

Humanity a Plenty

By James R. Carey, PhD, PT

Affiliation(s)

Beleaguered but not broken
She dons once again
Her foreboding regalia--
pandemic paraphernalia

An unglamorous gown
Hiding every curve
Cuffed with gloves
That thwart every touch

A stark dark mask
Warps each word
A full-faced shield
A wall, a window



All a collage
that frightens the frail
As they thirst for humanity
in their infirmity

Behind all these trappings
A wondrous gift:
Two gracious green eyes
See past the disguise
To offer each patient
humanity a plenty

Their eyes widen and wetten
A wrinkle arrives
Behold now how
Their face pinkens and smiles

About the Authors



Jim Carey, PhD, PT, FAPTA is Professor Emeritus at the University of Minnesota, Division of Physical Therapy, where he taught for the last 23 years of his career, including 20 as Director. His research focused on neuroplasticity in people with stroke. He retired in 2017. His interests still include promoting global physical therapy in developing countries and in advancing the humanities component of physical therapy. He believes that beyond understanding the science of clinical conditions and their interventions, enlightenment on humanness overall is crucial to maximizing our effectiveness as health care professionals.



Jessica Carey, CNA, HHA started her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) journey as an Emergency Room Technician at the Fairview - University of Minnesota Medical Center. In search of something more individual-focused, she explored home care where she discovered a passion for attending to end-of-life stage patients. She began to notice how much kindness, humanity, and compassion surfaces not only in herself but also in her colleagues, patient family members, and in the patients themselves at this point in their lives. She has now been with Allina Hospice and Palliative Care as a CNA/Home Health Aide for three years. The photo is a self-portrait taken just before seeing her first COVID-19 positive patient. She took the photo to document the beginning of a new time in her life. Jessica has seen 10-12 COVID patients up to this date plus many more non-COVID patients. The best part of her day is when she breaks through the PPE barrier and makes patients smile.