

Editorial

It is an honor for me to be part of this issue of Ceylon Journal of otolaryngology. I have been privileged to meet many of you throughout Sri Lanka and around the world, and in many diverse environments. I have also established connections and maintained friendships across many professions. Throughout all these meetings, discussions and experiences the common thread has been the care of patients. It is the cause above all others which unite us.

However, do we manage to balance our professional commitments with our personal lives? Do we maintain wellbeing? Do we ensure that the work does not take up more of our lives than we want it to? The nature of the role as a Surgeon can experience conflict between caring for patients and caring for ourselves. There is always more that can be done for the patients and the difficulty is that we feel that we are not doing enough; but we need to make sure that our own health does not suffer. The balancing act can be difficult to those with personal commitments. It can be demanding as in addition to fulfilling clinical duties there are other facets to our duties such as teaching, management, leadership roles, which are not always possible to fulfill within usual working hours and can encroach on our lives outside work. In addition there are family commitments which makes it quite a challenge.

The pressure and the stress of working as a dedicated ENT Surgeon, while trying to maintain control on the personal and professional life, can result in burnout, making us feel exhausted and lack of interest at work.

Introducing appraisal will be an opportunity to look at how we cope with our work –life balance, to pause, consider, discuss and reflect on our experiences and to get an objective view.

We may also decide to take additional commitments to enrich our lives, such as charity work, cultivating a hobby or focusing on a fitness program or sport. It is extremely helpful to have a supportive family, friends and colleagues to avoid burnout.

Since work and life are dynamic processes, our needs and wishes also do change. Therefore work –life balance is something we need to continually revisit.

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