

Luminous Beings are we, not this crude matter – Yoda, Star Wars Episode 5



Dear ACP colleagues and friends,

I hope you and your families have endured this winter, as well as the uncertainty and trials of the past year.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, as you are likely aware, the ACP's annual Internal Medicine meeting is going to be virtual. Although we are all looking forward to the day when we can travel to exciting venues to attend these meetings in person, that time has not yet arrived. Nevertheless, the meeting will still be full of excellent scientific content, so I encourage you all to register and plan to attend. There is a virtual pamphlet providing details of the meeting that you can find [here](#).

With the vaccine rollout now in full swing, I am hopeful that we are nearing the end of pandemic restrictions, and that next year we will all be blown away by an incredible **live meeting in the windy city of Chicago, Illinois**. Until then, keep your laptops and devices charged, and your high-speed Internet bill paid so that you can stay informed in our current virtual world.

COVID-19 has not been the only challenge we have been facing. We have been bombarded with situation after situation laced with tension and acrimony relating to topics of racial, political and social struggles. While some of the areas are more clearly black and white, others have their shades of grey, for certain. One thing that I have been proud of throughout it all is the ongoing work of ACP to support people of all stripes, in particular the disadvantaged. How easy it can be to create artificial barriers between ourselves and others, whether it is the color of our skin, the language we speak, the size

and value of our homes, the religion we follow (or lack thereof), our political affiliations, and so many other things. The joy of being human is in our uniqueness, and we should celebrate that rather than expect everyone to be like us. I have been proud to serve on the Board of Governors to help draft and approve resolutions that lead ACP down roads of advocacy for all, as we are all, at some time or another, patients, and so ACP should be, and is, an organization interested in everyone.

The Work Goes On

As a front-line GIM specialist in rural NS (in particular a rural area that was recently blessed with a \$22 million donation to our local hospital foundation – Click [here](#) for details) , I realize how lucky I am to have stable work in a pandemic. I am grateful to all of the internists, General and Sub-Specialists, who continue to provide excellent care across our region.

As things continue to open up and begin to look more like the "pre-pandemic normal", we need to remember the things we have learned in the past year. Virtual consultations have been a huge step forward in patient care for geographically challenged areas such as those found in many places in Atlantic Canada. My own regional hospital covers patients who could have to travel close to 2 hours to get to their nearest regional hospital, which would mean a 4 hour round trip just to come see me for a follow-up visit for 15 minutes. To be able to offer them the convenience of a phone call or Zoom Healthcare virtual visit from the comfort of their home (or their office at work) is something that, hopefully, will continue into the future.

Prior to the pandemic, in Nova Scotia, virtual visits were not a billable service, and the government had no interest in changing that until COVID-19 came along. I fear there may be a push to eradicate it once the pandemic is over. This is one of many areas where ACP advocates for physicians and patients. At any time, if issues such as this one catch your attention and you feel passionate about making change, feel free to connect with me and we can work to draft a resolution to the ACP that will help bring the power of their advocacy to bear. What we each do individually makes a difference, but what we do together can be transformational.

I look forward to hearing from you – reach out to me at any time through the chapter portal or directly at bmoses@dal.ca

Sincerely,

Brian Moses, MD, FRCPC, FACP

"Would I rather be feared or loved? Easy. Both. I want people to be afraid of how much they love me." Michael Scott (Steve Carell), The Office