McMaster Program for Faculty Development (MacPFD)

Spark Podcast

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Interviewer: Dr. Teresa Chan
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Dr. Teresa Chan (00:02):
Welcome to the MacPFD Spark podcast. This podcast is meant to inspire you to take the next step in your development journey as a faculty member. We're really excited to bring you all sorts of content from inspiring you to teach or supervise differently, to leading and managing your team, to thinking about new creative ways or humanistic ways to actually do your work, and finally, to up your game in your scholarly practice. Are you excited yet? I certainly am. So sit back, listen, and enjoy this latest episode of the MacPFD Spark Podcast.

[music]

Dr. Teresa Chan (00:45):
Hello, everyone. Welcome back to another episode of MacPFD Spark. I am so delighted to present in this episode two really awesome guests. I think our guests are always awesome, so I'm a little biased. The first is Dr. Karen McAssey. She is someone who has been working in the MD undergraduate program, and she is going to talk about how she transitioned the MD program in the time of COVID. It's been more than a year since we transitioned, and I think it's really important to take stock of what we've done and to respect the hard work that we did all in 2020 to be able to get us through these years, and so tune in to see what she ended up reflecting on with me recently. The second part of the episode features Dr. Michael Gottlieb, Dr. Mary Calderone Haas, and Dr. Yusuf Yilmaz. They will be speaking about something that is near and dear to my heart, and this is a syndication of a previous webinar that they conducted about collaborative writing. So, you'll hear me in there too 'cause I was their host for that event. Get ready. Here's the episode.

[music]

Dr. Teresa Chan (01:58):
Hello, everyone. I am here with the esteemed Dr. Karen McAssey. She is someone who does a lot of the work within our clerkship section of the MD program, and she is the chair of that section of the curriculum because the organizational structure of the MD school is structured that way, where there's a chair of pre-clerkship and there's a chair of clerkship, and those were some of the roles that you might aspire to, I guess, if you're interested in leadership within education. I brought her here to talk a little bit about what the MD program has been doing in this brave new world of the post-

pandemic era. And we had to all pivot really quickly in the kind of spring basically of 2020 and a lot of us have had to move mountains, and you're one of those people who has had to reinvent how we do medical school training essentially within a couple of months of the pandemic being established. And you've just brought in your first class of students who will have experienced their initial bit of medical school really as an online experience, so I'd love to hear what you've been up to and what are some of the challenges and archive some of that zeitgeist for the world, just so we can learn from it.

Dr. Karen McAssey (03:16):
Thanks, Teresa. It's great to be here today. For sure, the pandemic required many, many changes to our curriculum. We had to move very quickly to provide an ongoing curriculum so that there wouldn't be any interruptions in our pre-clerkship learning. So, we basically moved our entire curriculum to an online environment as was required in many different areas of our lives during the pandemic. This included for us then problem-based learning tutorials, which is really fundamental foundation of our pre-clerkship curriculum. All of our tutorials went online. We have large group sessions, so we call them active learning large group sessions, and they were delivered online as well as our clinical skills curriculum, our professional competencies curriculum. So, we quickly moved everything online. There were a number of bumps along the way, for sure. We had very frequent conversations with a number of different stakeholders, and particularly the feedback from the students was so critical in being able to make changes in an iterative fashion. And now, as we're looking into the latter part of our pre-clerkship curriculum for the class of 2023, we're starting to think about which aspects we might be able to start to deliver in-person again. And of course, clinical skills is going to be at the very top of our list to be able to do some in-person activities.

Dr. Teresa Chan (04:48):
Yeah, I can imagine clinical skills must be one of those things that's very challenging to do virtually. And I know that we have some MacPFD webinars on what you can try to do maybe ahead of time. And there is something about the kinesthetic and movement-based properties of clinical skills that probably make it best to be taught more in-person than online, so definitely finding ways to do that safely has probably been a big challenge as well. There are some pretty amazing things that you've had to reinvent or change in this last little while. My understanding, because we've had Jason Profetto do some of our workshops and stuff like that around some of the clinical skills. But more importantly, the OSCE, is that you have experimented with online pivoting of assessment as well. So, it's not just curricular delivery, but assessment. Can you talk to me a little bit about the behind the scenes of how you pull that off?

Dr. Karen McAssey (05:41):
So, in terms of online assessment, that definitely has been a challenge for our program. We have a number of assessment tools that we use in pre-clerkship. So, we have something called concept application exercises, which are really short-answer tests that students write once a month. We have RPEs or retrieval practice exercises, multiple choice quizzes. We have our PPIs, the progress testing that happens throughout the MD program, as well OSCE. So, all of these assessment tools have moved directly online. We've had great expertise and support from our project officer, who is Jeremy Sandor, who works for the MD program. And again, some bumps along the way and lots of conversations with our PESA Committee, which is the program evaluation student assessment committee. But we have been able to really continue to deliver the same sort of assessments that we were doing pre-COVID. We've continued in our new world within the pandemic, being able to deliver those online.

Dr. Teresa Chan (06:44):
Alright, that's great. And so what do you think are the biggest changes between online delivery of things like PBL or some of these assessments and like, what do we gain and what do we lose? Like what has your curriculum been able to do and what are some things that maybe in this new format that you miss and you think that we'll have to make sure we fall back in?

Dr. Karen McAssey (07:05):
Online tutorials are an interesting aspect in terms of some of, sort of the advantages and disadvantages or gains and losses. Much of what happens in tutorial can happen on an online environment. When you have the right platform, you've got video and you've got audio. Online PBL requires that there's clear setting of expectations. So the students know what to expect. The tutor knows what to expect, but that's kind of along the lines of setting ground rules for PBL in general. So making sure that cameras are on, mics are on, that students take breaks because of course, one of the big drawbacks to all of these online activities is the fatigue that happens. Both students and tutors with really, constantly being online, trying to mitigate some of that fatigue by making sure we build in breaks. And we make sure that our session facilitators for our active learning sessions are starting and ending on time is really important. Engaging learners is a another, I think really important aspect of online problem-based learning. And certainly, within a tutorial that's in-person, you want to have an opportunity for all students to feel that they're contributing and to be able to contribute, but engaging learners in an online environment takes a different skill set for sure.

Dr. Karen McAssey (08:27):
And so, taking advantage of some of the features such as the chat, raising hands, making sure that you use kind of the Brady bunch screen so that everyone is visible as much as possible, using the whiteboards with some of the programs so that students can contribute in different ways, whether it's, you know, diagrams as well as verbally, as well as chat, I think is really, really important. And building relationships, you know, that's been a challenge for sure as well, right? Because in a small group, you get to know your students so well when you're a tutor, whereas you lose the opportunity for some of those not hallway conversations per se, but just kind of the chit chat that happens before or after tutorial. So, you know, making sure that you really build positive relationships with your group online, things that would resonate with even an in-person environment or things like, making sure you're saying our tutorial or our group, you know, addressing the students by name is really important, sharing personal experiences, but you just kind of have to go the extra step when you're online. You may need some asynchronous means of communication in between sessions that really just allows you to build those relationships and for students to get a good sense of what your work looks like clinically as a tutor, because that's so important to them in an in-person scenario.

Dr. Teresa Chan (09:51):
Yeah, for sure. I mean, I think that we're all trying to live in this new world of being online. And I think that you see some people do some really cool things. You're like, I'm gonna totally use that, right? Like I love how the chat has become this way of breaking down the traditional hierarchy, or even if someone's speaking for on and on and on that people are able to engage and say something that they'd like to speak next and things like that. I think being able to evolve some of those practices to role model for our students, how we might do that, but then also like, teaching them back into our own lives and other avenues, because I think that what you might learn from your students in PBL will actually help jazz up how you might run your next committee meeting or next business group meeting or something like that. And so I think different people have different roles,

and I think our students can be a great source of inspiration as well in this space for how to improve our practices at large across other things.

Dr. Teresa Chan (10:44):
And so just pointing that out because I have learned a lot from some of my online teaching of best practices that people will suggest and then I'll adopt. And I think that that's just part of the growth mindset of being a faculty member. So I think that that's amazing times right now to really use this as a way to think through what are the affordances that an online platform allows for us, right? I would assume that in the big classes that you have, like you have large group sessions with all the medical students, do you feel that it's changed anything there?

Dr. Karen McAssey (11:15):
In our curriculum renewal, we had already made changes to our large group sessions. So there are active learning, large group sessions. So a significant amount of time is devoted to interactivity engagement. We use a lot of polling, for example, sometimes breakout rooms because of the changes that we had made previously to the large group session so that they weren't passive didactic. The students weren't asked to sort of sit at their computer for a couple of hours at a time and just soak up information, but they were actually, much more active. I think that that really served us well when we needed to go to an online environment. Because again, we could take advantage of polling, in many of the different platforms. And, as I said before, breakout rooms, and so, it became much more engaging. The chat is really helpful for many of the active learning sessions as well, but you often need a second person or at least sort of a second set of eyes on the chat just to make sure that it's being monitored and students can ask questions as they go along.

Dr. Karen McAssey (12:22):
But we really encourage our facilitators to have a look at that chat and for students to be able to ask those questions. And, sometimes it's even an advantage as opposed to kind of being in a large lecture auditorium and raising your hand or pressing the button on the mic when students have the opportunity to use the chat function. For some students, it makes the question asking a little more accessible for them.

Dr. Teresa Chan (12:49):
Yeah, I think that there's all diverse groups of preferences within our student cohorts, so I think acknowledging that it's important to think about all the different ways that people might be more comfortable communicating. And so in a classroom of hundreds of people, I can imagine there are some that might not be the most comfortable there, and maybe now with only the 25 squares on a given Zoom day, even if there are pages and pages of other participants, maybe asking a question there seems a little less intimidating. Maybe typing the question is less intimidating. I think those affordances for people who may identify as being a little bit less extroverted, maybe more introverted would be I think key. The other part of it too would be in a big classroom where you have multiple rows of students, it's hard to see the entire classroom so you might bias yourself towards those who are in the front of the class. And so being able to try to figure out how we make more equitable that ability for people to have a voice, speak up, I think that would be important as well. So maybe we can take some of these lessons we learned from running Zoom meetings and big classes in Zoom over back into our daily practices when we actually go back to physical spaces as well.

Dr. Teresa Chan (13:58):
There are a lot of things that I think of now that I'm like, "Maybe I do need a simultaneous chat somewhere to run during my class," so that even if I'm not able to man the fort there, maybe I ask one of my co-tutors, maybe my co-teachers, maybe we teach more as a team, and so that someone is responsible to look at that. I know that some big conferences had always had a Twitter moderator or something like that. Do we need to use tech enhanced ways to bring that back into the classroom after? I wonder about that because I do think that there's been a huge advantage of using that chat in enabling people to say things that they might not have actually asked or said, and somehow that seems safer. And so I wonder if Slido or some of those other technologies that you might actually do might be quite useful to be able to fold alongside even just a giant traditional med school large group session, as interactive as it might be. [chuckle]

Dr. Karen McAssey (14:54):
Yeah, totally agree, Teresa. There's gonna be so much that we've learned as a result of the changes that we made, and many things that we will wanna hold on to. Some things we will happily give up, but things like how we use technology in large group sessions, the chat are really great examples. And just to go back also to what you said about student feedback, we've had so many great ideas coming from our students, and it's been a great opportunity to learn with the students and from the students in terms of how they're using technology, how they appreciate some of these different features that we've brought in, as well as those that have worked less well, for sure.

Dr. Teresa Chan (15:36):
And I've noticed for at least our master program from faculty development, we've also noticed that there's all sorts of really interesting ways in which the technology has allowed more affordances. I think for a young faculty who have children at home, it's always been hard for them to get out of the house to do anything, and if they can't even have fun, they're probably gonna not also then aspire for greater faculty development, for instance. And so it's been quite eye-opening, the accessibility and the types of people that might come in for a digital workshop as opposed to something that we had to do in-person. And so I do think that these are all things that we should give pause to as we migrate back, that we're not gonna lose people and make inaccessible the things that we are able to make very accessible and very clickworthy at this point. And I think that those are all challenges we hopefully look forward to facing because I think that means that we'll have the choice of more different ways to connect with people, and I think that this pandemic has helped us enable people with the skills and the comfort level to be able to think more creatively about the digital space that might run concurrently to augment your physical curriculum and offerings.

Dr. Karen McAssey (16:45):
Absolutely, I couldn't agree more. One small example would be tutoring over the summer months. It has been years and years and years since we have run a foundation over the summer months because we just couldn't get tutors, and this past year we needed to run one of our foundations over the summer months, and people could tutor from their cottages or wherever they were over the summertime and really had that flexibility. So that's something that we'll really have to consider carefully when we move back to in-person tutoring, how much might we wanna continue to hold on to, just to give our tutors some flexibility, as well as our students some flexibility.

Dr. Teresa Chan (17:29):
And I think that flexibility is the name of the game here. You don't wanna just cave to everything that people want, but to make it so that if it's internalized, I think is really important, and I think that

making sure that we acknowledge that our faculty are doing a lot and that if we can make it a little bit easier for them, then that's great. And maybe it means that you could do a more blended version of PBL. I know that there are a lot of tutors like myself who on other years might be traveling quite a bit, and even when I am traveling, I might have been able to run the tutorial, but now I had to have nine weeks contiguously blocked off that I couldn't switch it up and say, "I'm gonna do it on Zoom another time." I have to show up to a tutorial room. That made it impossible for me to tutor sometimes. So now with co-tutoring, and then on top of that, being able to be flexible that if I'm on the road and in a different time zone, as long as I can partition my time well, I can still run tutorial if I'm in Dallas or Shanghai or wherever. That would be inconvenient for me, but make it accessible at least for me to be able to do it because tutoring in Shanghai might be at 1:00 AM [chuckle] But it is something that we would have to actually wrestle with and see, and if that was something that I wanted to be able to commit to but couldn't.

Dr. Teresa Chan (18:47):
I do think that the technology might afford some opening up of that, so I think that's a very interesting proposition, I think, for the future, and so, thanks so much for... Yeah, I think that I will have to recalibrate maybe if that's available to us in the future.

Dr. Karen McAssey (19:05):
So, Teresa, people often ask me, "Are there any disadvantages to problem-based learning?" and the only thing that I can ever come up with and looking at all of the literature, the only thing you hear is that it is resource intensive, that it's a considerable time commitment for our tutors. So we may now be able to say there are no disadvantages to problem-based learning, because now we have the flexibility and the choice to be able to deliver it in-person or virtually.

Dr. Teresa Chan (19:38):
Yeah, and it might be interesting to see. It could be that a tutor could be given license with their tutorial to assign it either way. It might be that you actually just stream people into what their preference is. So those who are interested in doing something locally-based and in-person, they would get that opportunity, or you would sign up for a virtual tutor who might be in a different campus actually and have mixed groups of individuals in the pre-clerkship. So, I think there are some great advantages to being able to go digital, is that you might actually get more diversity of thought, a greater reach of people. And I think that that might be quite exciting because I do know that a lot of our faculty, they wanna get engaged and they're in smaller communities, and it's quite of a trek to be able to come down to Hamilton to run a PPL tutorial and that adds two hours to their day at least, and that could be a big barrier. But if it's just clicking a Zoom link and they can reserve some time in a couple of afternoons, I think that can go a long way to making more equitable and accessible some of our greatest assets, which are new faculty that might wanna do this. So, I think those are very, very interesting propositions, and I think that that's been one of the big unifiers of what we can do in this digital space, is to bring people together more efficiently.

Dr. Karen McAssey (20:51):
Yes, and we had an opportunity to do some of that in our earlier foundations, to have tutors from all three campuses and different community sites, and it's something we value so much in the MD program. I'm sure other programs do as well because students will get a perspective from their tutor, from someone who is maybe working in Hamilton, and then they'll have a perspective from a tutor who is working in a different community, and it just really adds to the richness of the experience for students.

Dr. Teresa Chan (21:23):
Agreed. And so I think the sky's limit in the future, and I thank you so much for coming in to chat with me about this. It's an exciting time. It's daunting and exciting at the same time, but few things that are exciting are ever without a small level of daunting fear that they induce. I think that the fear and excitement have a lot of the same physiologic cues. So I think that it's been really a privilege to be able to watch on the sidelines as you've done some great innovation work and led a huge transformation of your curriculum, so congratulations to you and your team for all your work, and obviously to Dr. White for steering that ship altogether. I look forward to seeing how the McMaster MD program continues to innovate and change over time.

Dr. Karen McAssey (22:11):
Thanks so much, Teresa.

[music]

Dr. Teresa Chan (22:15):
Wow, that was a really awesome first segment of the MacPFD Spark podcast. And now, onto our second segment.

[music]

Dr. Teresa Chan (22:28):
Hello, everybody. It's me, Teresa Chan again, assistant dean for the program for faculty development. I am delighted to have a panel of speakers here with me today to talk about collaborative writing. And so, I have some people that I've been writing with collaboratively, some for months and some for years, and so I would like to introduce them. So first is Mary Haas. Maybe Mary can turn her video on and jump in and wave hi.

Dr. Mary Calderone-Haas (22:54):
Thank you all so much for having me.

Dr. Teresa Chan (22:56):
So Mary, do you wanna tell everyone a little bit about yourself, where you're at?

Dr. Mary Calderone-Haas (23:00):
Oh yes, sounds great. I'm coming to you from Ann Arbor, Michigan. I am one of the assistant program directors at the University of Michigan Emergency Medicine residency, and I have an interest in social media and education in communities of practice and have had the pleasure of doing some collaborative writing with the people leading this session, so it's a pleasure to be here.

Dr. Teresa Chan (23:21):
Great. And next, we will put the spotlight on Dr. Michael Gottlieb. So, Mike, do you wanna take it away and introduce yourself?

Dr. Michael Gottlieb (23:29):
Thanks for having me. Excited to speak with you all over the next roughly 45 minutes. So, my name is Mike Gottlieb. I am an associate professor, the ultrasound division director, and the ultrasound

fellowship director at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. I am also an emergency physician and I've been collaborating some of these team members for quite a while. Actually, I was collaborating with Teresa Chan for almost a year before I actually even met her through online collaborations. We developed a program together before we actually met, so it's a testament to the value of collaboration over an online medium.

Dr. Teresa Chan (24:02):
There was a lot of Google Hangouts, I think, before we met in-person, and I felt like I already knew you by the time I met you in real life for the first time. So, testament to that technological jump that we can make, for sure. And I think some of you all know, but this is the famous doctor Yusuf Yilmaz who's a post-doctoral fellow here at McMaster. Yusuf, do you want to tell us a little bit about yourself and your background again?

Dr. Yusuf Yilmaz (24:24):
Thank you for having me again here on this session. I'm Yusuf. I am a post-doctoral at MERIT, McMaster University Education Research, Innovation and Theory Unit. And I've been working with Dr. Chan 10 months now starting from the 1st of September, but I've been knowing her from Twitter before I wrote her. So collaboration was started on Twitter and then moved to just doing my post-doc here with her, so it's kind of a good story for me here.

[laughter]

Dr. Teresa Chan (24:55):
Excellent. So, we're gonna stop the spotlight and we're gonna bounce around a little bit. So I'm gonna start a little bit with my own reflections and I'm gonna ask everyone to reflect on their own as well about the art of collaboration. So for me, one of the beautiful things about writing collaboratively rather than taking a serial approach is that you don't have to feel so lonely anymore when you're writing. So, you don't have to feel like as the first author, you have to bear the burden of actually putting it all together and then having this masterpiece before you send it to your co-authors. What I have found is that using collaborative writing techniques such as Google Docs or even just a shared Dropbox folder where you take turns, you can check-in with your authors more often. And I think that, to be honest, with the ICMJE criteria help everyone meets the authorship criteria more rigorously, not that I'd like to police who's been involved in the paper, but I do find that sometimes in big collaborations it's hard to tell who wrote what. And Google Docs, definitely, as you might have seen in the other video that we did earlier, it allows you to kind of track that and see who's contributed and who's disagreed with whom, and try to iron that out.

Dr. Teresa Chan (25:57):
So I think that that's really nice and I think that in today's day and age, where we're trying to be ethical about our involvement as authors and make sure that the adhere to the International Consensus of Medical Journal Editors, so ICMJE have criteria, but what makes you an author. I think it's really nice to have some of these general tools to allow for that kind of tracking. The other thing that I like it for is that when you share it with people, to their gmail or other kind of affiliated accounts, you can actually, I guess, Josh was, one of my colleagues, and he's called me out on it, he's said that at times, what happens is that you can kind of "gamify" or I guess, reinforce a positive behavior in writing, so for instance, if Mike, Mary and I are all writing a paper together, when Yusuf is involved as well, and he goes and edits 32 things, all of us get a push notification from Google that says "Hey, Yusuf has been working really hard on this paper", and the likelihood of me clicking in to

take a look at what Yusuf's done and also maybe contributing myself is higher as well. So I think that it actually encourages that kind of collaboration and hands-on approach, so that people aren't kind of like, off on their own. With that I'd like to kind of pivot over to Mary and have her talk about some of the ins and outs that she's had.

Dr. Mary Calderone-Haas (27:13):
Thank you. Yes, I think one of the things that I've loved most about the remote collaborative writing experiences is that, it's given me the opportunity to connect with people outside of my institution. I have great mentors and connections here at the University of Michigan, but there's something that's been really special about being able to learn from people at completely different environments who have a different working culture and have learned totally different strategies and leadership skills that I maybe haven't been exposed to within my own little microcosm. So even just to the remote writing experiences I've had with the team members leaving the session, for instance, the authorship grid was a tool that I learned from Dr. Chan, and that's the table that we saw on Yusuf's template there. You could see it at the table where everybody filled out their name and institution and Twitter handle, and that was just like, blew my mind, because one of the biggest roadblocks in traditional writing I've found is that end-stage, just getting everybody's authorship information, it takes people forever to respond to you, and then all you're waiting on is to make sure that you have their spelling and their degree and everything correctly, and just putting that out there upfront, and the Google Doc was such a beautiful, simple solution to that.

Dr. Mary Calderone-Haas (28:19):
So that's just one example of how I have learned through the process of being able to work with people outside of my institution. And I think the social experience is so amazing when I reflect back on some of the papers that I've had the biggest challenges with or that have felt the hardest to write, it's because I really felt the full burden, and for some reason that made me more likely to procrastinate, but that positive peer pressure aspect that Dr. Chan is talking about, it is just so valuable. When you see other people on the team getting work done and being productive and contributing, it makes you wanna do the same thing versus, it's so easy in traditional writing to just stall when the first author gets busy and they haven't had bandwidth to move along the paper, the paper just kind of hits that roadblock, but this way people on the team are much more engaged and more invested in moving it forward. So those are some of the things that I've really appreciated about the experience.

Dr. Teresa Chan (29:10):
Alright, I'm gonna toss it over to Dr. Gottlieb now to share his insights as well.

Dr. Michael Gottlieb (29:15):
Yeah, I'll accurate some of Mary's and Teresa's really great points is that just broadening your network, no matter how much great mentorship you have your own institution, there's so much more out there that you can be exposed to, to make more opportunities to learn from other people, both from the style standpoint as well as just expansion of knowledge of ideas that we would never have thought of that when you get a group of people together, you have to find these really great future projects that you would never have thought of individually. Having that team component of it is such a really, really great way of really creating much more powerful projects that are much more impactful in the larger... One of the other things I really enjoy about this collaborative writing style is that our centers are pretty busy, and I think when you try to get five or six or seven people together,

I think we've all done those Zoom calls where there's one option, it sort of works and even then it's like one person misses it, and it's impossible to get everyone together in the same thing.

Dr. Michael Gottlieb (30:04):
So you start a project like four months later because you have to plan something wherever everyone can reserve of one Monday at 3:00 PM, and then something always happens, and these projects that are usually stalled off for infinity can then be done much quicker because we can work asynchronously and we'll probably talk about this a little later, but you can use platforms like Slack or Microsoft Teams or what are different models to allow people to add comments and whatever time works best for you. So I mentioned I'm in this position, and so I'm working sometimes overnight, and as a result, I probably won't be able to respond to something at like 7:00 PM if I'm working in the evening at the time, but I can respond at 3:00 AM and not wake everyone up and instead I can just add my comments and that way when someone wakes up at 7:00 AM they can add upon that, so it kind of works around everyone's schedules regardless of how busy or erratic the schedules are.

Dr. Teresa Chan (30:53):
That's great. Yusuf, do you wanna add your thoughts here?

Dr. Yusuf Yilmaz (30:56):
What I want to find nice about the Google Docs, like they give you the option to assign the different sections with comment bubbles and then they will just get notified and they just assign to that section. So in these regular cases like you will send them to emails like, "Okay, can you write some introduction paragraph," or "Can you do a method section?" But here you will just talk about the context, the context, your base. So when you click something on the methods part and then highlight it and make some comment on it, and then you will be able to just assign some people "Okay, can you finish it?" Or you can even discuss on the comment bubbles, so you will have just get this sorted out through our paper and they will just always update it about the information. And if you're working in the 3:00 AM and then you'll be just working on your part as well.

Dr. Teresa Chan (31:49):
And that brings up a good point, right? You can have disagreements sometimes, so I think Mary, we've had papers where maybe everyone didn't see eye to eye, and so if you wanna join me and reflecting, I don't how we actually overcame that because I think that that's important too, right? Not everything's all sunshines and rainbows, just 'cause you have a Google Doc, right? Sometimes you don't get along, and sometimes it's... Yeah. Yeah.

Dr. Mary Calderone-Haas (32:12):
Thank you for bringing up this important topic. I was telling you, my psychiatrist friend that just visited me today, we were kind of reflecting on academics because she recently completed a fellowship and went to work in the community. And I asked her, "Do you ever miss academics?" And she's like, "No way, too much drama." [laughter] Yeah. I hadn't thought of it that way, but there's kind of a lot of drama in academics. People have different perspectives. Everybody's really intelligent and smart and everybody has a valuable perspective, it just may be different. And so those people have egos, and you maybe are doing everything remotely where you lose the nuances of reading somebody's facial expressions and tones with text-based communication. And if you're trying to get something done quickly, which our teams, we like to move things quickly and get them done, it's just a set up for conflict. And so that experience that Dr. Chan was referring to, even though it was a little

dramatic and challenging and a little bit emotional at the time, it was actually an amazing learning experience because conflict is inevitable.

Dr. Mary Calderone-Haas (33:19):
And even if you're somebody like me who doesn't like it, you're gonna eventually find yourself in the middle of it and have to deal with it. And I think the most valuable lesson for me that I'll take moving forward when I encounter conflict in collaborative writing teams is to take it to an in-person or Zoom or phone conversation. Take it off the text-based platform and have a meaningful conversation because you're much more likely to be able to understand each other's tone of voice, meet halfway, recognize that both of you have good intentions when you're having more of a face-to-face voice conversation than a text. And usually, when there's conflict, it's good to just kind of acknowledge it and be like, "Hey, let's pause. Let's talk through this on a Zoom call and work through it and strategize moving forward." And sometimes, you need to adapt your strategy to make everybody on the team comfortable. And then the second point is just to reflect on who you work well with. If you're part of a team that wants to move fast and you have other people who are more methodical and wanna take time and review it thoroughly and everybody have an equal part, you may not see eye to eye. So kind of setting expectations in the beginning about your timelines and making sure everybody's on board with that can help from the preventative side of conflict.

Dr. Teresa Chan (34:29):
Yeah. And I think that what Mike was reflecting on earlier about getting a Doodle poll out to find a time when everyone can meet sometimes you might not need to do that at the beginning, but it might be when you've had 17 million comments in the margin and there's a back and forth between Yusuf and Mike and they're just disagreeing, it might be time for the rest of the authorship pool to go, "Hey, why don't you two go and do a Google Hangout and resolve this and get back to us, or we do it as a big team." So, it really depends on how you wanna work your team 'cause there's a good amount of leadership there, too. So with that in mind, I'm gonna pivot to Mike and I invite him to kinda speak about leading teams because I've been on your teams before, Mike. I'd do it again anytime. So maybe you can kinda go through the process of what this looks like when you are the one leading a collaborative writing team. What are some things and steps that you take?

Dr. Michael Gottlieb (35:19):
When we're looking at teams, I think everyone has their own slight different variations of how they like to run teams and some of it's aligned with your personality. So, I will lend how I like to do it but with the caveat that everyone runs teams a little bit differently. I think one of the probably hallmark features of when you're running a team is just discussing your goals and timelines early. So establishing, "Okay, this is what our goals are. This is what we'd like to accomplish. This is what people are going to do, and this is when we'd like to have it done by." And I try to dissect out pieces. So rather than saying, "Let's aim to have our paper done by July 25th," I'll say, "Okay, so we have several parts of this paper," and I'll break out each step into a timeline. So, for example, "We'd like to have the outline done by a week from now, and in another two weeks we'd like to aim to have kind of the web search done. And another two weeks from that we'll do the writing piece." So, each piece builds on itself so it's a little bit more bite-sized, which at least for me is often a little easier to tackle. Okay, I can do an outline, but to say I have to do this whole paper in two months seems overwhelming. But to do an outline a week is much more manageable.

Dr. Michael Gottlieb (36:22):
And so, kind of creating these bite-sized pieces and then communicating with the team and saying, "Alright, does this work for you?" My schedule in July is probably not quite as busy as a program director's in APB, and so that's gonna influence things. And so, for example, on my end, I'm like, "Well, I'm core faculty so I have a couple of things I have to do, but I'm not probably the same level as Dr. Haas, where she's gonna be incredibly busy at that time." And being cognizant that these times affect people different ways and checking with the team, making sure those deadlines work. When I'm running a team, along those lines, I like to give people an outline. "Okay, here's what I'd like you to do," and I'll provide them an example because my vision may not match their vision. So, it's nice to know what my vision is and let them see what I'm looking for, but it prevents me from or at least limits my micromanaging of it. So, I'm not telling them, "Okay, we're gonna do this exactly this way," because there's multiple ways to get to an end product but if you know what the end looks like, it's easier to get there, even if you're gonna take your own pathway. So, I try to give them examples of where I wanna go without necessarily forcing them to follow my exact pathway.

Dr. Michael Gottlieb (37:23):
One of the other things I found really helpful is creating dyads. And so oftentimes, we'll have a bigger team of somewhere between five to maybe nine or 10 people, and we have four sections of a paper. So for each of those, I'll assign basically two people to work together. And I try to pair it where I have a more junior person and a more senior person. So the junior person gets the opportunity to do level writing, but they have a direct, targeted mentorship. And each step along the way. So, more frequent check-ins that are built into that. They have the opportunity to learn. They create, if haven't worked together before, a new mentorship model hopefully identifies a new mentor for them. And then that dyad team will then check-in with the bigger team. So, it creates a little more direct mentorship, and that seemed to work pretty well from projects I've done. Those are some of the things that I've found to be most effective from a teaming standpoint.

Dr. Teresa Chan (38:09):
Yeah, those are really good tips. And I think that what you do really well, that you probably didn't even think that you do, is that you set a very psychologically safe environment for people to speak up and object. Like you make it,"Hey, would that work for everyone? Can everyone confirm that this is gonna be okay for them?" You make it so that people don't feel like they're being pressured. I think that you've even said things like, "There's no timeline other than the one we set forth." And those are kind of really powerful phrases to use when you're leading a team of asynchronous writers. Because as much as sometimes when everybody's working on stuff, someone's like, "I just had a baby, and I'm on mat leave right now." And all of these pressures build up. Or they have six kids they're trying to home school right now during COVID. Each of those things is gonna be slightly different, whether you're male, female, young, old. It really doesn't matter, being able to be a good teammate to your colleagues and friends as you're trying to marshal them through a paper. I think it's about empathy and it's about creating that space for them to tell you what they need.

Dr. Teresa Chan (39:10):
And I have even had authors where I've invited them to reconsider what their job is because maybe we can save them for later. Like something comes up, "That's great. Why don't we swap out? I'll write your section. Why don't you do the hard edit at the end to give us that unified voice?" And they're like, "Oh, when is that gonna be?" I'm like, "Oh, probably a month from now." And they can do it then. So I think that there are things that come up, and being able to have that open communication back and forth with your colleagues is a key to success. Now, there was one

question that came up in the comments and the idea of how do you address unequal contributions by writers? How do you guys do that? I'll kinda point at maybe Mary. What are your thoughts? How do you think through that?

Dr. Mary Calderone-Haas (39:54):
I become angry and passive aggressive. [laughter]

Dr. Teresa Chan (39:58):
Well, at least you're honest. [laughter]

Dr. Mary Calderone-Haas (40:02):
Actually, that's kind of what I did, [chuckle] the first time that I encountered this situation. And more recently, now that I've been writing a little bit more, I will nudge them gently and I'll say, "Hey," and I'll give them some sort of timeline. If I'm leading the team, I might say, "Hey, do you think we can plan on this timeline to complete this task?" And if they miss that, I'll kinda do it again, and if they miss that again, then I'll check in with them and make sure there's nothing else going on. 'Cause I think, if somebody's not contributing, before you get angry or resentful, you need to first assume the best intentions and make sure they're okay. 'Cause a lot of times people have other things going on in their life and completing this paper may not be their number one priority. And if it's a pattern of behavior that doesn't seem like it's just isolated to a particular situation they're experiencing, then I'll often reach out and I'll become a lot less shy about suggesting changes in authorship order. If it's somebody who's one of the core, the first, the second, or the last author who's not really pulling their weight in the way that we outlined in the beginning team expectations, I'll say, "Hey, these deadlines have passed. I haven't really been able to hear from you about what's going on. If I don't hear from you, I'll plan to complete the paper and move you to the middle author position." Or something like that.

Dr. Mary Calderone-Haas (41:16):
I think it's always better to try to have a conversation verbally if you can before doing it via email that way. But sometimes people just ghost you, they just don't respond. And so in that case, sometimes it's your only option in terms of getting a hold of them. It's hard. I definitely don't feel like I am a pro at this. I'm still learning. These team dynamics can get super tricky, especially when you have a continued clinical or other professional relationship with somebody that you have to continue to work with them. So I don't know if you guys have other strategies. I would love to hear them too.

[chuckle]

Dr. Teresa Chan (41:47):
Well, I think you kind of snuck one in there without actually calling it out. Which is having that awkward conversation at the beginning. I joke about it being the academic prenup, before we get into this paper together. We're not getting into bed, we're not getting married, but we're kinda forming a new relationship. Let's have that awkward conversation. Because just like back when I was dating, the idea was like, "Where is this going?" That's okay for dating, but in a paper, first author, last author, second author like you said, Mary, these things actually have academic merit and weight and ramifications for people's careers. And so I think that having that prenup equivalent conversation, like the pre-paper conversation, to say, "What are the jobs here? And then who's doing what?" And having expectations for those titled positions, I think is really important. So for

instance, at my shop, a second author doesn't really carry that much weight, so if I'm second, I might as well be somewhere in the middle. I know in Yusuf's environment, and back in Turkey, first author or nothing. It's a very different environment there. So every institution, every discipline has a different code of conduct.

Dr. Teresa Chan (42:57):
So having that conversation upfront will save a lot of heartache. And so being able to have an upfront conversation, I think the grid actually helps with that because then people have to actually write themselves in where they think they fit. And sometimes for that same grid that Yusuf showed, I'd honestly put down first author, like kind of like just some nudging comments as to, "Will do this, will do that." And it's like a terms of reference. So if you're signing up there, you're putting your name after with all these accountabilities. Often that authorship box remains kind of blank. [chuckle] Not surprisingly, because it's actually quite a hefty lift. And so I think that that's important to think about. And often with some of the papers and the research projects I'll be working on, that's already kind of decided who the first and probably the last author is. Whoever the senior author, the supervising person, the mentor, the guide. But as I evolved in my writing and I have mentees who have become peers, then that definitely is something that can change.

Dr. Teresa Chan (43:57):
So, Gottlieb's come a long way, and when we were starting, it was pretty obvious that I was mentoring him. Now, I would say that he flipped that table regularly, and so we have to have that conversation, 'cause who's gonna be first, who's gonna be last, it's kind of like who's on first conversation. You don't wanna get too confusing, but you do wanna have that conversation. Mike, do you have any thoughts, or Yusuf?

Dr. Yusuf Yilmaz (44:20):
Sometimes even though you nudge them, you try to talk it out, about their contribution to the paper. Sometimes they're just not interested in it, but they wanna be in it. So in this case, there's a conflict for the ICJME new criterias, so they have some contribution, but they don't continue with that. So, do you consider to removing authors from the author list, or just putting them to the acknowledgement part? What are the best strategies to deal with the unresponsible authors, co-authors in this case?

Dr. Teresa Chan (44:56):
Yeah, the ghosting authors, yeah. Okay, so, Mike, I'm gonna ask you to try that one out, and then Antonio, if you have a question or you have a comment, we'll come to you next.

Dr. Michael Gottlieb (45:05):
You gave me the hardest one. Alright, challenge accepted. Yeah, I think that is a really difficult situation. In general, calling back to the other point that has Karen mentioned earlier is, it's just, you have to talk to the person. And I think it can get lost in the email, it can get lost in Slack channels. And it's talking the person saying, "Here's where we're at." "Here's what everyone else has done". And I try to frame it that way, to give a little bit of a peer pressure of like, "This is the amount everyone else has done to satisfy ICJME." And that's actually nice, it's out there that I can say, "Okay, this is what they expect of an author. What can we do to bring that in? Can you help out with this piece? Can you maybe do me a massive... " As I think that chair mentioned earlier, can you do some massive as to maintain a voice? And that's something where they may feel more comfortable in that role, especially, I think, with senior authors that can be challenging, because they're gonna both be a

power differential at times, or there may just be the challenges of trying to get them to do something they don't feel like is at their level. Which we could talk about whether that's true, but they may feel that way. And I think that we have to be conscious of that piece.

Dr. Michael Gottlieb (46:13):
So maybe giving something that may feel a more appropriate task to them, that utilizes their skill set to their best ability. So they're really knowledgeable, I feel, maybe they can bring that knowledge in and help buffer references and come up with a more in-depth discussion. They may feel more appropriate doing. But I think it has to be a conversation. I'm also very interested to see how you all approach this.

Dr. Teresa Chan (46:35):
And then I go to Antonio, because it's such a hard question. We will take any answers we can have from the floor, of course, as well. Alright, I think from what I heard, this is what I'm gonna reverse engineer, is that she's asking about honorary authorship or courtesy authorship. And so I think the ICMJE criteria, which we'll post in the show notes when we actually put this up on the web, but also they're just searchable, so if you wanna just Google it right now. They are pretty well-defined criteria that outline what it means to be an author. And people who meet partial parts of those criteria, like they don't actually meet all of criteria one, which is contributing the idea, gathering data, that kind of substantively contribute to the doing of the research. As criteria two is being able to write and actually have participation in writing of the manuscript. And then the last phase is actually final approval. So that's definitely the three kind of phases of things. A final approval and sign off on standing behind the paper, so if it gets retracted and going through the Surgisphere kind of debacle, you would have actually set up for it.

Dr. Teresa Chan (47:45):
I do think that that idea of the honorary authorship is definitely something that's going by the wayside with the advent of the ICMJE criteria. And to be honest, those are relatively new. They're like a new technology right now in the world. And so having a conversation with people who are more senior, that didn't come up in that era is hard. But I think that where we flip it is we actually do better by our junior colleagues than it has been done to us and we actually just start working, following it through in a good way going forward. And so if you're a junior person, there might be an expectation, and I would explore judiciously with your mentors, how best to handle something. I've heard all sorts of atrocious stories of chairs bullying their way into papers, or very senior people being that way. Unfortunately, I know those things happen. And those people would probably be the same to say, "Oh, no, that would never happen on my watch." And yet, sometimes, that can be the case. One of the things I do commonly notice is that junior authors sometimes don't appreciate the way that the senior people might have contributed. Because they come along a different phase of the study. Maybe they didn't realize that it took five years to secure the funding, and now they're a PhD student, and they're like, well, that person never did anything. They might not appreciate the whole story.

Dr. Teresa Chan (49:02):
So having that prenup conversation, and talking to the criteria, making sure people understand what everyone else has done, is actually a really big part of it. So, have I written in a margin comment? I'm like, "I'm not sure what this person has done, but hopefully, they can take a look at the paper and make some suggestions." Would be good. The other thing that I've done actually is actually booked time with someone that's maybe more senior, realize that actually, and this is something that Mary

had said that maybe we should bring up, there was a tech barrier. And that's why they hadn't edited the Google Doc. And so what I'll do is I'll Zoom with them, I'll screen share, and then we'll just go through the paper together. And so sometimes it's about creating whatever way to be as equitable and accessible as possible to include everyone and being mindfully inclusive can be really important. There are some people that are better editors, and wouldn't want to write a first draft. There are some people that only want to write a first draft, and they hate editing.

Dr. Teresa Chan (49:55):
Once you understand who the people are and their roles, you can better money ball your team together. And so, I know several people that I've written many, many papers with, and they abhor that first writing part, but they are wonderful editors. And when I send them something, they will redline the entire document to the point where I can't see straight anymore within what's track changes and what's not. And that's interesting, because for some reason, they can't get over the blank flashing cursor, but they can basically rewrite the paper for me. [chuckle] Which is amazing, right? So I think everybody's got different superpowers and so when you're assembling your team, I think again, like Mary said, make sure that you have the diagnosis right. Make sure that you're calling a spade a spade, and that this person doesn't have a mental health issue or crisis at home, other things that are prioritizing, grants, other grants. Maybe they're interviewing lots of people for residency programs. Maybe they've got something going on in their lives.

Dr. Teresa Chan (50:53):
Like I said, those are first diagnosis of exclusion. And then the fact that they're kind of "Lazy" may also... It's just the same way that when you have a resident, or a med student, or a nursing student at risk, the assumption shouldn't be that there's nothing wrong with them. Most of the people that are in academia still are there because they're gluttons for punishment and they like this kind of work. And so, trying to figure out what it is that they want to accomplish and how they saw themselves fitting in the team is important. So you can hit it off at the pass with that first conversation, and then you can revise the authorship agreement and try to figure out. And most people will acknowledge, "Yeah, I didn't contribute as much. I'd like to step up. Here's what I can do. It just time just got away from me, yada, yada, yada." I think that's an okay conversation to have. And then I think as you, as a lead author, if there's a first or last author, depending on the situation, your job is to try to find a way to get them involved again, and I think that takes some negotiating, but welcome to academia, I guess. [chuckle] And it doesn't have to be high drama, it's not Greys Anatomy drama. It is definitely something that is worth having a conversation about though.

Dr. Teresa Chan (52:00):
And again, sometimes you'll be in a situation, especially if you're very junior, looking at Yusuf, he'll be in a very different situation than me who's assistant dean right now. When we walk into a paper, I can say certain things that Yusuf might not be able to some of his senior colleagues. And acknowledging that that power dynamic exists and knowing that as a junior person, you will just sometimes learn through negative role modeling as much as positive role modeling, that I'm never gonna do that to someone else. And so the real rubber meets the road is that yes, ghost authoring, or courtesy authoring, or honorary authorship shouldn't happen. Does it still happen? Of course it does. Is it because the ICMJE criteria are relatively new and we haven't done a lot of fact dive around it? Probably, partly. Are there practices in academia that pre-existed that and people are still beholden to them? 100%. And I think that's why we're trying to do this scholarly secrets series. So that we can actually bring to surface some of these controversies. I'll also be posting a link to something that we did a couple of years ago, actually on the honorary authorship phenomenon.

Dr. Teresa Chan (53:07):
We did a medic series, a medical education in cases series, it's like a little workbook that basically works you through a vignette and then some discussion points and some write-ups and some hints from people who have handled this before. So I'll put that in the show notes as well as another thing that we can have as a resource. So maybe you wanna get out that resource and actually do a little small group session with your lab so that you can have that conversation of what is honorary authorship? Should it even exist? I love it when there are some junior authors, they don't even know what that term means, I'm so excited because it means that they've never encountered it and they've never been subjugated to it, and they've never felt unfairly burdened. And to me, that is the way that we flip the switch, that's how we change the fabric of how we do business, is that we do better for our junior people that has been done to us. Are there any other questions from the floor? I'd love to know if anyone has any more horror stories that they want us to debrief for them, or even Mary or Mike or Yusuf, if you guys have any and slightly anonymous stories, you can tell that's okay too.

Dr. Michael Gottlieb (54:13):
So I was actually just looking back through the chat and I think there's one other question that would probably be good for us to discuss since this is something that took me a while to develop out too, is how do you actually figure out what's a reasonable timeline from [0:54:21.9] ____. So, I'm interested to hear how you guys do it as well. For me, generally, I will take whatever my end date is, if there's something more firm like, okay, I need to have this abstract in by a certain conference, or this is a time-sensitive, like COVID, our research is gonna be a little more time-restricted than it might be for things like that can go on for a year or two and probably not impact practices quite as meaningfully. So I figure out what my absolute end is, I need to have it done by this time. And if I don't, then I'll try to come with a reasonable timeline of roughly three to four months, because after three or four months, you have those projects that dwindle forever. So I try to feel like, "All right, within three to four months we should probably have an end for this at least reasonable stage, whether it be a launching project or writing up a paper."

Dr. Michael Gottlieb (55:04):
And I just work back step by step from there, usually I'll use about two week increments, for something larger, like writing up a whole section of paper, I might stretch out to one or two months. And then again, kinda like I mentioned earlier, I just negotiate with the team and say, does this seem reasonable to you? Is this something that I'm being overly ambitious with? Or, Is your schedule actually really open if I make this, do we actually have the project dead on? How's that work man? Where we realized that if we stretch it out too far, it's actually was gonna be more complicated 'cause it would have overlapped with interview season. So instead we actually made the deadlines a little bit earlier, so it wasn't going to fall on a really busy time of year. So sometimes it's just negotiating what works best for people during certain times of year. How do you guys develop your deadlines or timelines?

Dr. Teresa Chan (55:44):
Mary, any thoughts?

Dr. Mary Calderone-Haas (55:44):
I think it depends on what I'm writing about, if it's a perspectives piece or something that's very timely, and I feel like other people may have a similar idea and be writing something similar, there's

a little bit more time pressure to get it done quickly. So I have, with COVID, for instance, is a good example of that. So for those papers that naturally shorten the timeline to more of like a two-week period, I feel like the sweet spot is probably one to two months, 'cause I agree with you exactly, Mike, if it drags out too long, it just dies. There has to be some time pressure to help get rid of the inertia. But I feel like two months is usually good, so that if people have other things going on in their life, they can kinda work around them to contribute at some point, and then if I have a lot of other projects going on that are relatively more time-sensitive, and I have another project that's less time sensitive, but I still kinda wanna keep doing, I'll sometimes just let things go a little bit slower. Just by the nature of recognizing I can't do everything fast and sometimes you can sacrifice quality for speed. So it really depends on the project, who I'm working with, how timely and time-sensitive it is and how busy I am with other things that are more time-sensitive.

Dr. Teresa Chan (56:57):
100% I agree with you. I think there's different sizes of projects, right? Something that is multi-year collaboration, or you're gathering data for three years, you might have some periodic, what I call a paper sprints where you kind of lock down a study protocol and then you lock down a really good intro, because you've only got the grant proposal, and so I try to have a running paper in the background through the process of an entire kind of arc of a research study. It may not be the case so much. If you're doing a commentary, like you said, those you can really spread, and you basically put an outline down and just write it, right? So Mike's been a champ taking us through some in two weeks, and Mary, we've done ones that are one and a half weeks or something like that, but that doesn't have any data, but I do find for some of the bigger projects, you might have a slower burn over time, and so I do find that I try to do the multiple wins thing, which is if I'm writing a study protocol, it's a small pivot.

Dr. Teresa Chan (58:00):
Also turn that in as a grant, it's a small pivot to then take the past tense of all both of those documents and turn it into your intro a method section. And so really, as you're doing your science and the data is collecting in the background, you can actually be half done your paper. And if you're doing hypothetical deductive positivist like quantitative work, you can already have your discussion, you may have your results or just be like, was it significant or not? Like there's a little bit of toggling, but you've kind of already got this story for your whole paper by the time you've set up your study. Slightly different battle with qualitative and not probably need this on who he and are about how to write qualitative paper, 'cause I'm still struggling to that myself, but I think those are all things that you can consider, and then I think the next question, thanks for asking that question is, how do you actually strategize, how you get all multiple projects done? Because in the ideal situation, you're working on one paper at the time, but just like in the emergency department when I'm working clinically, I also want a patient at a time, I've usually balance between projects and for the aforementioned reasons, some of them have been working.

Dr. Teresa Chan (59:10):
I've been working on this for three years and we're still collecting data, and it finally comes ahead and we can finally write this all up because our data collection is over versus another paper that just opportunistically comes up and we just wanna get it out. How do you like the sort between them? That's a really great question. I don't think I have it solved yet. I was just reflecting with some of my collaborators that I'm a very reactive these days. I'm basically balancing from postdoc fellows to med student to collaborate, or I get an email from Mike and Mary, where are we at with this? And I'm just basically putting out fires right now because I've got so much on the go at last count I forgot 40-

something different projects on the go with a lot of them actually in the final writing stage and submitted right now. So like I've been kind of on our big writing binge. And so I'm kind of like the worst person to ask right now, I usually like to be a little bit better planned out in my attack, but for some reason because of delays, because of opportunities, I've got all these papers cluster to me at once and that's not where I like to do it. I like to try to space things out a little bit more, ideally.

Dr. Teresa Chan (1:00:19):
I usually keep tabs and before I submit another paper to another journal, I will actually hold back until some of them have cleared from the resubmission and re-submit. Unfortunately, right now, I can't do that, and I don't know if it's because I'm more senior now, or COVID has just completely destroyed the way that we're writing right now, but it is something that I try to bear in mind is like, how do I put it, deploy the papers at different speeds and not take on anything new until I've cleared up some of the old stuff? It's not working for me, so I've love to hear what Yusuf, or Mary or Mike, what do you guys have as pearls for that?

Dr. Yusuf Yilmaz (1:00:58):
I think that our method running the papers weekly, is kind of quite strategy because we are refreshing up every week, like what is the current state of this paper and what are you gonna do for them until the next week, check queen. But these are like work note, and now we are moving to formal to select channels, which helping us to check changes more instantly, so this kind of strategies is helpful.

Dr. Teresa Chan (1:01:23):
Yeah, so what use of soft empath, I have a tradition when I haven't been so reactive and don't have wonderful people like Mike, and Yusuf, and Mary, are bothering me, is that I often try to keep tabs on all of my projects and use If and I do this with our projects together, and we actually run the list. It's kind of like rounding on your patients if you're a clinician, it's like that Monday morning like, Okay, everybody, let's go on a round on all our patients, it's a very similar phenomenon, it's like well, Okay, so what are we gonna do for that person to get Mrs. Smith home? It's a very similar phenomenon, it's like, okay, that paper, what's gonna get that paper out, right? Like Smith is now the author, Mrs. Smith is Dr. Smith is doing your first author on the paper, like, Okay, so how are we gonna bring Mary Smith's paper home now? How we're gonna get it out into the ….and what's our journal? And so it's very much an analogy to the way that we do, and I try to speak that way with clinicians because often you already have that time management skill set that you have, right?

Dr. Teresa Chan (1:02:27):
And so just like you would if you're in an impatient board full of patients or an Emergency department, full of patients, there are some patients that are gonna take a while, they actually probably need to be admitted, and so you're gonna do what you can for them, and then they get admitted, that'd be like, you do your protocol, you set the data collection and we have any data now for three years right? That's gonna be a very different process and then you'll need to remember to come back to them later versus you have someone that probably needs to be admitted overnight for observation and then their ethanol level will be at an adequate level in the morning, and they will be able to safely go home. And so each of these things is a slightly different kind of arc to them, and I think that that rounding on paper is getting a habit of doing it, plus depending on how busy you are once a week as Yusuf have, doing right now, roughly, or if you have a more relaxed schedule of scholarship, maybe you're not working on 40-something projects, that's okay. And you're only doing

like a week, then maybe once a month. It is good, depending on the running memory bank that you have. Mike, do you have any thoughts?

Dr. Michael Gottlieb (1:03:32):
And definitely overtime would be massive in blocks and papers coming in right now. I think that one thing I've found somewhat more helpful for this is figuring out where I'm the rate limiting step and where someone else is gonna be the rate limiting stop. That turns out that it's something relatively simple for me to do, even though I could do a couple weeks later, if it's something that I can do, get my piece done with, and that's going to allow other people to work on the project, and I might preferentially slide that project up, so then other people have a couple weeks to work on it, and is off my plate, it drops down to my do list and it helps the project get done a little quicker. So I will usually try to figure out if there's something where I'm inhibiting other people of doing their work, how can I get that piece on first? The other thing I usually try to do, this probably just from my own psyche is if I have a project that's really a lot of work and it's really kind of way, like I need to get this thing done.

Dr. Michael Gottlieb (1:04:20):
I think my intrinsic major is to try to say, Well, then I'm just not gonna do it right now, I'm gonna do all these other really easy things, I'm gonna go to my email and the lead of the spam messages, and I'm gonna go through my calendar and make sure, all the calendar things, retreat, find all these media tests and don't really benefit anything, just don't have to do the bigger task, and I kinda catch myself and say, No, alright, this thing is gonna get time sink, but I'm gonna give up two or three hours and really focusing at this thing done, and I feel like this kind of uplifting afterwards. I'm like, Okay, that big kind of boulder on my shoulder is now gone, and it makes the other project easier to do, and I just go overall a little bit more relaxed about, so I generally try to identify what that big impediment is, exactly I eat the live frog first. [laughter] And try to get that piece at least done with, and it makes everything else go much quicker.

Dr. Teresa Chan (1:05:06):
Yeah, and sometimes the live frog is, let's say, not as disgusting you thought it would be. It's not as hard to swallow. Sometimes we build things up when we're writing. I kinda see some of my colleagues, they need to have the entire afternoon off and they have to have this ritual where they have to have the right brew of coffee and it has to be in the right mug, and there's this ritual to writing. And for those of us who write more often, I would say that we probably have trained ourselves for various techniques that you can kinda look at just tasks which into writing whenever you have time. Between two Zoom meetings right now, I might write a paragraph or two on something. I'll just make sure it's there as soon as I close Zoom, I'm like, "Oh yeah", and I write that paragraph for Mike and I try to do step-wise manner so that I can get it done, right? I think that some of those strategies are really fitting it in when you can, knowing that you have to have a really good outline.

Dr. Teresa Chan (1:06:02):
So, where I spend a lot of time actually is that story board or the outline of the paper to make sure my logic was coherent, and anyone that knows me knows I always carry a pack of sticky notes around. And because I'm not a very organized mind. And in my beautiful mind I guess, I'm sometimes very chaotic in the way that I think about things and what I do is I actually take a whole bunch of post-it notes, like sticky notes, and I write one thought per sticky note, and they don't come in order, they are definitely disordered, but what I do after I've brainstormed everything out

into sticky note, and you can do this in Google Jamboard if you wanna do it, but I've organized it in order then. And I put headings like intro, methods, results, discussion, and I organize my stickies into those piles under those headings of the paper, and then after that, what I do is I actually lay it all out in the order that it should make sense, and I fill in the blanks. 'Cause sometimes they'll be a logical gap.

Dr. Teresa Chan (1:07:01):
And so, it is inspired by things like design thinking, like in 20 in 20 out, or quite frankly Pixar. It's like how you would put together an animated cartoon. You're gonna divide and conquer in the end. But as long as everyone knows that Nemo has to be found at the end, well, we kinda know where we're going. And we know what detour is that the little robot takes, and what friends the monsters find along the way. Those are the kind of things that you can program into the script of basically your paper, so that everyone else can follow where you're going. And so, that way, especially with collaboration, this outline is really important. Well, just like in Pixar, you need to make sure you get that outline is really important, and you can all work around it a piecemeal, a little bit at a time. That kind of brings us back to that collaborative writing kind of stance which is, "Yeah there's a lot of projects, but many hands make light work." And so, having lots of people on deck to be able to share in that burden, makes it more enjoyable and less misery to be writing together. I think that's about all the time we have tonight. I was just gonna thank everyone for their time and thank you for coming, thanks so much for joining us. And we're really excited to have you. Thanks a lot.

[music]

Dr. Teresa Chan (1:08:22):

Thank you so much for tuning in to the MacPFD Spark Podcast. Just so you know, this podcast has been brought to you by the McMaster Faculty of Health Sciences and specifically the Office of Continuing Professional Development and the Program for Faculty Development. If you're interested in finding out more about what we can offer for faculty development check out our website at www.macpfd.ca that's www.M-A-C-P-F-D.ca. Many of our events are actually web events that are free. Finally, I'd like to thank our sound engineer Mr. Nick Hoskin who has been an amazing asset to our team, thanks so much Nick for all that you do. And also thank you to Scott Holmes for supplying us the music that you've been listening to. All right. So until next time this is MacPFD Spark signing off.