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The Strength Within

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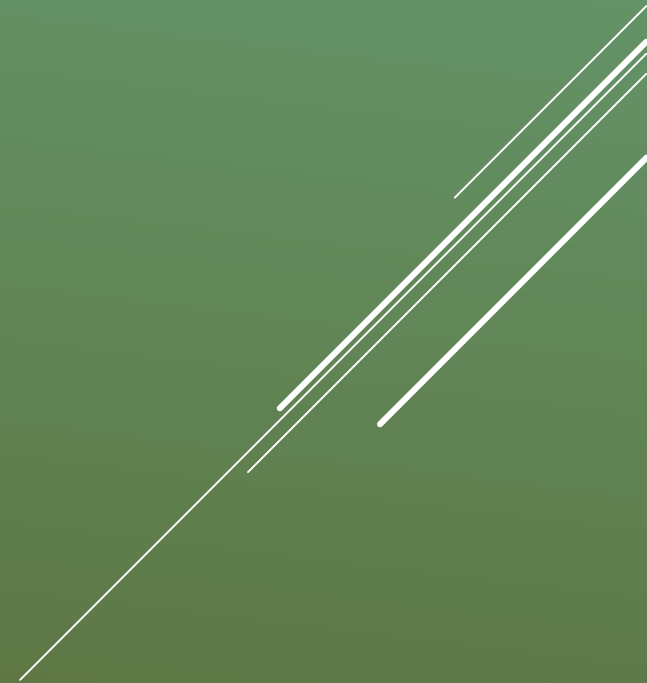
What happens when the loved ones we relied on to be there for us can no longer fulfill that role? When the burden of expectations is unexpectedly thrust upon us and we are called to rise to the occasion. Now, we find ourselves fulfilling the role of the caregiver in their stead. Maintaining our courage and pushing ourselves to be there for our loved ones, meanwhile deep down, feeling the pain and the unease of not knowing what the future holds. This creates a fundamental conflict within the psyche, an experience that manifested itself throughout medical school.

As medical students, we are trained to always remain calm, confident, and collected in order to make the most appropriate decision to best approach the situation at hand. When an individual that is sick is a loved one or caregiver, it becomes more challenging to maintain our composure. The people who once took care of us are now relying on us to be there for them. Internally, this leaves us in a state of vulnerability as we attempt to maintain our strength on the exterior.

However, the dichotomy of conflict is that while adversity may push us to the lowest of lows, this simply creates the opportunity to rise to new heights. Through our suffering we find resilience, through our tribulations we find strength, and throughout it all we find the perseverance to carry on for those we love.

Through our commonality of experience we can find friendship. Despite any situation, there are always other people who share those similar experiences and can empathize with you. With friendship you can find renewed strength within yourself to overcome what you thought wasn't possible and be an inspiration for the person that once took care of you.

THE STRENGTH WITHIN



“This essay embodies the internal conflict we face as our loved ones deal with illness.”

AUTHORS BENJAMIN RIVERA AND ALEXANDER MACIA ARE THIRD-YEAR MEDICAL STUDENTS AT KPCOM.

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