November 20, 2017

Dear Colleague,

Physicians in every age have faced challenges and our generation is no exception. The rapid and sustained evolution of healthcare over the past decade, however, has deeply affected how we function as medical professionals and as human beings. The increasing rate of burnout and distress is frighteningly high, potentially taking its toll on patient safety and the sustainability of the health "system."

During medical school and residency, we learned how to function on minimal sleep, were generally taught to stuff our emotions where others cannot see them, and did not question the fact that we had no control over our lives for that season. Unfortunately, many of us have carried these habits into our careers and this has made it all too easy to forget the reasons we put down on medical school applications for going into medicine in the first place.

However, I believe there is still plenty of joy and meaning that is available to us in our chosen profession. The real question is how to recover and guard it.

Last year, Any Medical Society launched its Physician Wellness Program, designed to provide cost-free access to confidential "life coaching" from therapists vetted by physicians. In our first year, we've provided more than 120 counseling sessions to our fellow colleagues, helping walk them through marital and work-related challenges, grief, anxiety, depression, and other stressors.

The board committed to starting this program knowing it was the right thing to do and did not want to raise dues to sustain it – and we still don't! That is why I am asking you to consider making a year-end tax-deductible charitable contribution or monthly pledge to the AMS Foundation. If you are not struggling with any of these life or work challenges, your generosity can help pay-it-forward for others who are. If you are struggling, please reach out for help; the enclosed brochure explains how our program operates and our website has many other resources.

I am so proud of our medical community and believe we have a greater solidarity in our profession than many other cities. In spite of our different specialties and employers, our city's culture of collaboration with friends *and* competitors is truly unique.

On behalf of the board of directors, thank you for your membership with AMS and making our community a vital place to practice medicine.

Sincerely,

Michael Feelgood, MD, President

**P.S. You can make your contribution securely online today at Anymedicalsociety.org or by mail with the enclosed brochure. A gift of $125 will cover the cost for a single counseling session – $1000 will sponsor the 8 allowable sessions per member in a year.**