

*In other words***Emergency haiku**

As an emergency and urgent care psychiatrist, I find that writing haiku engenders a sense of purposeful focus in the midst of emotionally charged clinical work. I began exploring this poetic form with a “haiku kit.”<sup>1</sup> This consisted of a book on haiku writing, a drawstring bag containing an assortment of words from which a poem can be created, and a blank book for the writer’s own creations. Haiku writing and its evocative repetition of meaningful themes can induce a meditative state and, over time, a sense of wholeness. On two occasions, I chose the word “blossom.” Here are the results:

through gentle snow crust  
from frozen dark, undaunted  
slim tulips blossom

old before her time  
neuro-tangled brain, and yet  
memories blossom

Constructing these poems from words drawn at random from a little

cloth bag is, I have found, a self-revealing process. Although the form is strict — a 5-syllable line, a 7-syllable line and another 5-syllable line — it provides enough scope to reflect on my particular stage of life, my love of nature, and healing themes.

gentle spiral down  
called to dark, nourishing ground  
a leaf carves her path

willow once weeping  
windblown limp branches twisting  
now hand-woven chair

midlife wants a cat  
with two a.m. sweats and frets  
perfect companion

lichen clings brittle  
with crevice-rooted cedar  
rock solid marriage

Some days in the emergency department inspire more unusual poetry,

which I think of as “psycho haiku”:

out of frying pan  
flips manic energy swing  
into dancing fire

code white certify  
in secure facility  
like catch and release

paranoia spins  
relentlessly drives mind fields  
eccentricity

downward social drift  
day by day spare change sustains  
no place in this world

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**REFERENCE**

1. Dupont LH. *The Haiku Box*. Vermont: Journey Editions; 2001.