



## Rana Awdish

### Topics

Health and Wellness, Inspirational Speakers, Women's Interests

### Travels From

Michigan

### Bio

Dr. Rana Awdish is the Director of the Pulmonary Hypertension Program at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit and a Critical Care Physician. She also serves as Medical Director of Care Experience for the Henry Ford Health System. Dr. Awdish's mandate, as well as her passion, is to improve the patient experience across the system. After suffering a sudden critical illness herself in 2008, she has become a tireless activist, refocusing her fellow providers on the patient experience and improving empathy through connection and communication. She lectures to physicians, hospital leadership, and medical schools around the country. Her book, *In Shock: My Journey from Death to Recovery and the Redemptive Power of Hope*, has been featured in the *Washington Post*, the *Times*, the BBC, NPR, *Huffington Post*, *Today* show online, the *Telegraph*, and the *Daily Mail*. It is also an *LA Times* Bestseller. Rana Awdish has written for *Harvard Business Review*, the *Huffington Post*, as well as the *New England Journal of Medicine*. Dr. Awdish received the Schwartz Center's National Compassionate Caregiver of the Year Award in 2017. She was named Physician of the Year by Press Ganey in 2017 for her work on improving communication. She was named Henry Ford Hospital's

Critical Care Teacher of the Year in 2016. She was awarded the Speak-Up Hero award in 2014 for her work establishing a workshop-based program called CLEAR (Connect, Listen, Empathize, Align, Respect), which trains faculty and trainees in relationship-based communication skills utilizing improvisational actors. Prior to coming to Henry Ford, Dr. Awdish completed her training at Mount Sinai Beth Israel in Manhattan. She attended Wayne State University Medical School and completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She is board-certified in Internal Medicine, Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine.

She lives in Michigan with her husband Randy, their son Walt, and a very old tabby cat named Lexy and a new Ragdoll kitten named Dephine. Her hobbies include Ashtanga yoga, cooking, and oil painting. You can follow Rana Awdish on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

## SPEECHES

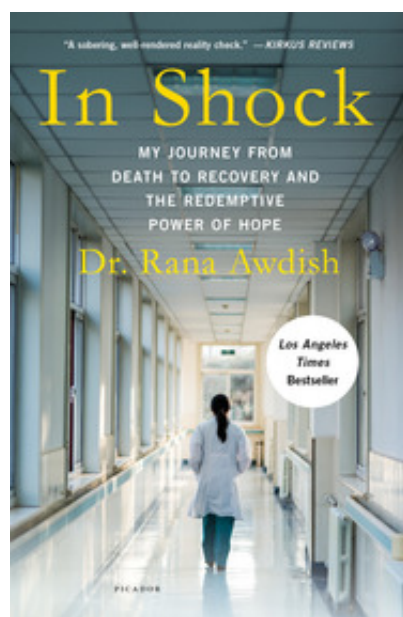
**The Wound is the Gift** Dr. Awdish speaks on the lessons learned from surviving critical illness. She focuses on the illuminating power of moments that shatter our bodies and allow us access to truths. "The Wound is the Gift" is an inspiring talk about how confronting our own mortality can help us to find meaning and peace. Ultimately, our dependence on each other and our interconnectedness are beautiful.

**In Shock** As a critically-ill patient, Dr. Awdish appreciated a dark hole at the center of a flurry of what was otherwise highly-proficient, astoundingly skillful care. It took years of being a patient to understand that though the healing potential of knowledge is magical, it is also a lie. Medicine cannot heal in a vacuum; it requires connection.

**The Power of Words** From her experience as a patient, Dr. Awdish saw how inadvertently hurtful even an amazing doctor's words could be. There is suffering that is intrinsic to disease, and then there is the suffering that we confer, which is very much avoidable.

**The Broken Vessel** Dr. Awdish focuses on what is needed to heal medicine and how medical training distances physicians from patients. It is only by giving primacy to the patient narrative, building resilience in physicians, and forming a community that we can hope to reunite the sparks to a cohesive whole, with the power to heal us all.

## BOOKS



Trade Paperback

[In Shock](#) My Journey from Death to Recovery and

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## the Redemptive Power of Hope

St. Martin's Press

Dr. Rana Awdish speaks on her story of loss, illness, and treatment and the revelations derived from her experiences. Hauntingly perceptive and beautifully written, *In Shock* allows the reader to transform alongside Awdish and watch as she discovers the flaws in her profession and in her own past actions as a physician while achieving, through unflinching presence, a crystalline vision of a new and better possibility for us all.

REVIEWS: "Dr. Awdish was very well-received. She is so personable and the book signing was a big hit. In addition, her talk was phenomenal. I have never seen this audience so engaged and connected with her. It was very quiet and no one was looking at their phone or leaving early. She also received a standing ovation, and I had never seen that before as well."

- Dr. Marijo Snyder, Vice President of Medical Staff Development & Clinical Engagement, Bronson Healthcare Group

"Dr. Rana Awdish's personal story is so incredibly powerful and moving. She captivated attendees with her art and science of storytelling, candid sharing of her healthcare experiences and her ability to connect with the audience with empathy, humor and humanism. Dr. Awdish is a true professional who graciously gave of her time and spirit to impart on our organization the importance of seeing patients as human beings and meeting them where they are in their life. Her presentation skills are flawless – seamlessly recounting her life altering experience with dignity and grace. It was an absolute honor to have Dr. Awdish at our Patient Experience event as she epitomizes how every moment matters."

- Nicole Giammarinaro, RN, MSN, Director, Education & Research, Office of Patient & Customer Experience, Norwell Health

"Dr. Awdish recounts the details of her compelling critical illness, which lead her through a personal transformational journey. She captivated the audience while describing her efforts to refocus health care providers on the patient's perspective of their care experience. She chronicles her own struggles as a physician-patient and how she engaged her colleagues to break from their historical training and truly listen to their patients and families. From there, she describes how her organization has developed training tools to help doctors learn how to better interact with patients and improve communications in a way that boosts the patient experience while also supporting physicians. Dr. Awdish's passion for improving patients' experience to improve patient care and physician well-being is palpable in her presentation. She is a remarkable physician and speaker."

- Carole S. Empey, Principal, Foley, Baron, Metzger & Juip, PLLC

"When I first heard Dr. Awdish speak about her experience as a patient in our ICU I was mesmerized. Her insights into how we can do a better job, as medical professionals, with our patients is absolutely inspiring. I have been a critical care nurse for 16 years and she inspired me to change my approach with my patients and their families. To be a better nurse: to listen more, to be present, to show empathy, to see the patient not the disease, and to support, educate and advocate for my patients and their families. Dr. Awdish is truly an engaging speaker that will change the way we as medical professionals practice medicine."

- Marilee Mann, Henry Ford Hospital

"Breathtaking, exceptional. Rana Awdish is at once a dying patient and a highly respected critical care physician. Her generosity of spirit brings laser focus to both perspectives as she lays these double lives side by side under a single microscope, impeccably weaving together the worlds of personal loss and faltering medical care. She bears the souls of both with graphic accuracy; pulling the audience into their own humanity as they feel the crushing blows of well-intended, but recklessly delivered messages; the horrifying loss of personal agency and the innate will to regain ourselves. Her keen observations as both patient and doctor are so vivid that they suck the breath out of the room. As she leads us to our own conclusion that (in medicine) 'we can do better,' she builds the case for restoring compassionate care and humanity to healthcare."

- Maria S. Kokas, Henry Ford Hospital

"There is a transformative power as Dr. Awdish speaks from the heart about her experiences as a patient in her own Intensive Care Unit. Her survival is remarkable, as is the optimism she retains while presenting a tangible path to greater empathy in modern medicine. If you have ever felt burdened by the lack of humanity in medicine, you must experience Dr. Awdish presenting live."

- Dana Buick, Palliative Care Physician and Communication Consultant

"Rana Awdish tells her story to help make all physicians better doctors. Her experiences as a critical care doctor and critically ill patient combine into a powerful lesson for all of those who hope to heal others. Dr. Awdish's strong voice guides physicians to treat all with empathy, improving both outcomes and patient experiences."

- Lewis Eisen, Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine at Albert Einstein University

"[Rana's] indomitable spirit lifts us as we hear [her] poetic storytelling on [her] remarkable journey to and from death's edge. We can almost hear the careless insecurities spoken about [Rana] in the O.R. We can hear and feel the numbing lack of empathy during [her] crushing ultrasound moment. We are stunned by the poorly choiced words spoken to [Rana]. We are simply stunned. Despite this shock, as Dr. Awdish, states with profound optimism and simplicity, 'We can do better.'"

- Kamran Boka, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine & Pulmonary & Critical Care Physician at UTHealth McGovern Medical School

"Rana Awdish's story is powerful, emotional, and instructive. As a member of the health care community, she knows why we say the things we do, and then puts those sayings in a whole new light."

She is a polished and thoughtful speaker who will keep the audience attentive the entire time she is speaking.”

- Mary Reich Cooper, MD, JD, Vice President and Chief Quality Officer at Connecticut Hospital Association