

Invictus

■ LOU ELLEN HORWITZ, MA

Get an English major as your CEO, and eventually you're going to get some poetry. "Invictus" is about bravery and determination in the face of whatever comes. If you want to see it in real life, just look around your centers—or look in the mirror. It's talking about you.

One of the things that helps us to keep getting up when we get knocked down is the helping hands of others. Or a look in our direction that shows us another person who understands what we are going through and believes that we will get up. Or a reminder that the most important step isn't the first one—it's the next one.

This is the moment in all great movies when things look their worst. The hero has delivered the knockout punch and is gasping for breath and the audience has exhaled...then the ominous music begins because the knocked-out villain has begun to stir. It's then that the hero realizes they have to strap up and go back in one...more...time. And you know then that they will truly be victorious.

Heroes don't just show up. They show up over and over and over. When the hard things come—like a pandemic—they don't close, they stay open. When the pandemic rears its head again, just when the heroes thought the battle was finally dying down, they strap on their weapons, pull each other up, and get back to it.

I'm talking about you, urgent care.

There are no words that can adequately express what urgent care's performance through COVID-19 is going to mean to our industry and specialty in the long term, because that is what we haven't seen yet, but I'm pretty hopeful and you should be too. The hero doesn't stand up to get the credit, but it sure feels great when they do get it—and it is past time for your turn.

I should also mention that I've had the privilege of seeing this in the UCA team as well. Our staff and volunteers have risen up, stayed focused on putting members and urgent care

first, figured out what that means in the time of COVID-19, handled hard choices, and taken the chances that needed to be taken. It's a great group of people and I can't wait for you to meet them when we can get our band back together—at long last—in Las Vegas.

The cancellation of the Convention has been hard to take for all of us, but we are already using this "found time" to move forward faster on the initiatives that will mean the most to urgent care: advocacy, public relations, partnerships, and advancing the specialty. There is much to come on all of these and we hope you will get involved. We are also working on more marvelous member benefits, and look forward to launching those sooner than expected.

I will leave you, for now, with the poem.

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

– William Ernest Henley – 1849-1903 ■



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