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**In this piece she talks about finding the right balance of clinical and creative in her career, through writing.**

When I was a medical student, not content with studying Special Study Modules like ‘Spirituality in Medicine’, I chose to do a year long intercalated degree in Psychological Medicine. At the time, the reasons behind this included wanting to do something a bit different, and to delve deeper into the brain. Looking back, it was also a period of time that I needed to switch off the analytical side that medical school was feeding excessively, and indulge my creative side!

During the year out of my medical degree, I throughly enjoyed the group interaction that came with modules such as ‘Psychopathology in the Arts and Literature’. I also became a student editor for an online newsletter. It finally seemed that studying Art at GCSE and Literature at A-Level, was coming to use!

After medical school I followed a predictable and esteemed path on a combined clinical academic pathway. It was in the middle of core medical training that I started to wonder whether I had the right balance of work and life, and a little later whether I had the right elements in my career that made it fit for me. In retrospect, I would say that amidst the job applications, interviews, and exams I had neglected my creative side and, in part, that had been responsible for creating a sense of imbalance.

A year out, followed by taking up less-than-full-time working allowed me to kick start a more self-reflective career path. A trajectory over which I now embrace the idea of combining clinical work with more creative aspects allied to medicine.

Although I now combine a variety of activities - whether teaching or media work amongst others - one of my favourite activities is writing. As an editor-in-chief of a medical magazine, called Medical Woman, I am fortunate enough to have the opportunity to write on a regular basis and edit others writing!

I enjoy writing opinion pieces for medical magazines or journals, and also sometimes find myself scribbling down a bit of fiction when my imagination runs away with me. I would say writing is one of my most favoured forms of expression. I do see myself as a communicator; that interaction with other human beings brings me real pleasure and fulfils a sense of curiosity in me. Writing helps contact and connect with people. There is also the practicality of writing; for me, grabbing a pen is quicker than getting out my art supplies. I deem it a process of digestion, which can be more cathartic than standing in front of an audience presenting. Writing provides an opportunity to express the days highs and lows, an opportunity to indulge the imagination, and an opportunity to play with words. Perhaps most importantly, through writing we can convey those viewpoints that harbour complexity and require sensitive articulation.

Over the past decade or so, perhaps the most valuable lesson I have leant is that there is great value in recognising your own creative strengths and preferences, incorporating these into our careers can yield both professional and personal fulfilment.