

**THE NEED FOR CONTINUED COMPASSION IN HEALTHCARE BEYOND
COVID 19**

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The COVID 19 pandemic has, apart from laying bare the disparities and inequities in healthcare, brought about a significant and sustained emotional onslaught of compassion amongst and for the healthcare workers across the globe. People are recognizing the sacrifice, altruism and bravery of doctors, nurses, respiratory therapists and all other front-line workers. There is also a sense of empathy and compassion for patients, and their families among the public in general. This reawakening of the most basic of our instincts as social animals has long been needed. Compassion has the power to transform medicine, a view propagated by Dr. Trzeciak in his book '*Compassionomics*' recently. "There have been voices calling for more compassion in health care forever," he states. Sadly, this catastrophic pandemic has

shown the best side, in most instances, of society. Kind acts are being carried out towards front line workers, neighbors, store workers, food industry workers among others. This kindness and compassion have been eroded away from medicine and healthcare in recent decades. Patients and families were losing trust in physicians. This renewed relationship comes from a display of the true core of medicine, one that was enshrined by true patient advocate figures such as William Osler, Florence Nightingale to name a few. Residents are rising to the catastrophe by working in COVID units, nurses are volunteering for dangerous shifts in ICUs, physicians are sacrificing their own safety and health to fulfil their duty of care and are going beyond limits of human suffering. It is this moral imperative which is needed in medicine and healthcare- from making future policies, facilitating research, to providing care at the bedside. The ethical and moral norms played out in the COVID 19 healthcare scenario are what has been wanting, and had disappeared for nearly a century, with a few exceptions. At the end of this terrible global phase, there must be a sustenance of this underlying core of medicine. It has been fulfilling for thousands of physicians and nurses, as well as all frontline workers, to perform with the honor and compassion which made them join this profession in the first place. Policy makers must understand that in order to infuse longevity and vitality in a fast burning out industry, this compassionate care must be allowed to flourish and perhaps the lead should be taken by the very same healthcare workers who are at the forefront of this battle right now, and may their passion, love and integrity help them win it, for the sake of humanity and our species.