

Atul Gawande

Quotes

*People, Care, Team, Skills, Medicine, Thinking, Risk, Inspiration, Motivation,
Understanding, Doctors, Mean, Trying, School, Priorities, Running, Way,
Nursing, Meaningful, Writing*

Better is possible. It does not take genius. It takes diligence. It takes moral clarity. It takes ingenuity. And above all, it takes a willingness to try.

~Atul Gawande

Our reluctance to honestly examine the experience of aging and dying has increased the harm we inflict on people and denied them the basic comforts they most need.

~Atul Gawande

No matter what measures are taken, doctors will sometimes falter, and it isn't reasonable to ask that we achieve perfection. What is reasonable is to ask that we never cease to aim for it.

~Atul Gawande

You may not control life's circumstances, but getting to be the author of your life means getting to control what you do with them.

~Atul Gawande

You can't make a recipe for something as complicated as surgery. Instead, you can make a recipe for how to have a team that's prepared for the unexpected.

~Atul Gawande

Arriving at an acceptance of one's mortality is a process, not an epiphany.

~Atul Gawande

Courage is strength in the face of knowledge of what is to be feared or hoped. Wisdom is prudent strength.

~Atul Gawande

Coaching done well may be the most effective intervention designed for human performance.

~Atul Gawande

Life is choices, and they are relentless. No sooner have you made one choice than another is upon you.

~Atul Gawande

This is the reality of intensive care: at any point, we are as apt to harm as we are to heal.

~Atul Gawande

I think the extreme complexity of medicine has become more than an individual clinician can handle. But not more than teams of clinicians can handle.

~Atul Gawande

Human interaction is the key force in overcoming resistance and speeding change.

~Atul Gawande

We yearn for frictionless, technological solutions. But people talking to people is still the way norms and standards change.

~Atul Gawande

The evidence is that people who enter hospice don't have shorter lives. In many cases they are longer.

~Atul Gawande

Just using a checklist requires [doctors] to embrace different values from ones we've had, like humility, discipline, teamwork.

~Atul Gawande

We have medicalized aging, and that experiment is failing us.

~Atul Gawande

Writing lets you step back and think through a problem. Even the angriest rant forces the writer to achieve a degree of thoughtfulness.

~Atul Gawande

I chose surgery because I thought that perhaps this would make me more like the kind of person I wanted to be.

~Atul Gawande

This was not guilt: guilt is what you feel when you have done something wrong. What I felt was shame: I was what was wrong.

~Atul Gawande

Our ideas of what our priorities are shift as we come face-to-face with some of the struggles.

~Atul Gawande

I learned about a lot of things in medical school, but mortality wasn't one of them.

~Atul Gawande

What about regular professionals, who just want to do what they do as well as they can?

~Atul Gawande

What is the alternative to understanding the complexity of the world?

~Atul Gawande

Man is fallible, but maybe men are less so.

~Atul Gawande

In every industrialized nation, the movement to reform health care has begun with stories about cruelty.

~Atul Gawande

In one study, old people assigned to a geriatrics team stayed independent for far longer, and were admitted to the hospital less.

~Atul Gawande

And in stories, endings matter.

~Atul Gawande

We recruit for attitude and train for skill.

~Atul Gawande

These are folks that keep people out of hospitals, out of emergency rooms, out of nursing homes. And not only that, they help people achieve more fulfilling lives.

~Atul Gawande

Are doctors who make mistakes villains? No, because then we all are.

~Atul Gawande

Expertise is the mantra of modern medicine.

~Atul Gawande

The battle of being mortal is the battle to maintain the integrity of one's life.

~Atul Gawande

You know, 97 percent of the time, if you come into a hospital, everything goes well. But three percent of the time, we have major complications.

~Atul Gawande

When I do an operation, it's half a dozen people. When it goes beautifully, it's like a symphony, with everybody playing their part.

~Atul Gawande

If the conversation people think is coming is the 'death panel' conversation, that's a total failure.

~Atul Gawande

When [disease] can't be stopped, that's where we become lost.

~Atul Gawande

If we took away the ability to put defibrillators in people in their last years, people would be shouting in the streets.

~Atul Gawande

If I became just a brain in a jar - as long as I can communicate back and forth with people, that would be okay with me.

~Atul Gawande

The definition of what it means to be dying has changed radically. We are able to extend people's lives considerably, including sometimes, good days.

~Atul Gawande

Outsiders tend to be the first to recognize the inadequacies of our social institutions. But, precisely because they are outsiders, they are usually in a poor position to fix them.

~Atul Gawande

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