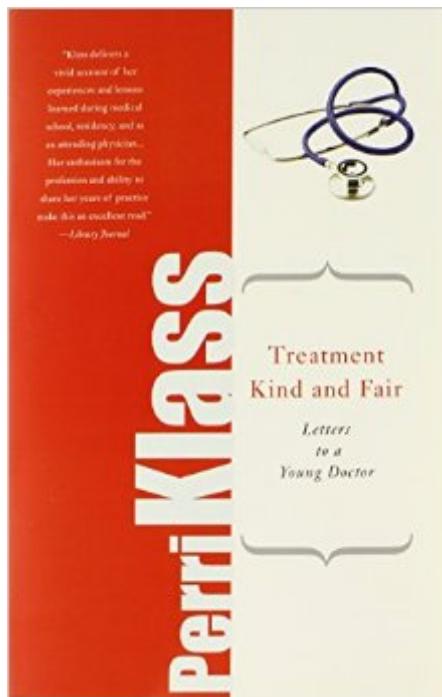


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Treatment Kind And Fair: Letters To A Young Doctor



Synopsis

If you've ever sat on an examination table and wondered what is really going on in your doctor's head, then this book is for you. New York Times contributor and beloved author Perri Klass addresses the primary issues in the life of any doctor and, by extension, the lives of those for whom they care. She explores the moral judgments of doctors, questions of death and physician-assisted suicide, the daily life of a doctor, doctors as patients, and more. Klass offers a fascinating glimpse inside the doctor's office for aspiring physicians and medical buffs. Treatment Kind and Fair is also a must-read for anyone who's ever been a patient.

Book Information

Series: Letters to a Young...

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Basic Books; 1 edition (August 26, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 046503778X

ISBN-13: 978-0465037780

Product Dimensions: 4.6 x 0.6 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 11 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars (See all reviews) (10 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #803,282 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #306 in Books > Medical Books > Medicine > Doctor-Patient Relations #1536 in Books > Medical Books > Administration & Medicine Economics > Health Care Delivery #2736 in Books > Medical Books > Medicine > Reference

Customer Reviews

I can't remember a time when I didn't read Perri Klass's books and stories. As I recall, she was featured in the New York Times as a writing prodigy, and she continued to write when she made the improbable choice to pursue a medical career. As she pointed out, she wasn't particularly gifted in science and math. No one in her family studied medicine. But that's what she wanted. Her "becoming a doctor" stories will be relevant to anyone choosing a career, in or out of medicine. Klass's gift lies in her ability to humanize whatever she describes and add her own unique combination of earth-mother warmth and cool analysis. So she describes her own experiences as a patient in a hospital, her interviews with young medical students and her memories of good and bad decisions over the years. It's like reading about the mom next door, a totally ordinary person...and

oh yes, she's also a doctor and famous writer.I don't relate this book to TV programs like Greys Anatomy and ER. Frankly, I don't like those programs. I compare it more to Jerome Groopman's book, How Doctors Decide, and Atul Gawande's Better. Like them, Klass accepts all the downsides of contemporary medicine but also applauds both the field and her profession. She writes about getting into the lives of her patients. She remembers calling hospitals from distant vacations, tracking down test results and follow-ups. As a pediatrician, she seems more humane and caring than most doctors. She acknowledges that pediatrics brings special joys -- you rarely deal with end-of-life issues. I believe pediatrics attracts the more humane physicians, leaving the rest of us with those who view patients as money-generating numbers.

Harvard Medical School graduate Perri Klass is a pediatrician as well as a wife and mother. In "Treatment Kind and Fair--Letters to a Young Doctor," the author shares the considerable wisdom that she has acquired over the years. Dr. Klass practiced primary care pediatrics in Boston for more than a decade, did infectious disease work at the Boston University School of Medicine, and has been involved with a program called "Reach Out and Read," which "promotes reading aloud and early literacy." She is currently a professor of journalism and pediatrics at New York University. Klass discusses many of the challenges that prospective physicians face: getting into medical school (no mean feat); once admitted, memorizing an incredible amount of technical information quickly; adjusting to the responsibilities of being an intern and then a resident; learning how to communicate effectively with patients and their families; avoiding medical errors and gracefully handling the inevitable mistakes that do occur; and facing a patient's death without succumbing to despair. "By entering this profession, you will grapple with uncertainty and insecurity, with tragedy and pain, and above all, you will meet people's needs." Klass covers a great deal of territory in this relatively slender volume. She discusses the art of conducting a patient interview as well as a thorough physical examination; the importance of caring, yet staying detached enough to function effectively; how to use the awesome technology that is available in the twenty-first century without becoming overly dependent on it; and how to strike the proper balance between one's personal and professional life. A doctor should never be so obsessed with her job that she neglects to devote her time to other interests and passions.

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