

From Darkness to Light
by
Arthur H. Brownstein, M.D., M.P.H.

The optimism of a doctor is not based on the naiveté of a schoolboy—a notion often predicated by the public at large—but rather on the commitment to a practical ideal, an ideal strengthened by the rough and rocky road of personal experience.

In day to day practice a doctor learns to recognize not only angels, but demons of darkness also; for in his job he daily descends into that gloomy and confused underworld of suffering which masks the light of the human soul.

As a worker called to rescue victims trapped underground in a collapsed mine, the physician cannot be content to remain on the surface, merely directing operations from the safety of some ivory tower. He himself must descend into the pit to grasp the hands of his patients and attempt to escort each one of them back into the light of day.

The seasoned physician knows this subterranean territory—as well as the exit—because he was once trapped there himself. He has been led out from the darkness of despair into the light of hope by the kind hand of Fate, his devoted and loyal Master.

A lifetime of service in medicine can be likened to a marathon: what motivates a doctor most is cultivating a personal feeling of gratitude for his own life, the life he has been given. In this spirit he can sustain himself in prolonged periods of darkness, through those times when the sun refuses to shower its light.