

**Table 2** How to write a 55-word story [21, 30]

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- 1 Think of a compelling story based on your experience (as clinician, patient, other?)
  - 2 Write down everything you can think of
  - 3 Don't edit, just write (phrases, words, key chunks of memory)
  - 4 Put it away (optional and can be done at any time between #2 and finishing)
  - 5 Read over your writing and begin to clarify the idea or storyline that you want to convey.
  - 6 Begin editing, sometimes ruthlessly
  - 7 Share your work with others for reactions and feedback
  - 8 Keep editing until you get 55 words. Use your word counter, and also double check manually.
    - a. The title doesn't contribute to the word count but shouldn't be more than seven words
    - b. Contractions count as single words
    - c. Eliminating articles (the, a, an) can help with word count
  - 9 If you cannot cut enough words, you probably have material that either would lend itself to a longer essay or become multiple 55-word stories
  - 10 Given the brevity, formatting can make a big difference. Experiment with line length, indentations, hanging indents, and other use of white space
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