

Proust questionnaire: Dr Judith Hall



Where do you live?

Vancouver, on UBC Campus.

What profession might you have pursued, if not medicine?

Anthropology/archaeology, because the differences in societies and cultures are so interesting.

Which talent would you most like to have?

Extrasensory perception, so I could actually know what others are thinking, instead of just guessing.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?

Surviving and thriving in a patriarchal profession (which has been changing over my career).

Dr Hall is a clinical geneticist and pediatrician. She is currently a professor emerita and is active in the new UBC Emeritus College. Dr Hall was head of the Clinical Genetics Unit and chair of pediatrics at BC Children's Hospital, and has published extensively on congenital anomalies.

Who are your heroes?

Women physicians who listen to their patients and take the time needed.

What is your idea of perfect happiness?

Being active, alert, engaged, and regularly close to nature.

What is your greatest fear?

Having a preventable accident.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?

Allowing myself to become too busy to listen and be empathetic.

What characteristic do your favorite patients share?

Wanting what's best for their kids and providing tough love for themselves and their children.

Which living physician do you most admire?

Dr Cynthia Curry, a clinical geneticist working in a difficult situation, providing exemplary care in spite of horrendous systemic and financial barriers, and working hard to make a diagnosis in the ever-changing landscape of clinical genetics.

What is your favorite activity?

Pulling diverse concepts together, exploring uncharted territory, and providing new concepts or options to trainees, patients, and peers.

On what occasion do you lie?

It's not really lying, it's just not bringing up or taking up subjects and topics that lead to conflict.

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?

Fantastic, fabulous, appalling, and pathetic.

What is your favorite place?

The Pacific Northwest.

What medical advance do you most anticipate?

Finding ways to alter epigenetic programming; in other words, to break the cycle of three-generational poverty, abuse, and illness.

What is your most marked characteristic?

Curiosity, along with gratitude and generosity.

What do you most value in your colleagues?

Sharing their curiosity and kindness.

What are your favorite books?

Aging Well by George Vaillant, and *The Lacuna* by Barbara Kingsolver.

What is your greatest regret?

Not understanding the role of elders in our society until I became one.

What is the proudest moment of your career?

Having my whole family come when I was inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame.

What is your motto?

There are always three possible solutions.

How would you like to die?

At over 100, healthy and vigorous, in my sleep.