

An Essay on Physician's Honor

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For outsiders, I want to tell a personal, sincere and slightly long story about the games played to besmirch physicians' honor. I entered medical school by mistake. In the classrooms of every medical school there are students who are quite smart in mathematics and should have been in engineering or pure sciences. I was one of them. Years later, I realized that I did not have the physical and psychological resilience to be a physician. I always viewed my teachers and fellow students who could succeed in medical profession with envy and respect. I felt sorry for not being able to practice this difficult but honorable profession. After medical school, although not formally, I received further training in engineering. Now, I serve in the Biophysics Department of a Medical School, behind the front lines of medicine. I feel lucky for having combined my engineering ideals with the education and research of the medical profession.

Why do I write all this?

I feel that I can look at the medical profession both as an outsider and an insider.

For those who have only the outsider's view, I offer a thinking exercise to separate the right from wrong, in the storm unleashed over the medical profession nowadays.

Get up at 8 am. During the entire day do not ever sit down.

At 8 pm you are still on your feet.

You are still on your feet at 9 pm, at midnight and at 1 am past midnight.

At 2 am you are up, at 3 am you are up.

At precisely 3 am, open a newspaper, find a Sudoku puzzle. If you cannot solve it, imagine the sweet baby goldfish in your jar will die. If you solve it, the fish will live. Now you can go to bed only to get up an hour later.

You are up at 4 am ... and at 5, 6, 7 am.

It is now 7 in the morning. Tear a page from the Ankara Telephone Directory and memorize all the numbers. At 10 am, you will have to remember all these numbers.

Don't forget that you will still be up until 6 pm of this new day.

Imagine working 4 years at this pace. Now you are a

medical specialist.

Later, assume that you will work for 10 more years, perhaps not so heavily, but sometimes even more heavily (If all this makes you feel gloomy, please remember there are people who work like this for your benefit, even if you don't have to).

Now someone comes up and says: "You are a money grubber. You don't deserve the money you are paid. You have to work harder. 2000 lira a month is enough for you. If you want more, you have to choke another physician for it. I don't care if you are involved in education or research." We have not yet mentioned in this story 6 years of basic medical

training, marriage and having children, raising and educating your children.

I remember an aphorism by a respected writer: "The farthest point you can see is the inside of your eyes."

Look carefully at, first the eyes of physicians and then your own.

Meanwhile, do not forget the baby goldfish.

With my respects,

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