Thursday Memo – May 24, 2018

Things They Carry (after Tim O’Brien) – by Hugh Silk

Things they carry in their pockets
Our learners in their short white coats
Reference cards to help remember
Stethoscopes, hammers, and otoscopes

A note pad, ball point, and lists with boxes
Smart phones, small books, odds and ends
Snacks, water, and drinks of caffeine
To survive work hours so obscene

Those white coat pockets filled to limit
Stained brown on edges, holes at seams
Most items are obvious and seen by all
Yet other things carried, deeper still

Egos, pride, and young confidence
Routinely shattered by long white coats
Criticism, questions - more than enough
Fear and anxiety, weigh them down

Clinging to hope and thoughts of healing
The caring mind and soul grow thin
Pockets already filled to brim
Bodies fatigue, and hearts do strain

Still, they carry on with vigor
Guiding patients with smile and support
Mistakes, reflect, apologize
Holding a hand, comfort and empathize

Gone before them, Osler and others
health care mothers, Candib and Remen
Time to remove the pockets and jacket
Graduate, celebrate, find your own path

Say good-bye to textbooks and rout
Learn from your patients, colleagues and grace
Be creative, seeking the art takes time
Don’t yield – hold your own line