

February 7, 2008 (60th anniversary of the NHS)

Count My Worth

Count my worth not by the hours I work;
But by my work in those hours.
Count my worth not by the salary I earn;
But by how I earn that salary.

Count my worth not by the cost of the drugs I prescribe;
But by the responsibility with which I prescribe them.
Count my worth not by my adherence to guidelines and protocols;
But by the clinical freedom I choose to express.

Count my worth not by the number of patients I speak to;
But by the number of patients to whom I listen.
Count my worth not by the people I harm without intention;
But by the people I heal with it.

Count my worth not by the coffee break I take;
But by the colleagues whom I spend it with.
Count my worth not by the staff I employ;
But by the staff that I keep.

Count my worth not by the beliefs I hold;
But by the strength with which I hold them.
Count my worth not by the time I spend at work;
But by the time I spend with my family.

Count my worth not by what I know of medicine;
But by what I don't know of it.
Count my worth not by the limits that I push;
But by my knowledge of those limits.

Count my worth not by the weakness of my profession;
But by the strength of my integrity.
Count my worth not by what I have learned;
But by what I teach.

Count my worth not by what you perceive I do;
But by what you know I do.
Count my worth not by my inability to satisfy all;
But by my ability to satisfy many.

Count my worth not by the population that I treat;
But by my treatment of the person before me.
Count my worth not by the requirements that I tell you how not to die;
But by my pronouncements on how you should live.

Count my worth not by the convenience of my service;
But by the quality it possesses.
Count my worth not by the wealth of my business;
But by the health it enjoys.

Count my worth not by the value my QOF points hold;
But by the times when they are worthless.
Count my worth not by what I am eager to keep;
But by what I am willing to sacrifice.

Count my worth not by my use of IT;
But by how I am using it.
Count my worth not by the data that I hold;
But by the confidentiality that I keep.

Count my worth not by the years added to life;
But by the quality of those years.
Count my worth not by the tablets you take;
But by the number you don't.

Count my worth not by the fragile opinion of the public at large;
But by the trust I engender in the individual.
Count my worth not by the number of patients I see in a day;
But by the families that I watch grow over the years.

Count my worth not by my daytime hours;
But by my support of the vulnerable and the needy.
Count my worth not by the battles that I have fought and lost;
But by my willingness to fight again.

Count my worth not by my ability to say yes;
But by my ability to say no.
Count my worth not by the vitriol that you hurl now;
But by the quiet reflection when I am long gone.

- A General Practitioner (1948-2008)