

October 10th, 2011

Dear Dr. Sanson,

First off, let me thank you, Dr. O'Keefe, and TeamHealth for the opportunity to travel to India with the INDUS group. I had a magnificent experience. I can't recall ever attending such a large conference where I felt like I was surrounded by so many genuine and kind individuals. I'm amazed at how professional, well-organized, and well respected the conference has become in its brief six years of existence. Experiencing the EM movement in India gave me a feel for what it must have been like in the 70's as the same challenges and conflicts had to be overcome.

The experience also made me extremely grateful for the training I am receiving in the US and specifically at USF. This trip to India has deepened my belief that what we are doing in emergency medicine is beneficial for society and provides a service that no other specialty is able to offer. Who knows, maybe someday I'll head back to Germany to help establish our specialty there!

While living in Germany, I certainly got to witness the German stereotypes and after awhile, I also started to recognize the American stereotypes that were just "normal" to me before. I've always found great humor in these cultural differences and in no way ever meant or took offense to these cultural idiosyncrasies. Along these lines, I thought I would highlight my India experience with a few cultural differences in the style of the great Jeff Foxworthy.

You might be in India if...

If you find yourself on a six-lane road with trucks, cars, motorcycles, bicyclists, rickshaws (both gas- and man-powered), pedestrians, donkey driven carts, and a meandering cow, all weaving, merging and honking... you might be in India.



If you visit a place where almost everyone speaks your language, but you can't understand anything... you might be in India.



If every time you step out onto a street a salesman magically appears, product in hand, offering a "special price for you my friend"... you might be in India.

If you get into what looks like a peaceful line of people only to find yourself being pushed and crammed in a stampede of human livestock... you might be in India.

If you walk up to and even touch one of the world's greatest wonders and return to find your shoes still where you left them... you might have been very lucky in India.



If you realize how amazingly lucky you are just to have been born in the United States and not spend most of your life hungry and malnourished... you might be in India.

If you are proud of your street bargaining skills only to find out that you still paid double what the locals do... you might have just shopped in India.

If you're enjoying a hot spiced milk and tea concoction from a lady on the street with a propane burner and ingredients in old plastic soda bottles... you might be having the world's best Chai in India.



If someone is telling you “yes” while shaking, well, not really shaking, but more so bobbling their head “no” and you are totally clueless as to what they mean... you might be in India.

If you just paid 75cents to have a 90lb old man pedal you and your friend's overly indulged waistlines through one of the oldest and most active and congested cities of the world with no gears or brakes on his bike... you might be riding in a rickshaw in India.

If you get a sudden panic as the water from the hotel shower trickles into your mouth unsuspectingly and a spitting frenzy and mineral water mouthwash ensue... you might be in India.

If you're eating wonderful 'stews' over rice with foreign contents and flavors and maybe even feeling a good spicy burn... you might be eating a curry in India.



If the sight or sound of a mosquito causes you to slap your bare skin raw and leads to a DEET overdose... you might be in India.

If you're buying a watch from a street vendor with the brand “ROLAX” on the dial for less than \$5... you might be shopping in India.



If your quads are burning like you just sprinted a new track record while using a public restroom for emergent relief for the 8th time today... you might have the “Delhi-Belly” in India.



If you find yourself being stopped by strangers who want a picture with you because you are white... you might be in India. And your mug shot is probably on some random website.

If you are in awe of the vibrant color of women's dresses, contrasted against an arid, dusty background as they go about their everyday tasks...you might be in India.

If you are walking through an emergency room and realize that much of your training and skills are useless without the equipment, tools, and staff you are accustomed to... you might be in an ER in India.

If you are inspired and humbled by the drive and passion of doctors, nurses and staff who have dedicated their careers to improving the infrastructure and standard of acute medical care for their people... you might have been to an INDUS-EM conference. I know I have.



With great appreciation,

Andrew Wilson, MD
PGYII Resident Physician
USF Emergency Medicine
Tampa, FL
andrewwilsonmd@hotmail.com