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## Yellow Blooms

*Amitha Kalaichandran*

We waltz as she guides me through the broad strokes of her mind  
Bristles soaked in yellow acrylic thoughts  
Meet my futile efforts to untangle abstract words, emotions, visions  
She, an artist leading me through the self-portrait into which she  
was born  
I, equipped with theories of grey matter, white matter  
“Do I Matter?”  
Noises, so many noises, palms up to ears  
Shielding the cacophonous symphony surrounding her peers  
Screaming out to a choir of friends never made.

Friends who became paintbrushes and colours, so many colours  
But a fascination and loyalty to yellow  
Stretched canvas, after all, can't tease or run away  
Like so many of them do  
Creating blooms in the springtime  
“Spring reminds me of the colour yellow,” she smiles  
And so she paints with soft strokes and shades  
Smoothly gliding the brush of her perceptions  
As I navigate the canvas of her mind  
Trying my best to stay between the lines.

“I get angry when they stare”  
Herself an exhibit of loneliness intersecting misunderstanding

Healers, so many healers, massaging her mind into  
conformity  
As one might mold ceramic into an immaculate vase  
But her yellow blooms are caressed in a perfect asymmetry  
Textured with flecks of joy and pain juxtaposed  
A Healer learns most from the exception to rigid rules  
Like an abstract work transcends its conventional brothers  
And so we waltz with her words and mine  
To a place where patience and kindness become  
Interwoven in the yellow blooms of her mind.

**Amitha Kalaichandran**, MD MHS, is a paediatrics resident. Amitha earned a degree in global public health from Johns Hopkins University, a medical degree at the University of Toronto, and her Yoga Teacher Certification from Yandara Institute. She most recently completed a mindfulness-training course under Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn. She has an interest in integrative medicine and social paediatrics, with a growing interest in the connection between the mind and body as it applies to paediatric patients. While not on the wards, Amitha enjoys writing, photography, yoga, and cooking. Amitha's poem was inspired by her work with children with autism at the Toronto Western Hospital while she was a medical student. She would like to acknowledge Dr. Michelle Pearce (Paediatric Neurodevelopmental Clinic at the TWH), Sakthi Kalaichandran, Sol Guy, and Laura Cropper for sharing their thoughts on the initial draft of the poem. Email: [amitha.kalaichandran@gmail.com](mailto:amitha.kalaichandran@gmail.com)