

Virtual Mentor

American Medical Association Journal of Ethics
September 1999, Volume 1, Number 1:3.

ART OF MEDICINE

Call for Images of Healing and Learning

Audiey Kao, MD, PhD

Healing and learning appear to be paired processes, occurring together throughout human activity. But nowhere are these processes as prominently seen as they are during medical training.

Most any medium can be used to capture a representation of an aspect of healing and learning: the Chinese characters on this page represent the call that appears on banners when medical students graduate to become physicians. It urges them to apply what they have learned to prevent suffering and to heal mankind.

For most students, the medium that most readily lends itself to retaining some visual memory of a succession of fleeting moments is the camera. Through photographs, the highlights of yesterday's happenings remain vivid and communicable to others. The subtle interplay of light and shadow that renders a photograph unique may even be likened to the delicate shifts that characterize interactions between patient and physician or between student and teacher.

We invite students to send photographs portraying aspects of healing and learning. Accompany your photos with a description of what is captured in the image and the special significance the picture has for you. Through these images, students can communicate their personal perspectives on medical training and share their observations and reflections with others.

The viewpoints expressed on this site are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the AMA.

Copyright 1999 American Medical Association. All rights reserved.