

dear residents

Thriving in Uncertain Times

November 10, 2024

Dear Residents,

In the world of medicine, we are not impervious to the social change around us. If anything, both the welfare of our patients and our personal wellbeing are subject to environmental factors. The recent US election results may have come as a pleasant or as an unwelcome surprise to you. While change is inevitable, what is clear is that many aspects of our broader environment may witness accelerated transformation in the spheres of immigration policy, reproductive health, the economy, foreign policy, and taxation to name a few. These will add to the stressors placed on The House of Medicine which has endured a lot since 2020 – the pandemic, changes in how we think about reproductive health, and continuing workforce shortages. Concurrently, public trust in both science and in our profession has been dented. The silver lining is that these last few years have also witnessed the splendor of science in vaccine development, in the growing number of precision drugs and through technologic breakthroughs. The pace of change is dizzying, and it can stretch our coping skills and potentially impact our overall happiness and performance.

I have some personal experience with swift political change. In the 27 years I lived in Pakistan before coming to the US, we had a toxic mix of military rule, ethnic strife, geopolitics, and various failed democratic movements. Through all this, I still managed a healthy childhood, a remarkable education, and loving relationships with friends and family. Some of this was aided by privilege (my father was a physician) but much of it was because the human spirit is adaptable and resilient. Cultures and civilizations have regularly endured periods of seismic change, but these interludes have also unleashed creative energies. In the instability lies the possibility that creative forces will turn turmoil into the building blocks of a stronger structure.

[Oliver Burkeman](#) recently wrote: “Things reliably spin out of control in human affairs whenever we relate primarily to each other, and the world, through abstract conceptual lenses. That’s what’s going on when we see other people mainly as kinds of people, as members of demographic groups, nations, parties, or representatives of social forces.” Here at UT Southwestern, despite the uncertainty around us, internally we are united as humans, as healers and as professionals dedicated to the greater good. Burkeman reminds us that “this radical uncertainty is where you’ve always lived, whether you realized it or not, and the only place from which you’ve ever accomplished anything.”

I want to reiterate that when you matched here, my promise was to craft the best possible environment for you to thrive in. My team and I will double-down on that promise. You can count on our love and support.



Photo by [Kate Branch](#) on [Unsplash](#)

In solidarity,

Dino Kazi