



VOLUME 4 | ISSUE 10

Not Enough Said:

Candid Conversations About Life and Medicine

DECEMBER 2020



EMORY
UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF
MEDICINE

Division of
Hospital Medicine

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We bless this year for all we learned,
 For all we loved and lost
 And for the quiet way it brought us
 Nearer to our invisible destination.

From "At the End of the Year" by John O'Donohue

Yes, we learned a lot, loved a lot, and lost a lot. And yes, we are closer to our individual and collective destinations. However, 2020 was not in any way "quiet." Outrageous, gut-wrenching, and brutal all come to mind as more accurate descriptors. And so we bid an exhausted and somewhat relieved good riddance to 2020 at the end of this month. This month's issue memorializes the year and celebrates its ending.

In **Real Talk**, Julie frames the redemptive potential of the transition from 2020 to 2021 by remembering a trip to New Orleans that started inauspiciously with too many mimosas but ended with a joyful Second Line parade.

Satisfaction Distractions has two features this month, both centered around—what else?—food. Part I highlights our Division's favorite comfort foods of 2020: find out what feel-good foods got your colleagues through this year. And Part II works out the partisan politics of 2020 in the kitchen by exploring the most-googled holiday recipes across the country state-by-state with a bonus step-by-step guide to making a salad with only one ingredient found in the produce section.

For **Great Question**, we address The Question of the Day—"Are you going to get the vaccine?" and what to say when you're asked it for the 200th time this week.

We're delighted to feature some of our very own patients in **Big Talk** this month. We make a few post-discharge phone calls to catch up with a few of our patients who were hospitalized with Covid. What are they up to? And how has their experience changed their perspective?

Loyal *Not Enough Said* readers will be happy to see a theme from our October issue—"Found Hearts"—make a repeat appearance in this holiday issue. Don't forget to keep your eyes and your hearts open!

See you in 2021!

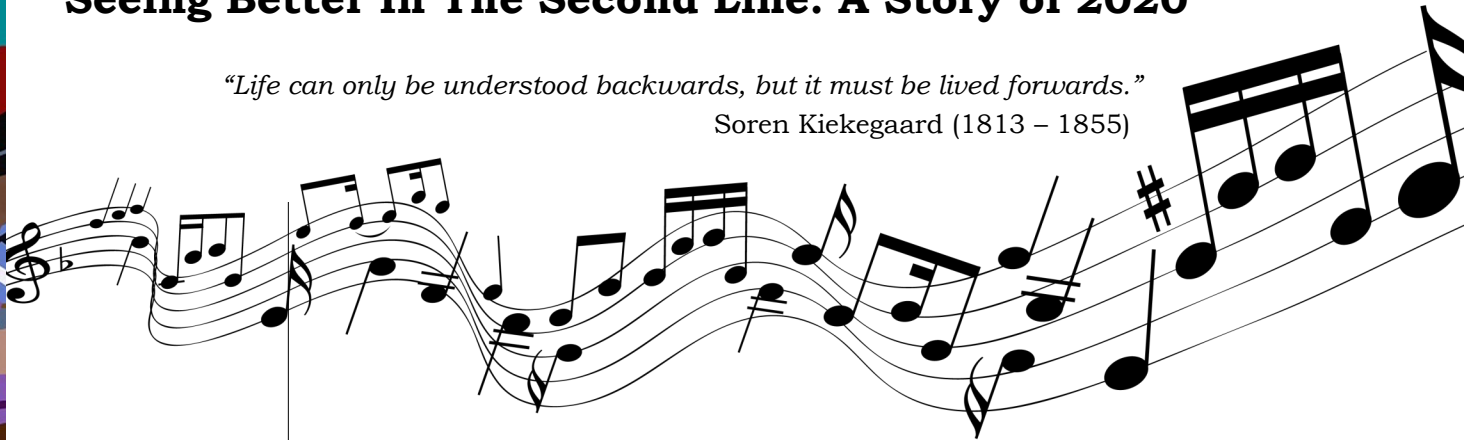
Send us your feedback and inundate us with your contributions. We appreciate hearing from you. **Write us** a Letter to the Editor, **or email us** your Real Talk suggestions, Satisfaction Distractions, and Great Questions at: notenoughsaidhospitalist@gmail.com

REAL TALK: FUEL TO KEEP THE FIRE FROM BURNING OUT

“Seeing Better In The Second Line: A Story of 2020”

“Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards.”

Soren Kiekegaard (1813 – 1855)

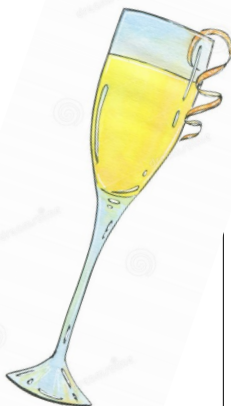


If you don't have a rule in your life that tells you to avoid imbibing bottomless mimosas while barely eating oysters and a scant amount of ceviche, you ought to.

Everywhere I turned this year I saw a story. Every line I read, every note I heard, every leaf that blew, every child playing on our street, every package delivered, every face behind a mask, every delayed twilight or hindered dawn, every memory of having done anything that felt impulsive and liberating. In all of it I saw story, each forming a larger story. Perhaps it was the distancing that made it so. Quite possibly it was the stillness. With nowhere to go, both did the work of moving me. Far removed from a past that felt increasingly less familiar, I kept returning to one memory in particular and the roles we play in the story of our destiny. What had happened was...

My friend and I were catching up, swapping stories about the myriad ways Coronavirus was affecting our respective patient populations in different parts of the country. Equal parts despondent and dejected, we steered the conversation toward imagining where we wanted to go first once it was safe to travel again. “New Orleans!” We responded in unison, as if to say one would be foolish to declare any other city more well suited for the task of redeeming your soul from the depths of COVID purgatory. After all, at least one of us had been redeemed there previously.

Vivid memories of a sunny, not yet sweltering May afternoon in uptown New Orleans rushed into focus. It was the kind of afternoon where you're content to get off the trolley and aimlessly walk to nowhere except where you sense other people might be going, till that aimlessness leads you to the first restaurant you see with outdoor seating, where you let the server convince you to get the bottomless pitcher of mimosas. If you don't have a rule in your life that tells you to avoid imbibing bottomless mimosas while barely eating oysters and a scant amount of ceviche, you ought to. But who could resist? Certainly not us, especially when we had convened our own personal national meeting, traveling from opposite sides of the country to spend time together in this place that's so uniquely American in its cross-cultural signature and a living breathing testimonial to what it feels like to recover promise from disaster.



REAL TALK: FUEL TO KEEP THE FIRE FROM BURNING OUT

The day before I'd lost it, fleeing from a trolley car, after chasing more familiar pleasures in a bottomless pitcher of mimosas. On the dawn of a new day, I woke up to the call of something unfamiliar in a place I thought I knew but had not yet actually been.

I should have eaten more. I should have drunk fewer wine glass-full quantities of mimosas. I should have listened to my friend when she suggested I turn down the to-go cup of the unfinished pitcher when we left. We should not have run to catch the trolley headed back down St. Charles Street, and I should not have sat in that sideways front seat as we headed back to our hotel. In that eternal yet somehow short lifespan, I felt the history of the preceding elation regenerating within me, making its way against my wishes toward the outside world and which only a well-timed stoplight would keep it from making the acquaintance of my fellow trolley travelers. Here's the story about having a good friend by your side within the larger story. She'll be ahead of the game for you often. She'll know you as well as you know yourself, and she'll shield you from turning your misgivings into unwitting and unwelcome offerings. Those are offerings best left to make the acquaintance of a garden space beyond the trolley stop, also accepting its role in your destiny that afternoon. And your friend will tell you that you should pretend like no one on the trolley can see you offer thine mimosas and scant solid nourishment unto the earth. And she'll do this lovingly, keeping it real by letting you know that only the ones with the good seats up front are riveted witnesses, moths to the flame of your humiliating tourist attraction.

A mercifully short cab ride later, the requisite components of personal disaster recovery were availed to me.

Long anticipated dinner reservations canceled. Check.

Comfortable bed for fetal position healing stance. Check.

A present friend quietly checking in on your breathing ever so often. Check.

That same friend getting you to laugh at the ridiculousness of it all and reminding you that plans are made, unmade, and fulfilled all the time. Check.

The daylight changed to darkness, but, as it does, again and again, the dawn finally came. And I was wide awake. The day before I'd lost it, fleeing from a trolley car, after chasing more familiar pleasures in a bottomless pitcher of mimosas. On the dawn of a new day, I woke up to the call of something unfamiliar in a place I thought I knew but had not yet actually been.



REAL TALK: FUEL TO KEEP THE FIRE FROM BURNING OUT

Let's see what it looks like to have tried to create something new in chaos and disappointment

Something in me said, "You know what? Let's try this again. Let's head to a different part of town. Let's actually eat something more filling and more nourishing. Then, let's keep going farther into that part of town, take the bus into the 9th Ward, and get off and walk so we can see what it truly looks like to have survived an unthinkable disaster. Let's see what it looks like to have tried to create something new in chaos and disappointment."

Let us find ourselves at an intersection, able to make a decision to use that thing that lured you but sent you fleeing in a different direction. And while you're there listen as you hear the drawl of a New Orleans herald declare "Second Line coming! Second Line coming!" Know that it is alright to be puzzled because you don't know what's happening. Yet go with that sense you have that something good is coming because it is.

For the uninitiated, here's what's coming. The Second Line is a New Orleans parade tradition of music, dance, and a celebration of life, rooted in the culture of enslaved Africans and the Benevolent societies and Social clubs formed over generations. It is an expression of emotions through music and movement forward, featuring a First Line of musicians and other folks dancing or leading the parade. The Second Line is where we come in. Any family, friend, or stranger, anyone from any race, creed or class can join the Second Line, moving forward to express joy or sadness, connected to a community celebrating the life of someone who has died, or any occasion deemed worthy of affirming our lives together. You can just walk if you wish, but it's hard not to dance when you're being led by the music and the energy of the people moving around you. On the day of our fateful encounter, Mother's Day was the cause for celebration, an occasion of inarguable metaphorical perfection.

... listen as you hear the drawl of a New Orleans herald declare "Second Line coming! Second Line coming!"

You enter the street nursing a daiquiri, knowing that one will be enough for the rest of the afternoon because you're about to be a part of something more liberating and intoxicating and integrating. You pause, and breathe, and you see a sea of humanity coming your way, spirits moving to a different rhythm, bodies doing the best they can to add their energy to the parade. You look around, take it in, and you lock it into your memory. You lock that feeling into your body. And you move with it as long and as far as it will let you, knowing the experience will be a light that can illuminate unknown paths on inevitably difficult journeys.



REAL TALK: FUEL TO KEEP THE FIRE FROM BURNING OUT

There is something redemptive in the Second Line, that brass band parade that invites us to lament or laugh . . . The Second Line is the start of a new story

There is something redemptive in the Second Line, that brass band parade that invites us to lament or laugh, to dancing to music that calls to something deeper within us than we realized we was there. The Second Line is the start of a new story. In fact, it insists that you start a new story, because it's the only way you're going to move forward, not forgetting, but not freezing or fleeing either. The story we cannot see coming will require our willing participation though, because it's that mix of whatever comes our way, seasoned with our response that turns this whole mess of life into our destiny.

Despite feeling frozen and wanting to flee from this year, it never let us forget what was most important. What we could not forget and have come to understand more clearly is how we rise and fall by the quality of our lives together. Ours is not some preordained fate, but a destiny we have a rhythmic hand or hip in, dancing behind it with each other so we can move forward. We hear the music, our memories enriched by tradition, and draw on the hope we may have sidelined but now realize needs to be front and center to give birth to a new way that invites everyone to the parade we can build to honor all of our contributions. That feels like the story of 2020. That feels like the second line of a new story that 2021 will begin.

That feels like the story of 2020. That feels like the second line of a new story that 2021 will begin.



Second Line New Orleans by Synthia Saint James

SATISFACTION DISTRACTIONS I

"It's so hard to pick one after bingeing out on food this year. I guess my go to has been **chaat** (Indian street food). Crispy hollow shells filled with potatoes and chickpeas, topped with tangy tamarind and spicy mint chutney for a delicious burst of flavors."

Harika Gorti (VA)



We have a feeling more than a few of us have indulged in some emotional eating throughout the year. We posed this question to our colleagues throughout the division:

"So embarrassing: **tater tots with ketchup & sriracha.**"

Sneha Neurgaonkar (VA)

"What has been your comfort food for 2020?"

"My comfort food for 2020 is **pho.**"

Minh Hang (VA)

Nothing Bundt Cake cupcakes

Sadaf Bhatti (St. Joseph's)



Homemade cinnamon rolls!

Jason Velasquez
(St. Joseph's)



"**Kit Kat** (before you think or say "gross", this is specifically Kit Kat shipped in from England). Totally and completely different from the Kit Kat here! Trust me, I'm a chocolate expert!"

Thara Vidyasagan
(St. Joseph's)



"For me it has definitely been **bubble (boba) tea!** I often go to my Local Bubble tea place before I even get home from work."

Aarti Duggal (Grady)



Overnight oats (yummy) & salads
Hafiza Ukani (EUH)

All kinds of sweet snacks! My excuse to buying them is: "The kids need some snacks!" "They" like cookies, cupcakes, cheesecake and chocolates!

Obsinet Merid (Grady)



SATISFACTION DISTRACTIONS II: NOT ENOUGH MADE EDITION

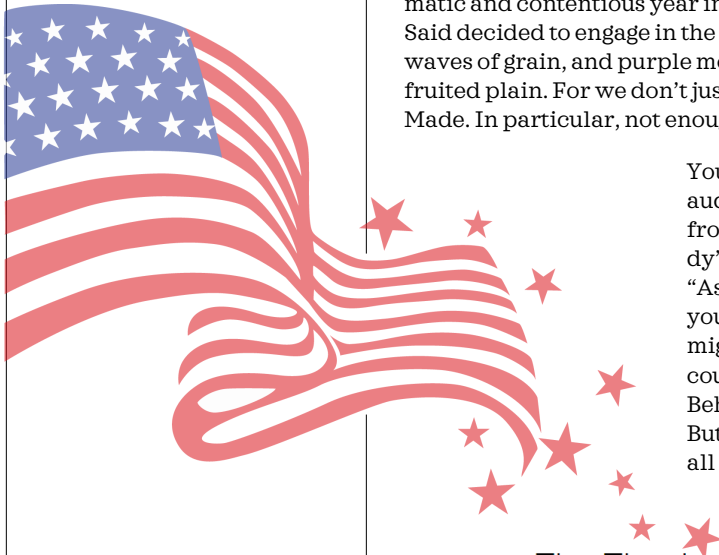
“we could do our
part to build
some unity on
the fruited
plain”

A core tenet of negotiation, even in the most hopelessly divided environments, is to find something the divided parties can agree upon. What, amidst carelessly-thrown characterizations, labeling borne of misunderstanding, refusals on either side to believe we can find any common ground, might we hope to agree upon? Perhaps the answer can be found in the anthem many will actually agree has notes we can reach without straining and lyrics that sound every bit as anthemic as we could imagine.

Oh beautiful for spacious skies
For amber waves of grain
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain

As all eyes are turned on Georgia, suddenly a key player at the end of this unquestionably dramatic and contentious year in the American democratic experiment, we here at Not Enough Said decided to engage in the truly non partisan act of reaching across spacious skies, amber waves of grain, and purple mountains to see if we could do our part to build some unity on the fruited plain. For we don't just believe there's Not Enough Said, we believe there is Not Enough Made. In particular, not enough “salad.” That truth, we also hold to be self evident.

You gotta give it up for American ingenuity and, dare we say, the audacity to boldly go where no one has gone before on the salad frontier. That's where we're going, taking to heart President Kennedy's directive during a breakthrough era of space exploration to “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.” As America gets to know Georgia, we thought we might find some comfort in these pandemic times, from the safe yet courageous confines of a kitchen, likewise getting to know America. Behold the fruits of our labor. No need to thank us. We thank you. But, you're welcome America. This comforting labor of love was for all of us.



The Thanksgiving Recipes Googled in Every State

By THE UPSHOT STAFF NOV. 25, 2014

Which foods are unusually popular in each state on Thanksgiving. [RELATED ARTICLE](#)



“the audacity to
go where no has
gone before on
the salad
frontier”

SATISFACTION DISTRACTIONS II: NOT ENOUGH MADE EDITION

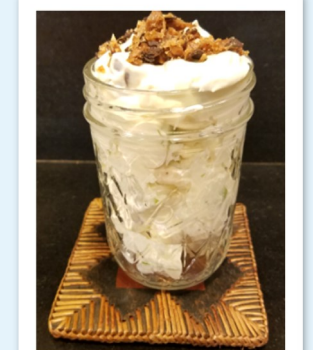
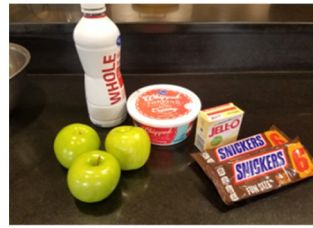
Snicker Apple Salad

“I’ll say it’s good
and different. I
mean, who is
expecting
snickers and
apples?”

- man in the
kitchen

“Yeah, I guess
you’re right.
That is what a
candy apple is.”

- also man in the
kitchen



1. Assemble all parties, encouraging thy apples and snickers to assume roles up front, promising to unite them in their common purpose of salad through the binding agency of pudding, the lightheartedness of whipped cream, and the growth-building properties of milk.

2. With a firm yet gentle hand, mix the binding, lighthearted and growth-building elements in a willing vessel, while carving away the prideful character of any apple or snicker inclined to prideful leanings away from its humble place in that vessel.

3. Permit the many-hued and textured ingredients to sit beside each other, appreciating their willingness to make themselves smaller to join together to form a more perfect union of what they themselves could not have imagined would one day be salad.

4. Come together as one and marvel at what you were able to achieve, while also marveling that others will view you as potato salad and be sadly disappointed or pleasantly surprised when they find out you were not as you seemed.

5. Proudly offer the fruits of your labor together to America and the world in a Mason jar, since many assume that’s how we in Georgia consume everything anyway. And when you savor the tart crunchiness, the chocolatey and chewy nuttiness, and the smooth creaminess, you might start humming another anthemic song which includes:

My country, ‘tis of thee...
Of thee I sing...
From ev’ry mountainside
Let freedom ring!

GREAT QUESTION: DILEMMAS AT THE INTERSECTION OF AWKWARD AND FRUSTRATING

Dear Anna and Julie,

Are you going to get the vaccine? I am getting asked this multiple times a day from patients and doctors and hospital staff alike. What's your take?

Sincerely,
Vacillating on Vaccinating

Are you going to get the vaccine?



Dear Vacillating on Vaccinating,

If you're like me, this question elicits a mixture of emotions. To be honest, up until last week, my initial reaction was an internal cringe, shying away from my own visceral nervousness about getting the vaccine myself mixed with a guilty feeling that I needed to be a walking public service announcement, pumping up enthusiasm and dispelling fears, when I was actually feeling far from confident. Having gone to medical school but not a vaccinologist, researcher, or infectious disease expert, I have definitely felt that on this topic, I have just enough knowledge to be dangerous—the admixture of the words “RNA” and “novel technique” and “Operation Warp Speed” immediately prompted a feeling of apprehension. I can imagine that for others, there are even more anxiety-producing concerns in the mix; for example, a sense of medical mistrust within minority groups based on historical exploitation and betrayal. Or maybe a family member or a patient who had experienced an adverse effect from another vaccine.

However, a constant stream of emails and news stories kept reminding me that I was going to very soon receive an email with a link to a consent form and an appointment so I decided that I'd have to name my fears, articulate my concerns, and find answers to my questions. I found some reputable resources to walk me through the science of the new mRNA-based vaccine technology, reviewed information generated from Emory researchers and clinicians that I trusted, and tuned in to one of the Town Halls offered at E.U.H. Turns out most of my vague molecular-biology-based concerns didn't make any scientific sense and that other worries were addressed in the trial designs and outcomes. This brought me a sense of relief and amplified my confidence in my decision to get vaccinated.

Ultimately, any medical decision carries some risk that has to be balanced with benefits. Over the course of my career so far with the multitude of decisions that have to be made every day, it's brought me courage and confidence to deliberately remind myself that my goal is to make the best decision I can with the information that is available to me at this moment in time. So, holding on to the promise of hope for our world, our country, our city, and my loved ones and armed with the information that I have available, I'll be heading over to the Emory Northlake site at 8:30 pm this evening to get my Covid-19 vaccine!

I share my thought process in the hopes that it will encourage others who may have some reservations about the vaccine, though everyone's concerns may be different. Honesty fosters trust and I think it's both important and beneficial to be authentic with our colleagues, friends, and patients while sharing what we've learned doing our due diligence in exploring our concerns and answering our own questions.

Sincerely,
Anna and Julie

BIG TALK: SMALL TALK'S OLDER, COOLER SIBLING

With 2020 coming to an end and 2021 offering promises and the hope of relief, “**Life after Covid**” seems a little more tangible. With this in mind, we started thinking about the literal “life after Covid” our patients are experiencing and decided to contact a few to see how they were doing. **The following three patients had all been discharged after a hospital stay for Covid and shared how they are doing these days.**

J. V., Age 47

How are you doing and what are you up to right now?

I'm feeling better. I seem to get a throbbing headache every day that I take Tylenol for but I'm not as tired anymore. My appetite is back though. Right now I am literally in my bed, under the covers, and I'm ordering gift cards to send to my family for the holidays.

What were your thoughts when you found out you had COVID? Were you afraid?

I was like, really? I mean I think I kinda knew before I came in, but then it was like now I really know. It felt like a gut punch, but in a way it was like a relief, cause you're not guessing any more. You can move on.

With all that 2020 has entailed, including COVID, do you feel you're viewing things differently now?

Definitely. I've known a couple of people who have passed away from COVID. People are really dying and it's hard to see people not take it seriously. I realize that I could have died too, or I could be on a ventilator. Knowing that really helps to put things in perspective. So, the way I see it, I can't even get worked up over small stuff.

I realize that I could have died too, or I could be on a ventilator. Knowing that really helps to put things in perspective. So, the way I see it, I can't even get worked up over small stuff.

BIG TALK: SMALL TALK'S OLDER, COOLER SIBLING

As long as I have the oxygen I'm doing okay. I'll be glad when this is better but it's just taking a while.

I'm just waiting to do some yard work.

It is what it is.

T. G., Age 76

How are you doing and what are you up to right now?

What's up? Right now? I'm at my daughter's, helping her move into her new house. I just drove the truck with the trailer, I'm not doing anything else. As long as I have the oxygen I'm doing okay. I'll be glad when this is better but it's just taking a while. I'm eating okay, but I never had a problem eating. Remember how I used to take notes on the food there? It was never being able to eat, just the quality.

I check on my oxygen and temperature every day. I have a green 5 x 7 army book that I use to keep track of it all. I check in the morning, afternoon, and at night. I could do a spreadsheet too I guess. Anyway, I'm just waiting to can get back outside and do some yard work. There are so may branches to clear.

What were your thoughts when you found out you had COVID? Were you afraid?

Emotionally? I didn't have any problem at all. I'd had pneumonia before. But I knew this wasn't just a cold. I was a little bit concerned about what am I gonna do with all my stuff if I die (laughs), but I got more confident when I got to the hospital with you guys.

With all that 2020 has entailed, including COVID, do you feel you're viewing things differently now?

I'm just waiting to do some yard work. It is what it is. We went through SARS before. When I go out, I got gloves and I wear my mask. Everybody needs to wear a mask, socially distance. Seeing people without a mask, I don't understand it. And these are educated people. I appreciate all you did for us. I still use that machine they gave me [referring to his incentive spirometer]. I haven't gotten it all the way to the top yet.

BIG TALK: SMALL TALK'S OLDER, COOLER SIBLING

O.F., Age 54

How are you doing and what are you up to right now?

So much better. I can breathe, I can talk without coughing. So good overall. I'm just so good. I'm out with my family getting something to eat. We're at Outback, my family's favorite. (No, it's okay. I can talk because I already finished eating). I had the short rib and mashed potatoes.

What were your thoughts when you found out you had COVID? Were you afraid?

It was very scary. From what you hear on the news, most people that get it, it seemed like they were passing away. I'm so thankful we were able to isolate in a way that it didn't affect anyone else at home. But I was so scared.

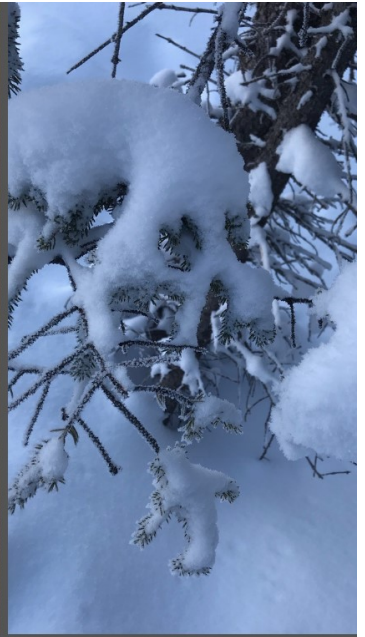
With all that 2020 has entailed, including COVID, do you feel you're viewing things differently now?

Anytime you have a brush with an illness like that (pauses)... This took me down. It hit me hard. It's made me think about my priorities. Life is precious and the stuff that you think is important is not. That small stuff you worry about? Life is more precious than that. It brings you closer to prayer, to your maker, and you see that life is so much shorter than you thought. God spared my life for a reason. A lot of people have died and I'm here. I'm enjoying every minute and I thank God because I get to make the best of the little things in life that I used to take for granted. Like even this meal with the family. My wife is just so delighted I'm home.

So much better. I can breathe, I can talk without coughing. So good overall. I'm just so good.

This took me down. It hit me hard. It's made me think about my priorities. Life is precious and the stuff that you think is important is not.

More "Found Hearts"

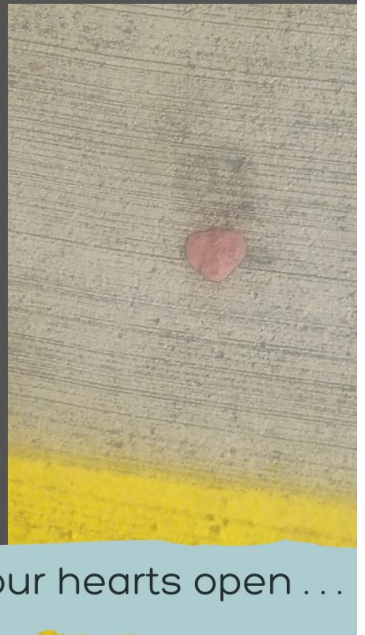
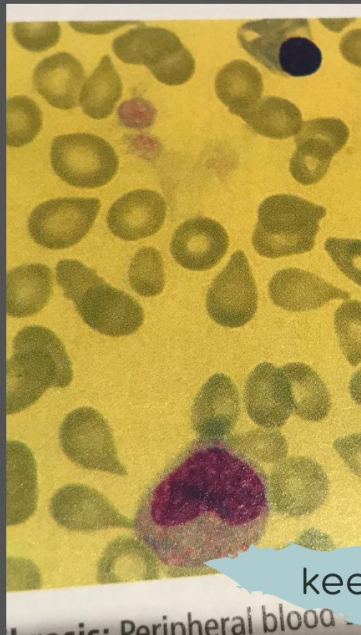
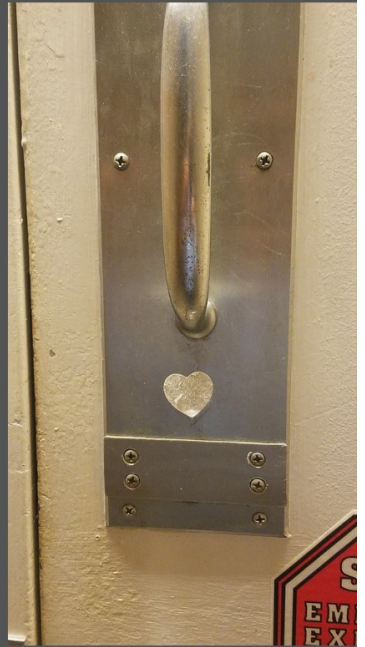


We have an exceedingly long way to go, but from the outside, at this threshold moment in our worrisome world, it has been good to know that around us are

hearts that have gone before us

and that if we can keep walking hopefully and looking for them, they will also find our hearts.

NES, October 2020



keep your eyes and your hearts open ...

Perinherai bloo



Lauren Powers

Not Enough Said: Candid Conversations About Life and Medicine

We're excited to hear your voices in upcoming issues, knowing that there are many among us with a lot to add and wonderful ways to say it. The more stories we tell, dilemmas we raise, and experiences we share, the better this project will be. We look forward to your contributions.

Email us at notenoughsaidhospitalist@gmail.com for:

- Letters to the Editor
- Real Talk fuel you want us to add to the fire
- Satisfaction Distractions making you happy
- Your frustrating Great Question

Your Editors,
Anna and Julie



Anna after vaccine dose #1

CONTRIBUTORS

Lauren Powers makes magic happen every month, ensuring that all the deep thoughts and interests we choose to share get delivered beautifully and accessibly. We are grateful for you and all you do Lauren.

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IMAGE CREDITS

Page 5: Synthia Saint James Second Line New Orleans Source: <https://www.thecollectionshop.com/xq/ASP/Synthia-SAINT-JAMES-Second-Line-New-Orleans/S.SJSECOND/LA.1525/q>

Page 7: New York Times section The Upshot, November 25, 2014, <https://nyti.ms/2l8KAMJ>



Julie and Kevin