



Info-Morsel | August 2024

Words, Poems, and Poets: Identifying What Matters (To You!) in Primary Care

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What is it we most value in primary care?
What is it in our provision of healthcare that we want to nurture?
What is essential in our teaching of up-and-coming family doctors?

Change is of the moment in primary care. The necessity for change and the crisis precipitating this need for change challenges us as individuals and organizations to identify the important questions and come up with optimal solutions. The inevitable conflict wrapped around the loss of what was and the uncertainty of what might be weighs on our minds and unsettles us.

Take an opportunity to see through the eyes of people whose education, experience and lexicons are markedly different to our own. Take an opportunity to enhance the acuity with which to sense what really matters.

The poem “Sometimes” by David Whyte¹ is a short and haunting reminder of the importance of being aware of our reality, in order to be what we intend, rather than what we have, by habit, become.

A recent mini-series “Poems as Teachers” within the podcast “Poetry Unbound with Pádraig Ó Tuama”² highlights the way that reading poems, and listening to insightful analysis, can expand our habits of mind as we deal with conflict, and open our ways of thinking, to see situations anew, with fresh perspective and energy.

Pádraig Ó Tuama will be giving this year’s Hooker Distinguished Visiting Professor Lecture, sponsored by the Department of Family Medicine.³ Take the opportunity to listen to his lyrical and invigorating approach to experiences of change and challenge, and come away inspired to create new possibilities in primary care.

1- Sometimes by David Whyte

<https://allpoetry.com/poem/15379830-Sometimes-by-David-Whyte>

2- Poetry Unbound

<https://onbeing.org/series/poetry-unbound/>

Poems as Teachers

<https://onbeing.org/programs/introducing-poems-as-teachers-ft-wislawa-szymborska-episode-1/>

<https://onbeing.org/programs/joy-harjo-poems-as-teachers-episode-2/>

<https://onbeing.org/programs/closing-poems-as-teachers-ft-kai-cheng-thom-episode-7/>

3- Hooker Lecture, Wednesday October 30, 2024, 5 pm, (in-person and virtual)