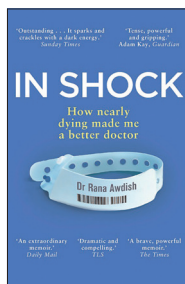


Life & Times Books

In Shock: How Nearly Dying Made Me a Better Doctor

Rana Awdish

Corgi Press, 2019, PB, 272pp, £9.99, 978-0552174756



ON THE OTHER SIDE

"Tense, powerful and gripping ... her writing style is often nothing short of beautiful — evocative and emotional."

Every doctor has been on the receiving end of medical treatment. Fortunately, few have encountered illness to the extent of ITU physician Rana Awdish, who was rushed to

her own department as a patient following a catastrophic perinatal haemorrhage. Awdish gives a raw and brutal account of the loss of her unborn child, subsequent emergency surgery, multi-organ failure, and the difficult road to recovery. This in itself makes for gripping reading, with plenty of twists and turns on the way. However, what sets this book apart is her insight into how this traumatic experience was not only able to change her own practice as a doctor, but also empower her as a patient advocate for compassionate communication.

The refrain of poorly judged phrases used by some members of Awdish's healthcare team throughout the book emphasises how such encounters can remain with patients for years to come. She also discusses how the isolating medical culture that she (and many others) trained under encourages physicians to internalise their emotions with potentially devastating effects to themselves and their patients. Despite the harrowing subject nature, Awdish manages nevertheless to instil a sense of hope in later chapters by documenting the positive

impact of her journey on her colleagues and institution. Concluding the book is a section detailing communication tips from both doctor and patient perspectives.

Awdish writes eloquently, honestly, and with a passion that jumps off the page. Her lessons will stay with you long after you close the cover. In the recent renaissance of popular medical literature, this is the standout book that will truly make you reconsider the way you practise medicine.

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