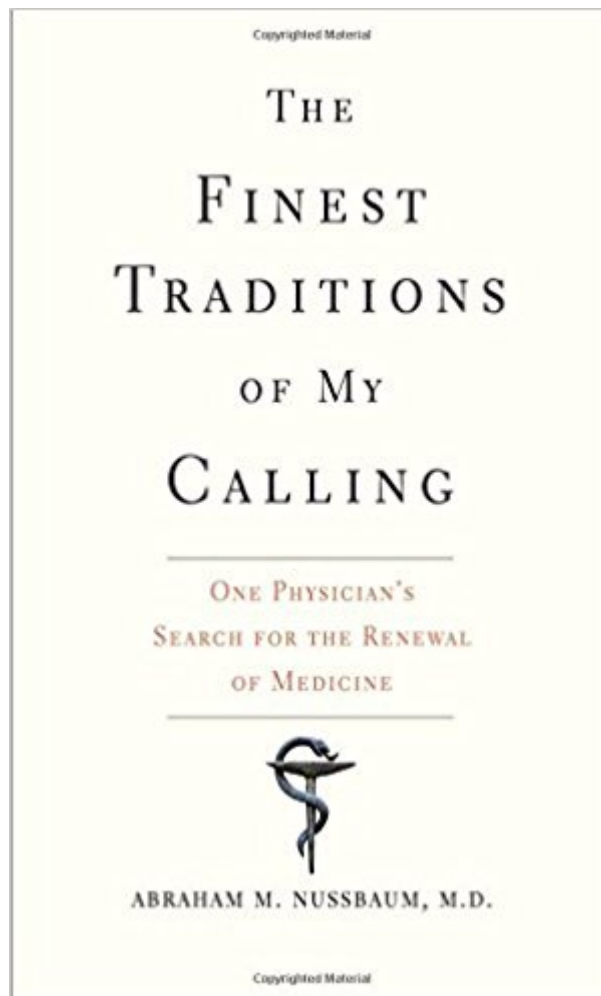




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The Finest Traditions Of My Calling: One Physician's Search For The Renewal Of Medicine



Synopsis

Patients and doctors alike are keenly aware that the medical world is in the midst of great change. We live in an era of continuous healthcare reforms, many of which focus on high volume, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness. This compelling, thoughtful book is the response of a practicing physician who explains how population-based reforms have diminished the relationship between doctors and patients, to the detriment of both. As an antidote to failed reforms and an alternative to stubbornly held traditions, Dr. Abraham M. Nussbaum suggests ways that doctors and patients can learn what it means to be ill and to seek medical assistance. ã ã Using a variety of riveting stories from his own and others' experiences, the author develops a series of metaphors to explore a doctor's role in different healthcare reform scenarios: scientist, technician, author, gardener, teacher, servant, and witness. Each role influences what a physician sees when examining a person as a patient. Dr. Nussbaum cautions that true healthcare reform can happen only when those who practice medicine can see, and be seen by, their patients as fellow creatures. His memoir makes a hopeful appeal for change, and his insights reveal the direction that change must take.

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Customer Reviews

“In a time when hospitals threaten to become factories and doctors seem no more than factory farmers, Nussbaum helps us see that there is an alternative. That alternative turns out to be exemplified in the stories he wonderfully tells of what he has learned from the sick. Hopefully his

book will be widely read because it has important practical as well as theoretical implications.

•Stanley Hauerwas, author of *The Work of Theology* “A clear-eyed and thoughtful (and interesting!) analysis of where medicine is right now, how it got here, why an alternative vision is preferable, and some gestures toward what that alternative might be and might promise. The stories are presented respectfully . . . and as real stories, not just case study examples.”

•Margaret Mohrmann, M.D., Ph.D., University of Virginia “Occasionally someone speaks up in the midst of our clamoring arguments about social problems and manages to do the simple and extraordinary thing that makes all the difference: they ask the right questions. Reading *The Finest Traditions of My Calling*, I couldn’t help but see Nussbaum as a Martin Luther of health care and this book is his 95 theses. May true reform ensue.”

•Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber, author of *An Accidental Saints: Finding God in All the Wrong People* “An eye-opening journey into the rapidly industrializing world of modern healthcare. Nussbaum steadfastly reminds us that true equality needs to include the humanity of the patient and the caregiver. A compelling read.”

•Danielle Ofri, M.D., Ph.D., author of *What Doctors Feel: How Emotions Affect the Practice of Medicine* “The author has produced a work that addresses the fall from grace of the medical profession. It is rich with nuanced details and stories of physician and patient lives. He moves through his territory with delightful stride.”

•Thomas Duffy, M.D., Yale University School of Medicine

Abraham M. Nussbaum, M.D., is the Chief Education Officer at Denver Health and is an associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. He lives in Denver, CO.

Having just finished Nussbaum’s book, I feel grateful for this story of a person who was willing and able to do more than just think about how things could be different. I disagree with some of the most negative comments offered by other reviewers, particularly those that aim at Nussbaum personally and his motives in writing the book. No matter how one feels about the many issues raised in this book, it is worth noticing that any person, physician or otherwise, can benefit from self-awareness and a desire to constantly improve in the service of others and of oneself. The book encourages us to honestly revisit our “Finest Traditions”, something well worth pursuing.

After over eight months of “living in the hospital” during my wife’s illness, I could relate to the varied perspectives of medical training in Dr. Nussbaum’s book. I’ve recommended it to most of my wife’s

doctors, who are many in number and specialty. I have a much deeper understanding of both the good and the bad in the care my wife has received during her extensive hospitalization. This book has given me a platform for intriguing discussion with the medical professionals we still see daily.

This book is about improving structure of medical schools and management of hospitals in regards to patient care. If this is a topic you are interested in, I highly recommend this book. Dr. Nussbaum is very well read and a very good writer. He has much to say about critically needed changes in how medicine is taught and the quality of medical care in our country. He describes first hand stories which expose huge gaps in care and teaching. Dr. Nussbaum's message concerns the need to put humanity and dignity, along with attention to detail and noticing red flags into today's delivery of medical care.

The author's musings made me proud to share his profession. I received training at Denver Health so I felt a familiarity with his observations about the environment and the patients, though I was there over 25 years ago. Although Dr. Nussbaum is in a specialty very different than mine, we, along with all physicians, share many things. We physicians need to remember that we have the astounding privilege of sharing people's lives in incredibly impactful ways. I thank the author for reminding me of this in an uplifting and humorous way.

The book tries to bring back the idea and philosophy of most young physicians for entering the work of being a good doctor. A good doctor has integrity, Humility, strong sense of awareness of others and graciousness and generously A love of life. The preciousness and fragility of this great miracle of life. The author certainly brings in Southie in telling the story of his troubles. Good reading good reminder that we're all on the same path and some of them are blessed with a vocation for Medicine.

Dr. Nussbaum, a psychiatrist, describes how he began medical school through working as an attending physician. He describes the present perspective of treatment - to fix the part that's ill, efficiently, and get paid. Dr Nussbaum describes this system fully and then explains how was mentored to view patients as people and to hear their stories before choosing a dx or treatment. The communication is part of the The writing is eloquent, if occasionally long winded. There is also historical information that adds drama

An outstanding inquiry and assessment into the challenge of being a physician. Nussbaum clearly loves the opportunity to care for patients and wonders how those coming into the world of medicine will get the same or better feeling of helping others and making a difference, given what they are asked to put up with. Important reading for patients, prospective patients, and everyone in the practice.

This is a deep reflection of what it means to be a healer and a warning to reverse the trend toward physicians as technicians using algorithms. This offers a message of hope through compassionate physician listening to heal the patient, the practitioner and their relationship.

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