

that negatively affect patient safety. The authors compare the cultures of nursing and aviation. Most nurses have experienced purposeful intimidation from physicians, and the comparison of physician behavior to airline pilot behavior is interesting. The authors relate that many airline tragedies were linked to an earlier cultural paradigm of the airline captain functioning as the sole decision maker and a not-to-be-challenged authority on the aircraft. They explain how this cultural message could cause a copilot who recognizes a potential safety risk to avoid speaking up for fear of reproach and incrimination. Cultural changes that began in the 1970s (eg, women gaining greater respect) brought an increased awareness of the problems that this type of attitude creates.

Disruptive behavior and bullying by health care providers in authority has been tolerated for many years, and the Joint Commission's recent focus on disruptive behavior as unacceptable is not only timely, but also relevant to patient care. The authors challenge the reader to consider whether health care professionals are placing patients at risk due to the "power distance" (ie, the degree to which power is distributed unequally among group members) in health care environments today.

The authors present other topics such as standardizing processes, implementing checklists, improving communication skills, developing strong teamwork, and removing barriers to a safe patient environment. They illustrate these topics by comparing the aviation and nursing worlds. The authors also discuss how the "lessons learned" by the aviation industry have been and are in the process of being studied and implemented in health care and suggest that health care professionals owe a debt of gratitude to what could be described as an unrelated profession.

The book offers readers an opportunity to evaluate the current health care culture, assess methods to improve patient safety, and improve leadership and team-building skills. The authors offer evidence-based references and methodology re-

sources; documents that can be downloaded for use in implementing changes or for continuing education credit are obtainable through a free web site link. A very comprehensive bibliography, multiple compelling charts and tables, and a warm writing style all combine to make this publication worthy of recommendation. **AORN**

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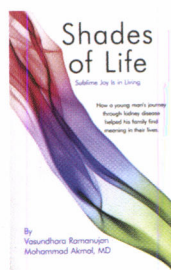
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Shades of Life

**Vasundhara Ramanujan and
Mohammad Akmal**

iUniverse

2010, 168 pages, softcover



A simple picture of an anatomically correct arm is depicted on the cover of the book *Shades of Life* and reminds me of helping to create arteriovenous fistulas for patients requiring dialysis.

This book describes the life of one man from the time he received the diagnosis of kidney disease as a teenager to his eventual kidney transplant procedures as an adult. End-stage renal disease is a difficult diagnosis under any circumstance; however, the patient's family was well educated and able to thoroughly research the disease and treatments, which helped them understand and navigate the treatment options.

The authors complement each other; Ramanujan is the mother of the young man with end-stage renal disease, and Dr Akmal is a physician specializing in renal disease. The book describes how the mother allowed her teenage son to make decisions about his care after they had obtained