine is tough. From the wide array of clinical scenarios that we see on a daily basis to the hectic schedules, EMR demands, COVID19 uncertainties, late nights documenting, and so on, it is no wonder that our burnout rates are higher than the national average.

We can promote physician wellness with systemic/structural changes or personal/physician-directed changes. Most of us will agree that structural changes are more efficacious in mitigating burnout, and research bears this out. There are many efforts being made to address these systemic issues, such as developing strategies to minimize inbox burdens, but these can be frustratingly slow to come in to effect.

In the meantime, we can also find some relief with self-care to help improve wellness. There are numerous strategies out there, from mindfulness exercises to gratitude journals to simply ensuring appropriate levels of sleep and exercise. "[The Professional Health and Wellness Mini-Portfolio](#)" is one useful resource. It's fairly short and simple and provides concrete strategies and can be quickly glanced at when you have a few minutes of free time. The [UCSD Center for Mindfulness](#) is another helpful resource. Consider finding a self-care strategy that works for you and enacting it for the next four weeks just to see if there is any noticeable difference.

Physician heal thyself. Physicians, for better or worse, have the dual responsibility of healing ourselves and healing the system that has led to our burnout *all while* providing high quality compassionate care for our patients. This can feel like an indomitable task, but we are optimistic that we can continue to come together and work as a united front in effecting positive changes for ourselves, the system and our patients. This inaugural issue of *The Eudaimonia*, named after the ancient Greek concept of happiness and human flourishing, is just one of the many efforts we are taking to promote wellbeing in our division, and foster a sense of community. We hope that you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed creating it.

Be well,

-GIM Wellness Committee

WELCOME DR RUTH ABELES AND DR ERIC MENDEZ!



Ruth Abeles, MD, is a UCSD undergrad. She earned her Master's Degree from Columbia University and her Doctor of Medicine from St. George's University, Grenada West Indies. She completed her Internal Medicine Residency at Stony Brook University Hospital NY where she served as Chief Medical Resident. Dr. Abeles, a full time clinician-educator, joins the La Jolla Internal Medicine Clinic as an Assistant Clinical Professor. Her scholarly interests include women's health, obesity medicine and resident education. In her time off, she enjoys traveling, yoga, hiking, baking desserts and spending time with her family.



Eric Mendez, MD is a Cal undergrad. He earned his Doctor of Medicine here at UCSD and went on to complete his Internal Medicine Internship and Internal Medicine Residency at UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine. As a full time clinician-educator, he joins the 4th & Lewis Internal Medicine Clinic as an Assistant Clinical Professor. His scholarly interests include LGBTQ Health, global health and cardiovascular prevention. In his time off he enjoys travelling, running, cooking, wine tasting, painting and beach volleyball.

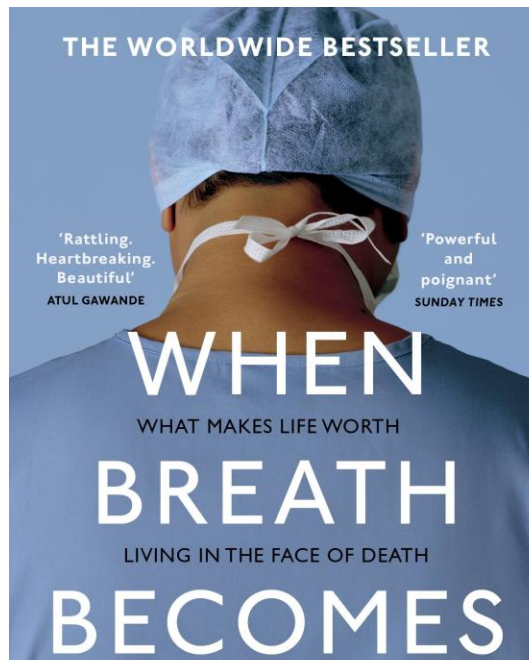
WELLNESS RESOURCES

- Check out the [GIM Wellness Document](#) with resources for our division. Please feel free to browse and edit/addend as you please!
- Dr. Deanna Hill shares that her secret to success and excellent athleticism is [Gut Check Fitness](#). Live Zoom workouts are from 6-7AM Monday, Wednesday and Friday. In addition, recorded workouts can be accessed later if the early time does not work for you.
- Wellness guru, Dr. Hilda Thorisdottir, suggests checking out [Airbnb Online Experiences](#) to learn new skills and games that range from learning how to make Argentine empanadas to taking a walking tour of Tokyo. There are many activities to do while spending quality family time and social distancing.
- The [Physician Support Line](#) offers confidential support from licensed psychiatrists, physician to physician. It is free and a beautiful example of doctors helping one another: 1-888-409-0141

Have any other suggestions for remaining healthy and well during these times? Please let us know so we can share with the rest of the division!

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Zoom Happy Hour/Game Night** – Thursday August 13th 5:30-7 pm, look out for link in your email
- **GIM Book Club** – “When Breath Becomes Air” – tentatively planned for an outdoor socially distanced venue Friday September 11th 5:30-7 pm (Pandemic permitting). More details to come.



WELLNESS IN THE NEWS

The results of our recent UCSD GIM Wellness Survey reinforced one indisputable fact – amongst our physicians Wellness is negatively impacted by the EMR Burden. On that note, here is an oldie but a goodie from Atul Gawande, published in the New Yorker in 2018. Read to be a little bit infuriated and hopefully a bit inspired to change the status quo. [Why Doctors Hate their Computers](#)

WHY DOCTORS HATE THEIR COMPUTERS

Digitization promises to make medical care easier and more efficient. But are screens coming between doctors and patients?

By Atul Gawande
November 5, 2018

“There are messages from patients, messages containing lab and radiology results, messages from colleagues, messages from administrators, automated messages about not responding to previous messages. All the letters that come from the subspecialists, I can’t read ninety per cent of them. So I glance at the patient’s name, and, if it’s someone that I was worried about, I’ll read that,” she said. The rest she deletes, unread. ”

“As I observed more of my colleagues, I began to see the insidious ways that the software changed how people work together. They’d become more disconnected; less likely to see and help one another, and often less able to”

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COLLEAGUES

Stacy Charat, MD – VA San Diego

What is something unique that your colleagues may not know about you?

I spent 3 years between college and medical school living in San Jose, Costa Rica and then Ensenada, Mexico. I worked for a pediatric oncology non-profit in Costa Rica and then as an (unlicensed but moderately trained) lactation consultant and child development educator in Mexico. I traveled all over Central America and Mexico during this period. My bus fare from Panama City, Panama all the way to Guatemala City, Guatemala (with several stops) cost less than my bus fare from Boston to Hartford when I came home!

What is something you have been doing to support your wellness during this period of social distancing due to the pandemic?

I am using the free trial of the [Headspace](#) App for healthcare providers. I am doing a short meditation/visualization every morning and many evenings and find it very helpful. I've introduced my kids to some of the meditations for children on the app. I highly recommend checking it out. There is also a list of discounts available to healthcare providers available on [Wirecutter.com](#) that I recommend taking advantage of!

What is something that you are looking forward to in 2020?

I am looking forward to a trip to Yosemite that is supposed to happen this summer. Fingers crossed that we still get to go!



Edward Chao, DO - VA San Diego



What is something unique that your colleagues may not know about you?

I try my best to navigate all of my roles with the ever-patient, kind help from my wife, Sarah, and our two daughters: 8-year-old Hannah, and 5-year-old Kayla!

What have been doing to support your wellness during this period of social distancing due to the pandemic?

Reading stories to our girls, hiking, traveling (I'm eagerly anticipating the end of being limited to watching Rick Steves' Europe), dancing, the arts, exercising, (trying to) sing along with my favorite music, and meditating all keep me grounded! Anticipating the future with an open, curious, and humble perspective, as well as fully living in and enjoying the present – these are also crucial for feeling grateful and rejuvenated.



Lisa Wastila, MD - UCSD La Jolla Clinic

What is something unique your colleagues may not know about you?

I love animals and have a sort of mini zoo in my house. Right now I only have 5 pets (a dog, an African sulcata tortoise, 2 lizards and a huge plecostomus fish), but pets we have had also include a horse, rabbit, guinea pig, skink, and numerous other fish!



People may not know I have 3 children: Christine (soon to be 21, a rising senior at UCLA where she is a nationally ranked equestrian rider and pre-vet), Matthew (17, a rising senior and avid water polo player), and Alexander (13, a rising freshman and soccer goalkeeper). Other fun facts: I'm a licensed youth soccer coach and a San Diego native!

What is one (or more) things you have been doing to support your wellness during this period of social distancing due to the pandemic?

I have been doing lots and lots of yoga. My favorite: [Yoga with Adriene on YouTube](#) (try it)! I also love going for walks (preferably on the beach, as we did in our happy hour) and bike rides around Coronado, where I live, and tending my garden (I've got tomatoes and zucchini this year).

What has been an important event/milestone in 2020?

Turning 50 in April (I was at work that day, and a patient of mine happened to offer to buy lunch for the whole office--great timing!) So we got to have a socially distanced party which was a novelty then, and it was also one of my first non-home-cooked meals since the pandemic started, so it was heavenly. My husband and I celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary in early June, and our anniversary trip was postponed, but we had a wonderful dinner out. My youngest son also was just "promoted" into high school, a bittersweet event for sure!



CREATIVE CORNER

“The Plight of the PCP”

By Nicholas Cardinale, MD – VA San Diego

*I am stuck in alert land
I cannot get out
The more I do
The more that sprout
Like angry weeds
They grow all day and night
Who shall deliver me from this dreadful plight!
I looked high
I looked low
No one to help that I know
I glued my derrière to the chair hours upon hours
Worked my tail to the bone
When my grade I pressure sore began to ache
I sensed deliverance in the wake
Caught up for the moment
My head above water shouting hallelujah
I will live another day
To drive my alerts away*

THE LAST LAUGH



Don Landgren editorial cartoon
USA TODAY NETWORK

Do you have original artwork, photography, or writing you would like to feature in the next issue of the *The Eudaimonia*? Original or appropriately cited humor? Willing to be our next faculty profile? Please email Arthi Balu – abaluu@health.ucsd.edu