



FROM BURNOUT TO BALANCE

WHOA, SO MANY BUBBLES. POP, POP, POP. I DON'T KNOW THAT THIS IS TRUE BUT I FEEL LIKE MOST WOMEN HAVE THAT INNATE DESIRE TO BE A MOM, TO BE SOMEBODY WHO GETS TO SEE THE PRIVILEGE OF KIDS GROWING UP AND, LIKE, HOW FUN AND COOL THEY ARE, RIGHT? AND JUST TO HAVE THAT RELATIONSHIP, TO BE ABLE TO POUR INTO ANOTHER PERSON, I JUST FEEL LIKE THAT'S THE COOLEST THING THAT SOMEBODY GETS TO DO. YOU ONLY HAVE LITTLE KIDS FOR A WHILE, YOU GET A SHORT AMOUNT OF TIME TO REALLY SHAPE AND MOLD THESE KIDS... AND WHEN YOU DON'T GET TO DO THAT BECAUSE OF DOCUMENTATION, BECAUSE OF ADMINISTRATIVE STUFF, WHEN YOUR KID LOOKS AT YOU AND SHE SAYS: MOMMY, I DON'T LIKE WHEN YOU'RE BUSY, IT HURTS TO DISAPPOINT OTHER PEOPLE. [Dr. ELIZABETH GOFF, LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA.] BOTH OF MY PARENTS ARE PHYSICIANS AND THEY OWNED THEIR OWN PRACTICE FOR PRETTY MUCH ALL OF ME GROWING UP. I SAW THEM WALK WITH PEOPLE THROUGH ALL THE HAPPY PARTS AND SAD PARTS OF LIFE AND THEY CARED FOR MORE THAN JUST THE MEDICAL ASPECT OF PEOPLE BUT THE MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL PART OF PEOPLE AS WELL, AND THAT'S KIND OF WHAT LED ME TO PRIMARY CARE. I TRULY BELIEVE FOR EVERYBODY MEDICINE IS A CALLING, I DON'T THINK YOU GET INTO THIS FIELD AND STAY IN THIS FIELD IF IT'S NOT A CALLING. YOU DON'T GET INTO MEDICINE JUST FOR THE MONEY. WE GET INTO IT FOR THE PEOPLE. SO SOMETIMES, I'VE SAID, YOU KNOW, THERE ARE THREE PEOPLE IN THE ROOM WHEN I GO INTO THE ROOM. THERE'S THE PATIENT, THERE'S THE ME AND THEN THERE'S THE E-M-R SYSTEM. SO THE WHOLE TIME YOU'RE IN THERE, AND PATIENTS KNOW IT TOO, THEY'RE LIKE, MY DOCTOR COMES INTO THE ROOM AND ONLY LOOKS AT THE COMPUTER, THEY DON'T EVEN CARE ABOUT ME. I MEAN, IF YOU'RE NOT IN THE ROOM, CLICKING ON BUTTONS WITH THE PATIENT, HOW MUCH WORK ARE YOU TAKING HOME? YOU SAID... WHAT WAS HER FIRST NAME? HOW DO YOU SPELL THAT LAST NAME? I'M OKAY, BUT I HEAR YOU'RE NOT DOING SO WELL. I THINK BURNOUT CAN LOOK DIFFERENT FOR EVERY SINGLE PERSON AND THAT'S, I, I THINK THAT'S WHY IT'S SO HARD TO STUDY, RIGHT? IT'S BECAUSE THERE'S NOT ONE DEFINITION THAT FITS. I WAS BRINGING WORK HOME ALMOST EVERY SINGLE NIGHT AND SPENDING HOURS AND HOURS OUTSIDE OF WORK-TIME DOING DOCUMENTATION. WE'RE NOT GOING OUTSIDE, IT'S TIME TO GO "NIGHTIES." WHEN YOU LOOK AT A LOT OF PEOPLE, THEY TALK ABOUT BURNOUT AS BEING JUST ANGRY OR NOT CARING, AND I CERTAINLY HIT A POINT LIKE THAT, UM, WHEN WE WERE TALKING ABOUT OR THINKING ABOUT HAVING OUR SON, MY HUSBAND AND I WERE GOING: MAN, THIS ISN'T, WE'RE NOT STRIKING A BALANCE HERE. SO I'D GET TO WORK AND, AND SIT IN MY CAR AND JUST GO, LIKE, FEEL... I LOVE WHAT I DO BUT ALL THE EXTRA STUFF MADE IT NOT WORTH IT. MY PATIENTS AREN'T GETTING THE BEST OF ME, MY KIDS AREN'T GETTING THE BEST OF ME. SO THE OPTION WOULD HAVE BEEN GOING PART-TIME AND MY HUSBAND AND I HAVE REALLY KICKED BACK AND FORTH FOR THAT, BUT WITH MY STUDENT LOAN DEBT AND THE HOUSE AND TRYING TO PAY FOR BABYSITTERS ON THE DAYS I'M NOT THERE, YOU KNOW MONETARILY IT WASN'T GOING TO MAKE SENSE AND SO IT'S REALLY ABOUT, FOR ME, TRYING TO FIND THAT BALANCE SO THAT I ALSO FEEL THE JOY AND THAT I'M GIVING THE BEST OF MYSELF. SUKI, INSERT WELLNESS H-B-I. NEW PARAGRAPH. DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS FOR THIS ABDOMINAL BLOATING. I'VE BEEN USING SUKI FOR LIKE A YEAR AND A HALF NOW, AND I KEEP GETTING THESE PATIENT NOTES BACK WHERE I READ THEM AND I'M, LIKE, WOW I SOUNDED REALLY, REALLY SMART WHEN I WROTE THAT NOTE AND IT'S BECAUSE I'M SAYING THINGS IN THE WAY THAT DOCTORS THINK. SHE DOES NOT CHECK HER BLOOD SUGARS OR HER BLOOD PRESSURES AT HOME BUT HASN'T FELT LIKE THEY ARE OFF, PERIOD. IT'S MUCH MORE RELAXED AND EASY TO DO NOW VERSUS THE COMPUTER, TYPING LIKE THIS FOR HOURS. THE DICTATION PART IS REALLY NICE BUT THERE'S ALL KINDS OF OTHER THINGS THAT HELP IT FLOW SMOOTHLY, THAT ALLOW THE DICTATION TO BE AS GOOD AS IT IS. IT'S THE FACT THAT SUKI PULLS UP YOUR SCHEDULE SO YOU'RE NOT TRYING TO OPEN A NEW NOTE FOR EACH PERSON. IT'S THERE. IT PULLS IN THE VITALS, IT PULLS IN THE MEDICATIONS. IT CAN PULL IN PAST PROBLEMS. EACH LITTLE THING THAT YOU DO IS SAVING SECONDS OR MINUTES, BUT THOSE SECONDS AND MINUTES ADD UP, SO AS THEY'RE TALKING I SAY, I'M JUST GOING TO CATCH THIS WHILE WE'RE TALKING AND THEN VERY QUICKLY IN THE VISIT THE COMPUTER GETS PUSHED ASIDE AND I GET TO JUST SIT AND TALK WITH THE PATIENT. AND SO I'M GETTING TO HEAR THOSE THINGS MORE BECAUSE I'M CONNECTING WITH THE PATIENT INSTEAD OF LOOKING AT A COMPUTER SCREEN, AND SO THINGS FLOW BETTER, I FEEL LIKE THINGS ARE GOING BETTER, I'M ALSO COMMUNICATING BETTER. I'M ALSO GETTING BETTER REVENUE AND BETTER R-V-U'S IN MY DAILY BASIS, AND PATIENTS ARE GETTING BETTER CARE. WHEN I WAS BRINGING A LOT OF WORK HOME, I EITHER DIDN'T HAVE TIME OR I FELT TOO MUCH STRESS TO DO A LOT OF THE THINGS THAT I ENJOY DOING. SO THIS SUMMER HAS BEEN JUST A REALLY FUN SUMMER. SOME OF MY FAVORITE DAYS ARE THE DAYS WHERE WE WAKE UP AND SAY WE'RE JUST GONNA HAVE A "YES" DAY TODAY. WE'RE GONNA SAY YES TO WHAT THE KIDS WANT TO DO AND WE'RE GOING TO DO IT. THOSE DAYS PROBABLY MY FAVORITE DAYS. YOU KNOW WHEN YOU HEAR PEOPLE TALK ABOUT THEY WERE CARRYING THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD ON THEIR SHOULDERS BUT THEY DIDN'T REALIZE IT UNTIL THE WEIGHT WAS GONE. YOU'LL HEAR PEOPLE SAY, LIKE, I FEEL LIKE I'M BREATHING FOR THE FIRST TIME OR I FEEL LIKE I'M WALKING ON AIR AND THOSE SOUND LIKE SUCH CLICHES BUT IT, IT'S THE EASIEST WAY TO EXPLAIN, LIKE, I WAS SO WEIGHED DOWN AND DIDN'T REALIZE IT. I JUST THOUGHT THIS WAS NORMAL. I LOVE WHAT I DO AND I LOVE THAT I GET TO BE A MOM AND A FAMILY DOC. I LOVE THAT I GET TO IMPACT PEOPLE'S LIVES ON A DAILY BASIS, THAT I'M GIVING THE BEST OF ME TO THE PEOPLE I CARE ABOUT. [SUKI. BRING JOY BACK TO MEDICINE.]