

THICKENING THE NARRATIVE

Story is the basic currency of medicine, and health care professionals (HCP) who want to write never have to look far for a good one. But they often struggle with how to write creatively, having been schooled in writing techniques such as the SOAP note and the case presentation. While these methods are useful for clear clinical communication, they can interfere with thinking and writing creatively. In this one-hour workshop, I discuss the role of narrative in medicine, and run participants through a series of interactive writing exercises aimed at helping them write past the habits and shortcuts HCP tend to use in thinking about patient stories.

1. Be able to discern 'thick' from 'thin' narrative 2. Have some writing tips to help them write more complex stories 3. Have completed three brief pieces of writing they can take home to continue working on 4. Be alert to some complexities and ethical issues when writing about patients