

MEGAN COLE

CUSTOMIZED PROGRAMS

Ms. Cole’s Customized Programs fall into three broad categories:
Focus Groups Performance Pieces Medical Readers’ Theater

<p style="text-align: center;">FOCUS GROUPS WITH PERFORMANCE AND DISCUSSION</p>
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This is a unique research tool for organizations wishing to hear authentic perspectives from their population in a safe, useful and entertaining format.

The sponsor provides Ms. Cole with a topic of concern, either benign or thorny. Megan meets with separate volunteer segments of the population and asks open-ended questions related to the topic. These responses are recorded, transcribed, and sent to Ms. Cole, who develops a dramatic presentation of representative comments and narratives. This presentation is followed by an in-depth discussion with all community members.

The volunteers are assured anonymity from beginning to end, which leads to a high measure of openness in the groups. The result is refreshingly unvarnished commentary from the people most involved with the issue at hand. The focus is *not to judge* the validity of any single viewpoint, but rather to allow members of a particular community *to become aware* of each other’s thoughts and feelings about issues common to them all. It is, in short, about perspective and mutual understanding.

Megan Cole has provided this research service to the following organizations:

- M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Houston
 “On Being An Oncologist” (with actor William Hurt)
- The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, University of Texas/Houston
 Health Science Center
 “Rewards and Tensions Inherent in Faculty/Student Relationships”
- The School of Nursing, University of Texas/Houston Health Science Center
 “A Slice of Life: Looking Back, Looking Forward”
- The School of Medicine, University of Texas/Houston Health Science Center
 “Coping with Hurricane Katrina”
- The Department of Continuing Nursing Education, Mayo Clinic
 “Reflections and Visions in Nursing”
- The Rinehart Clinic, Wheeler OR
 “Patients’ Stories”

Further details available upon request.

PERFORMANCE PIECES

In addition to **The Wisdom of “Wit”** Megan creates other performance pieces that are specifically designed for healthcare site populations.

These center on:

1. A single historical figure of importance to the sponsoring organization
2. A translation of a written narrative to the stage
3. A compilation to provide entertainment for healthcare workers

The sponsor may wish to produce any of the following sample pieces, or alternatively commission Ms. Cole to create an entirely new work.

Sample Pieces

“The Mystery of Maude Mellish Wilson”

A solo 30-minute play commissioned by the Mayo Clinic that Megan researched, wrote, and performed. The subject is Mayo’s first medical editor (1907-1933), a woman of vast importance to Mayo’s heritage.

A DVD is available from the performance given at the Mayo Clinic.

“Now I Must Begin Again”

A solo 45-minute performance based on the diaries of Dorothy Pitkin, a writer who died in a nursing home in 1973 and who wrote movingly and humorously of her experiences.

Ms. Cole has performed this piece at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Oregon State Palliative Care Conference, Mayo Clinic, and Swedish Hospital (Seattle) Chaplaincy Conference.

“Take A Break”

A solo 50-minute compilation of narratives, poems, and music designed to give healthcare staff a respite from daily stresses. The tone of the piece is light and humorous, with a focus on the wonder of nature, music, and love.

Ms. Cole has performed this piece at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Johns Hopkins University Medical School, and the Rinehart Clinic (Oregon).

MEDICAL READERS' THEATER

Medical Readers' Theater is based on a program developed at East Carolina University's Brody School of Medicine and published in "Medical Readers' Theater: A Guide and Scripts," ed. Todd L. Savitt, (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2002).

In this model, short scripts, derived from selected short stories about medicine, are read by students and/or faculty as public performances and followed by audience discussions.

These readings have proved highly useful for educating both medical students and the larger professional community about the social and ethical issues facing medicine.

Megan selects, casts, and directs the readings, and if needed, serves as a cast member. Typically, a week's residency is needed for this project.

Ms. Cole has produced Medical Readers' Theater readings over several years at the University of Texas/Houston Health Science Center.