



Epic Encounter

By M. Tepper Cohen, MD

i TRIED to let them
reprogram my brain;

sit quietly,
click appropriately,
enter data only
when prompted.

But my body,
my body kept
jumping out of the chair,
pacing,
stretching,
distracting,
intervening.

At first I blamed the caffeine,
poor sleep, bad posture, or karma.

But soon I was aware there
is this struggle—
so I used the pen;
at least I can
fight a small battle
on familiar turf
and win;

Before the defensive positions
of my cyberspace
(never knew I had one)
are completely overrun.

Managing Chaos

By J. Trig Brown, MD, MPH

Always ask, "what else?"
pan for hidden gold.
Expect the worst,
listen to that inner voice
where Nature hides her doom.
When things are good,
never brag
lest wanting blame for bad.
When behind, slow down,
dot that i, recheck that lab.
When angry, smile.
Ruffled, sit.
Hurried, pause.
Give ten when asked for one.
Listen.
Smile.
Shake that hand.
Touch.
Touch.
Touch again.
And foremost, do no harm.
What else?



M. TEPPER COHEN, MD, has been practicing primary care medicine for 23 years. He is presently working in the minor injury clinic for Northwest Permanente.



J. TRIG BROWN, MD, MPH, a general internist with The Carolina Permanente Medical Group, PA, is Chief of Internal Medicine for Durham and Chapel Hill.