

Book Review: Peterkin's 'Staying Human during Residency Training'

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As a “how-to” guide for new residents and a reference manual of quick tips for continuing residents, Allan Peterkin’s book touches on every aspect of residency training from the beginning of the “voyage” until completion and beyond. Personal stories describing “the sanctuary” of reviewing consults in call rooms with chips and popcorn add a personal element to topics ranging from “how to be an emotionally-intelligent team member” to “maximizing teaching opportunities.” These shared stories remind us of cherished moments within our own residency careers.

Targeted at graduating medical students, residents of all levels, and medical educators, the book’s recommendations touch on practical items such as improving resilience and maximizing balance during the residency rites of passage. The book clearly recommends that residents seek out a “patient and nonjudgmental” mentor, and encourages setting up a personalized “board of directors” to help one meet their professional, personal, and continuing educational objectives.

This book does not disappoint the seasoned senior resident either, even if they feel that they have heard all the advice they need about sleep, hygiene, healthy diets, and cherishing their friendships. Indeed, *Staying Human During Residency Training* covers topics with information specific to women in medicine, those with disabilities, and those of varying religious backgrounds and sexual orientations. Similar to the heterogeneous presentation of medical conditions gender issues, race, religion, and previous life experience all shape the experience of residency.

This book highlights the personal nature of residency and provides useful strategies for residents of all fields to “survive and thrive” during their training. For the graduating medical student, there is information on resilience building, and selecting a residency program. For the junior resident there are tips on using journal emailing lists or RSS feeds to stay updated on new developments and therapies. For the graduating resident, the book provides tables on planning finances and on various professional services that may be useful. Peterkin suggests that a doctor’s path is not “set for life,” as previously thought, but rather we need to continually establish goals and pursue them. Peterkin also quotes Sir William Osler, who may have provided a great description of residency and medicine, “The practise of medicine is an art, not a trade; a calling, not a business; a calling in which your heart will be exercised equally with your head.”