

Fall 2021

## A Balance of Compassion: Fighting Inequality and Creating Access in Medicine

Ananna Kazi

University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine, akazi1@une.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/bestill>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#), [Fine Arts Commons](#), [Medical Humanities Commons](#), and the [Photography Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Kazi, Ananna (2021) "A Balance of Compassion: Fighting Inequality and Creating Access in Medicine," *be Still*: Vol. 5 , Article 17.

Available at: <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/bestill/vol5/iss1/17>

This Essay is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Osteopathic Medicine at NSUWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in be Still by an authorized editor of NSUWorks. For more information, please contact [nsuworks@nova.edu](mailto:nsuworks@nova.edu).

*This article describes my passion for using compassion to fight inequality and creating access in medicine.*

ARTIST STATEMENT: **ANANNA KAZI**

A decorative graphic consisting of several parallel white lines of varying lengths, slanted diagonally from the bottom right towards the top right, set against the red background.

# **A Balance of Compassion:** Fighting Inequality and Creating Access in Medicine

I was born in Bangladesh, one of the poorest countries in the world. I grew up seeing poverty on the streets, educationally deprived children and a lack of proper healthcare services all across the country. My current home is in the Bronx neighborhood of New York, and similar to Bangladesh, it has a high rate of poverty, limited educational opportunities and insufficient healthcare resources. Living in these communities has given me a broader perspective of the healthcare needs of underserved populations. I believe that by being inclusive of underprivileged populations in our patient care, we show the values of empathy, dignity, diversity and respect that are required for successful medical practice for everyone.

After coming to America, I served as an advocate and voice for people who were economically and socially challenged in my community. I volunteered at the rehabilitation medicine clinic in the Lincoln Medical Center and seeing patients return with a smile or even displaying their ability to walk again, made me feel contented since I was able to be a part of their healing process. Through this experience, I was also able to reach into my own background of being underserved and made sure that the patients received the best possible care regardless of race or ethnicity.

Additionally, at Lincoln Medical Center, I learned the power of compassion through an incident with an elderly Latina woman. She had heart disease and needed to go to another floor for an echocardiogram, but felt apprehensive about walking due to a knee problem. I noticed her waiting for someone to transport her upstairs and, although not part of my job description, I took the initiative to bring a wheelchair and move her to cardiac rehabilitation.

This simple gesture really touched her. I witnessed her attitude change within seconds. "I don't feel my knee pain anymore, nor do I feel heaviness in my chest!" and her eyes lit up with joy. The satisfaction derived from making her difficult time a little better is something I will cherish in my future medical practice. Her experience reminded me of the importance of compassion in medicine. As a future physician, I want to utilize my compassion to work in partnership with my patients. I want to implement health programs to break down barriers to healthcare.

A medical education to me is more than an in-depth knowledge to science and finding solutions to problems---it is also a tool and platform to confront social inequities. I want to use community outreach and research to create access and defeat social determinants of health in order to reach patients who need healthcare the most. Because 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts', I want to create a **balance of compassion**, fighting inequality and creating access in order to transform the lives of my patients.

**About the Author:** *Ananna Kazi is a third year medical student. She has a passion for integrating compassion to fight inequality and creating access for all in medicine.*