

Resources: Fall 2017

By Keenan Whitesides, PT, DPT, NCS

What We're Watching

[The Neurons that Shaped Civilization](#)



Image credit:
David Shankbone

British scientist and novelist CP Snow once spoke of the two cultures: science on the one hand, humanities on the other with limited overlap. He speculated that the division between these two cultures was a major barrier in solving some of the emerging world's influences. But what if there was a scientific example of a melding of these two distinct "cultures"?

Tune in as neuroscientist Vilayanur Ramachandran explains the phenomenon of mirror neurons. Through this compelling TED Talk, Ramachandran illustrates the interconnectedness of our experiences and the role of empathy in bridging our human connection.

[What is the Difference between Empathy and Sympathy?](#)



Image credit:
Maile Wilson

What is the difference between empathy and sympathy? When we are at our lowest points, what is it that we need to validate our experiences? Follow along as Dr. Brene Brown creatively illustrates the vast difference between the expression of empathy and sympathy and how we can best help someone

alleviate their pain and suffering. The accompanying animation, created by Katy Davis, provides a multimedia way to visualize how our actions and thoughts can either help or hinder those we seek to support during difficult times.

What We're Listening To



Photo credit: The Moth

[If This Hair Could Talk](#)

At a routine pediatric check-up for her daughter, Melanie Kostrzewa learns that her daughter must be rushed to the emergency department for x-rays to explore a suspected condition that will eventually culminate in a craniotomy. As she and her family prepare for the upcoming surgery, Melanie enters a world of doctor appointments, concerns for the future, and the curious question of what will happen to her daughter's hair? Follow Melanie's story through her roller coaster of emotions and the surprising kindness of her daughter's neurosurgeon as a loving family bands together to support baby Ivy.

What We're Reading



Photo Credit: Norbert von der Groeben/Stanford Hospital and Clinics

[When Breath Becomes Air Book Review](#)

When a terminal cancer diagnosis is handed to 36 year old neurosurgeon Paul Kalanithi, he embarks on a journey to discover what makes a life worth living in the face of death. As he eloquently states: "I began to realize that coming face to face with my own mortality, in a sense, had changed nothing and everything." Read the book review from The New York Times linked above, and find the full book wherever books or audiobooks are sold. Kalanithi has so much to teach each of us at any stage of our lives, and his beautiful writing makes this memoir a must read.

What Makes Life Worth Living in the Face of Death?

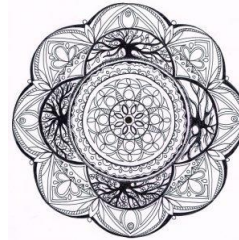


Photo credit: TEDMED 2016

As a follow-up to the above story, Lucy Kalanithi, Paul's wife, discusses the beginning and end of her life with Paul and their journey from diagnosis to acceptance in this TED talk. She describes the decisions they faced and her appreciation for the doctors that allowed Paul the freedom to choose how he would leave this life. In closing, Kalanithi leaves us with this advice: "When we approach suffering together, when we choose not to hide from it, our lives don't diminish, they expand."

Try This!

Zentangle



Check out this website which provides education and templates on the Zentangle© method, a style of artwork that "creates meditation." According to their website, Zentangle© allows you to create beautiful artwork from repetitive patterns. This style of artwork allows for reflection and relaxation, as well as an opportunity to practice mindfulness and decrease stress. Find free patterns to get you started at this website: <http://tanglepatterns.com/>

About the Author



*Keenan Whitesides, PT, DPT, NCS, is a 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.*