MAINTAINING PERSPECTIVE AND BALANCE

To the Editor:

We, health care workers and health care workers-in-training, are professionally farsighted. We frequently have our sights set 10 years down the road, focusing on the next stage of training, next position, and next phase of our careers. By continuously thinking of future plans, we may fail to fully appreciate that our lives are finite.

Based on demographic criteria, my life expectancy is 78.6 years or 28,689 days. Therefore, I am (statistically) expected to die on June 6, 2065. I have 19,010 days left before June 6, 2065 (tomorrow: 19,009 days; next year: 18,725 days).

Such a countdown timer for life expectancy elicits a motivating pressure. The persistently fleeting beats of time drive me to be more efficient and focus on what matters. I only have a set number of days before my upcoming deadline.

Knowing when I am expected to die makes my death seem a bit more imminent and therefore more relevant. Time becomes more valuable. Should I be doing something differently with my limited time?

As each day passes, I try to determine if I am (1) doing something I enjoy, (2) prioritizing effectively, and (3) taking time for myself. Reflecting on these three simple items is helpful in maintaining balance.

Adam E. M. Eltorai, AB
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