

# Resources

*Fall 2016*

By Keenan Whitesides, PT, DPT

Every so often you stumble upon something online that makes you pause. Something that brings up a new perspective or explains something you couldn't articulate, something that encourages you to dig deeper and look more closely at the world around you. The aim of the Resources section is to collect these moments in hopes of enhancing the experience of this journal. In between editions, we welcome submissions towards the resources section in order to maintain the thread of curiosity and deeper understanding of the human experience around us. Each submission will be accompanied by a brief description summarizing the resource, including possible ways the reader could incorporate this piece. It is our hope that this section will provide the necessary materials to evoke thoughtful discourse and reflection to carry forward into the lives of our readers.

## Cleveland Clinic Empathy Video

What if you had insight into the inner most thoughts of your patients? Would you treat them differently? These are the central themes of this silent film housing a collection of various patient experiences in a hospital environment. As you watch the film, you see the clear juxtaposition between those who have

received the best and the worst news of their lives all while under the same roof.

**Applications:** Excellent teaching tool for exploration of empathy in the medical environment, discussion starter for professionalism coursework.

## Becoming Disabled

“As we manage our bodies in environments not built for them, the social barriers can sometimes be more awkward than the physical ones,” writes Rosemarie Garland-Thomson as she discusses the difficulties of being disabled in present-day America. Join her for a tour through the history of disability in America as well as a first-hand account of the challenges and acceptance that living with a disability requires, as she challenges those of us in the community to rethink our perception of the disabled.

**Applications:** Great discussion piece for educating young clinicians on the struggles that follow those with disabilities once they leave the hospital floors, would be a great addition to discussion on ADA requirements and life-long disability. Gives great practical advice on how to show respect and dignity for those with disabilities on a regular basis.

## Forgiving the Body with ALS

“As I began to tell people about ALS, they began to tell me about the ALS that they carried” states Bruce Kramer, former Dean of the College of Education, Leadership and Counseling at the University of St. Thomas, who passed away from complications of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (Lou Gehrig’s disease). In this moving podcast, Kramer discusses how his diagnosis opened up conversations with others about the burdens we carry and the struggle we all face to make beauty in our lives in the midst of tragedy. After his diagnosis, Kramer began writing a blog entitled “[The Dis Ease Diary](#)” chronicling his life with ALS and authored the book, “We Know How This Ends: Living While Dying”.

**Applications:** Patient voice on living with a fatal disease and the perspective that actively dying creates that would be an excellent discussion piece for clinicians and a resource for patients with ALS or other progressive diseases.

## We Deserve the Compassion We Give

We’ve all had moments in our lives where we’ve left behind the troubles and struggles of our own lives to fix the lives of those around us. But does this ever really work? In this poignant reflection, Parker Palmer grapples with one important truth: in order to be present for others, we must be present for ourselves. Palmer uses Mary Oliver’s poem “The Journey” to remind readers that in order to help others, we must first help ourselves.

**Applications:** Clinicians and caregivers often place the needs of patients and loved ones before themselves. This reflection is an excellent reminder that in order to be present for those we care about,

we must make sure that we have taken care of ourselves first. This article is a humbling reminder that personal health—spiritual, physical, and mental—is an essential part of living and a prerequisite for caring for others. As Parker so elegantly states, “only when I’m in possession of my own heart can I be present for another in a healing, encouraging, and empowering way”. This article would be an excellent resource for caregivers, clinicians, and patients to serve as a reminder to make sure we take care of ourselves as we care for others.

## How to Become Batman Podcast

From the NPR Podcast *Invisibilia*, follow Daniel Kish through his experience as a child born blind but raised as if he could see. Throughout this podcast, Kish discusses how his development of echolocation allowed him to ride a bike while blind as well as taught him valuable lessons about the power of expectations.

**Applications:** For family members that are having trouble letting go of assisting their loved ones, this podcast offers a unique perspective on the importance of struggle and how it ultimately can lead to independence, also a good reminder of the importance of prioritizing independence for medical providers.

## *About the Author*



Keenan Whitesides, PT, DPT, is staff physical therapist at the Emory Brain Health Center after completing her neuroresidency at Emory University. Dr. Whitesides received her Bachelor of Science degree in Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology from Emory University, her Master's degree in Secondary Education from American University and her Doctor of Physical Therapy from Duke University. She has previously published some of her work in *The Intima—A Journal of Narrative Medicine*, an interdisciplinary, online journal of narrative writing from Columbia University. She considers writing and reflection an essential component of her practice.