

# Outside The Comfort Zone

Bruce Campbell, MD

*A life spent making mistakes is not only more honorable but more useful than a life spent in doing nothing.*

*-GB Shaw*

After over twenty years working as a head and neck cancer surgeon, much of what I do has become routine. Even the operations that once kept me awake at night or the procedures that required a trip to the library are just part of a day's work.

I am certain that most vocations have the same experience. The commercial airliner pilot plans her weekend while she is constantly scanning the displays and switches arrayed around her. The construction engineer carries on unrelated conversations while aligning girders that will support giant buildings. The bus driver listens to the radio as he guides his vehicle for the hundredth time through the switchbacks and the mountain passes. Things that used to command every bit of attention no longer require that degree of intensity.

Every once in a while, though, something comes along that brings everything back into a sharp-edged focus ...

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