Swiss physician Johannes Hofer coined the term ‘nostalgia’ in his 1688 medical dissertation from the Greek ‘nostos’, or homecoming, and ‘algos’, or pain.²

This time of year, with its cascades of vibrantly coloured leaves, is also the start of the academic calendar. Even with the challenges that beset primary health care, autumn brings the promise of a winter renewal, not least through teaching and learning. I find it hard not to feel a little nostalgic about the ‘back to school’ season. A powerful narrative of teaching and learning links the articles in this issue’s Life & Times.

**THE CHALLENGES OF TOMORROW**

A key goal of education today is to prepare learners for the challenges of tomorrow. For today’s and tomorrow’s GPs to be able to engage with climate-related health threats in partnership with their patients, medical curricula must shape teaching and learning now. Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) Curriculum Lead for Planetary Health, Suchita Shah, discusses what this means for GP education.² Although GPs may well be unique in their educational role, they can also help with teaching, and learning, and promote climate change education to patients.³

**A CURE FOR NOSTALGIA**

The arts and humanities can be profoundly deployed in medical research and education. ‘Found poetry’ is a neat example. It is created by taking words and phrases from other sources and reframing them — the literary equivalent of a collage. Jessica Watson and Fiona Hamilton demonstrate how the approach can be applied to qualitative research to capture and share experiences, ideas, and meanings in the form of a poem.⁴ Sentiment, feeling, and nostalgia can be powerful, and potentially overwhelming. For Hofer, nostalgia was similar to paranoia, except the sufferer was manic with longing, not perceived persecution, and similar to melancholy, except specific to an object or place.³ While nostalgia is no longer a widely accepted psychiatric diagnosis per se, practitioners and public alike can feel the passing of history and it isn’t always a comfortable experience. The recent death of Britain’s Queen Elizabeth II exemplifies the mingling of public grief and nostalgia.⁵

A fondness for the past can allow us to feel joy at the smell of new textbooks or the crunch of fallen leaves underfoot. It can also allow us to move forwards as well, learning from the past without repeating its mistakes. In this sense, education can be at least a partial cure for nostalgia.

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