The Art and Craft of Writing for Self-Care and Narrative Advocacy: A Workshop in Reflective and Public Writing (P11)

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Objectives
- Discuss (and practice) writing stories for self-care, education, or advocacy.
- List strategies for success in writing reflections, op-eds, personal narratives, and narrative advocacy articles.
- Identify publication options for narrative articles by health professionals in the lay press, medical press, and blogosphere.

Stories are everywhere in health care. By learning to tell their stories, health professionals can engage in self-care, advocate for patients, and educate the public and their colleagues. Reflective writing improves professional satisfaction and lifelong learning, while public writing offers opportunities for increased impact on health and health care. This workshop will begin with a discussion of different sorts of writings by healthcare professionals, drawn from op-eds, medical journal perspectives essays, and personal and policy narratives. We will consider when writing is for self-care and when it might be used for public education and advocacy and note techniques and strategies for success, including how to balance story and data and capitalize on your expertise. Participants will then pick a story or topic and draft the beginning of a reflection, op-ed, personal narrative, perspective, or advocacy piece. Finally participants will receive feedback on their draft from colleagues in small groups—the part of the workshop participants fear the most at the beginning and value the most at the end.