

Balance_Tao

Category: visuals

written by Tamra Travers | August 10, 2018



Tamra Travers

About the artist:

Tamra Travers is a third year family medicine resident training in New York City. Her professional interests include narrative medicine, integrative medicine, and obstetrics. Originally from Florida, she enjoys the ocean, sunshine, playing outside, and cultivating creativity and curiosity about the world around her. You can find her narrative medicine work on her blog: whitecoatwonder.tumblr.com

About the artwork:

"I reached out to one of my mentors, Dr. Ken Brummel-Smith, for advice during my very first clinical rotation of medical school in my third year. I was feeling overwhelmed discussing complex, non-treatable problems and suffering from patients day after day on my psychiatry clerkship. His response strongly resonated with me, and years later it became the inspiration for this piece.

This is what he wrote: "You are being given an amazing gift, working with people who are suffering. The most important thing you can do for them is to recognize your feelings and not run from them. Your job is to remain present, and removed, at the same time. It's the perfect Zen experience. Look at the Tao symbol and think of that when you are feeling overwhelmed. The black is being overwhelmed. But even in that tidal wave there is a circle of hope. The white is your commitment to the patient and to yourself. There's always a dark circle hidden in that, but the white is strong – and on top!"

Visuals editor:

Sara Kohrt