

The Death of Her

By Rhonda White, MSPT

My head hurts because it is full
of thoughts, bouncing back
and forth, around and around.
They cause a dissection, a confrontation,
a battle I can't contain.
My spiritual corpus callosum
implodes; the land I knew so well
is desolate, barren, and fruitless.

I am seeping slowly, surely,
into a scholarly death. The hurt
is winning. I am at the end of my rope.

I must release. I must release.
I MUST RELEASE
the pain of suppression,
oppression, guilt, shame, and cowardice
that poison my professional soul.

She has many names and many faces.
She can grin and frown simultaneously.

She is complex--a hoax with full autonomy,
entitled, arrogant, self-serving, and rude.

I did not invite her. I did not ask her to stay.
Yet, she lives on, empowered by pain.
She thought she would win. She almost did,
tricked by my high tolerance for pain.
My unhealthy desire to please.
My resistance to change, my ability
to endure the marathons of higher education.

Sadly, I got tricked too. We fell for it
at the same time--twins conjoined
by fallacies of impostors. Unknowingly
we signed up as teammates in the same race.

We qualified for the finals. I lined up at the start,
and the gun went off. I should have realized
her game plan then, but instead I passed
the baton to her in the exchange zone,
and she ran with it.

I can't stop her now. I won't try anymore.
She thinks she has won, and that has to be okay.
Not because I quit, not because I gave in,
but because I finally understood the purpose
of her pain. I stopped fighting her
and dealt with the symptoms like a good clinician.
The impairments caused growth, development,
refinement, and elevation to a place
where influence can blossom and spread
the seeds locked in the bowels of my practice.

My scars become superpowers; weapons

for the battle ahead. It's time! to go back to battle
before the war is over....

But I thank the Universe for those
who rescued me from myself.
They did their job well.
And now, the legacy continues
HE always provides seeds for the sower.
SURRENDER PW, SURRENDER PW,
SURRENDER!
And at last.....She is dead!

About the Author



Rhonda C. White is an adjunct professor in physical therapy and a pediatric physical therapist serving students in the school-based setting. A Chicago native with three decades of experience, she has worked across both clinical and academic environments with a deep commitment to advocacy, equity, and ethical practice. She previously served as a tenured associate professor and Director of Clinical Education at Prairie State College, and she currently contributes to the profession through her work on the for the Illinois Physical Therapy Association and the American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education.

Her writing is shaped by years of caring for children, supporting families, and navigating the complex emotional landscapes of healthcare and education. She often explores themes of identity, grief, resilience, and belonging, drawing from both personal and professional experiences. She is married and the mother of one daughter, and she continues to find inspiration in her family and the communities she serves.