

The Joy of Practicing Medicine

Editorial

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Medicine has traditionally been regarded as a profession which provides tremendous job satisfaction. Many doctors and even medical students are being increasingly dissatisfied with the practice of medicine. In the past, when doctors met, they used to talk about the interesting patients they helped to treat. These days they usually talk about financial stresses, job pressures, bureaucratic hassles and red tape. Doctors are increasingly toying with the idea of changing careers, while others are burning out in their mid-forties, where has the joy of practicing medicine gone?

It is very true that we are living in an era, where money, material comforts are imparted higher rating than academics or joy of profession. It is equally true that intelligent people may also start doubting the value of ten years of medical education when society constantly bombards the budding doctors that money is everything and the only thing. In such situation, how do we approach Medicine? In what way, the doctors should take upon the profession and derive maximum joy from it?

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First & foremost, we need to find meaning in our profession. Work is an essential part of being alive and physicians are fortunate to work in a job which can provide so much satisfaction. They are presented with new challenges daily. They can apply their mental abilities and their physical dexterity to successfully solve many of these problems; they are accorded respect and status: and they have control and autonomy. Unfortunately, many doctors no longer work for the sake of working; they are working for a car, a new house, or a vacation. It is no longer the work itself that is important to them, and this is a shame, because there is no such joy in doing work well.

We are privileged to help and to take care of patients. We need to respect our role, so we can learn to respect ourselves. If you do what you love, and love what you do, you will find a higher purpose in life and if you are passionate about your work, your life will be full of meaning.

We are fortunate to be doctors, because we can learn so much from our patients. They bare their heart to us, and make us privy to their innermost confidences, so that daily we get a ringside view of human drama, suffering, courage, life and death. Doctors have a chance to plumb the depths of the human soul, as they accompany their patients through their suffering. Our patients can teach us how to live and how to die and we need to keep our hearts open to their lessons.

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The doctors are hard pressed to find job satisfaction. However, instead of focusing our efforts on trying to identify what is wrong with medicine today, we should identify happy, positive and inspiring doctors.

We should remember that the relationship with our patients is at the heart of our professional role and a healthy doctor-patient relationship nurtures both patient and doctor. Medicine is masterly combination of science, art and service. When a patient thanks you for your work, or says that you have become like a family member, stop and relish that moment. Those moments are the real reward for being a doctor if you can slow down to let them in. when it comes to getting positive feedback, no profession in the world comes close to medicine. The joy to medicine is in doing good, which is why patients still confer a special status on us we need to prove ourselves worthy of it.

Finally, we should not make the mistake of equating wealth with happiness. The pursuit of wealth only complicates our search for happiness. As physician, we should be grateful that we get the opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of others everyday. Be thankful daily that you can help others. Medicine is a wonderful way to make a living. Be glad that you are a doctor and you can make the most of your profession for your sake, and for the sake of your patients and for the community.

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