

# On Making a Difference in Family Medicine Today and Tomorrow

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# Getting Started

- Something about me
- Something about the history
- How do we make a difference?
  - One resident at a time
  - New ideas or curriculum

# Focus of Presentation

- Behavioral Scientists: Our jobs and our developmental stages
- Distinguishing gifts from entitlements
- Seven Laws of Ecology



# Goal of Medicine

- Relieve or prevent suffering
- Maintain or provide hope
- Prevent, treat or cure disease
- David Slawson and Allen Shaughnessy have pointed out that EBM can only address the third goal

# Role of the Behavioral Scientist

- Focus the resident on being patient centered
- Provide skills training to address psychosocial issues
- Motivate residents to become reflective practitioners (i.e. Balint Groups)
- Do it all from a one-down position

# Underlying Assumptions

- Residents are more comfortable with biomedical issues
- They like a logical and analytical left brain focus
- Emotional matters are seen as a distraction
- Right brain thinking is holistic, simultaneous, contextual, and aesthetic



# Jane Brody in NY Times

“ideally you’d want a doctor who is empathic, returns phone calls and provides emotional support as well as good treatment—*admittedly a rare combination*”



# Strategies

- Maintain focus
- Seize “teaching moments”
- “Broken Record” the important stuff
- Stay tuned to their critical cases
- Tailor lectures and seminars
- Change horses in mid-stream

# Letters from graduates

The first prototype  
and

The totally unexpected turnaround



ME<sup>®</sup>

LET'S PUT THE  
FUN BACK IN  
DYSFUNCTIONAL



If the change has to begin with me  
how am I going to do that?

Let's take a developmental approach

SIX ARCHETYPES WE LIVE BY

INNOCENT • ORPHAN • MAGICIAN

# THE HERO WITHIN

WANDERER • MARTYR • WARRIOR



EXPANDED  
EDITION

CAROL S. PEARSON

Developmental Milestones in  
life and in our careers

# The Innocent

- Lives in an unfallen world--a green eden
- Life is sweet--one is being totally taken care of
- First stages of love or a mystic experience
- Newly hired as a behavioral scientist in Family Medicine



# The Orphan

- A disappointed idealist
- Forced to cope with a hostile environment
- Emotions often out-of-control or numbed
- Looking for safety
- Wants caretakers--MD faculty as mentors

# The Martyr

- Focus on achieving goodness and taking responsibility
- Takes care of others and sacrifices
- Represses negative emotions so as not to hurt others
- Sees work as hard but necessary for other's sake

# The Wanderer

- Seeks independence and autonomy
- Explores new ideas in own way
- Goes it alone and becomes one's own person
- Emotions: stoic--no sign of being hurt



# Warrior

- Goal: strength and effectiveness
- Slays the dragon
- Evangelizes, converts others, practices a discipline
- Changes or molds others to conform to personal ideals
- Works hard and expects rewards

# Magician

- Goal: Authenticity, wholeness and balance
- Appreciates differences, wants peer relationships
- Celebrates presence of God in everyone
- Works at true vocation--sees work as its own reward

# Recap

- Support residents and increase their comfort zones
- Encourage use of holistic thinking
- Facilitate communications
- Develop into magicians



# My Obsession with Gifts

- Everything that we humans have—all the resources of the planet we inhabit--has been given to us as a gift
- Raw materials are there for the taking
- Also, the talents each of us has been given, are gifts, we can even substitute the word

# Joshua Loth Liebman

## Details the Goods in Life

- Health, love, beauty, talent, power, riches, fame and above all peace of mind
- My additions: intelligence, positive energy, community, and challenging work
- Each is a gift
- We have not earned them, they have been presented to us as gifts

# More Gifts

- The love and care we receive from others
- The time and attention that we devote to the people we care for and about
- The attention and feedback that we give to the residents



# Contrast: Entitlement

- Most people feel entitled to have whatever they think anyone else has
- In relationships, when I feel entitled, anytime that I do not get exactly what I expect or feel I deserve, I am wounded
- I feel rejected, unloved, devalued

# Results of Feeling Entitled

- When I get it, that does not make me particularly happy, it is just O.K.
- But when I do not get it, I become unhappy and resentful
- Like addiction: when we get our fix, we don't hurt for the moment, a brief high, but no lasting happiness

# Detrimental Effects

- Relationship Issues
  - Generational issues
  - Gender role issues
  - Professional issues
- Societal Issues



# Need for Consciousness Shift

- Recognize that everything, even the bad stuff, is a gift that allows us to learn and grow
- Difficult people, even people who feel entitled, can be seen as gifts that give us the opportunity to develop patience, kindness and empathy

# The Ultimate Gift

- Forgiveness, both of others and of ourselves
- To need forgiveness implies that we have done harm
- Forgiveness is a gift as is love

# Dealing with Residents

- I am not entitled to their undivided attention and respect
- I can choose to look at the opportunity to make a difference by enhancing their interviewing and counseling skills as a wonderful gift
- It's magic



# Seven Laws of Ecology

- In 1974, Bertram Murray, a Rutgers Professor, wrote an article in the NY Times entitled "What the Ecologist Can Teach the Economists."
- Increasing relevance in the 21st Century
- Important when teaching family doctors

# 1. Everything is Connected to Everything Else

- Physical health is dependent on mental, social and spiritual factors
- Drugs have side effects
- The energy I put out affects other people

## 2. There Is No Such Thing As A Free Lunch

- Drug companies buy, you to listen to their spiel
- Prescribe too many antibiotics, resistant organisms develop
- Use up resources of the planet, pollution grows, lunch gets more expensive
- Our climate is changing



## 3. Nature Knows Best

- Human beings do not really know all that needs to be known to manage an ecosystem
- Doctors do not always know why one person responds to treatment and another does not
- Evidence based medicine deals with statistical probabilities—

## 4. Everything Must Go Somewhere

- Blocking feelings, keeping them out of awareness, not just failing to express them, has devastating physical effects
- Any blockage--of energy, emotions, blood flow or even elimination— is harmful
- The waste absorbing capacity of the natural environment is taxed—we cannot throw away forever

## 5. Continuous Growth Leads To Disasters

- More and more money and bigger and bigger practices are not necessarily good
- Money can become an addiction like everything else.
- Cancer cells, those that grow without limits, ultimately kill the organism
- Too much of anything—food is a good example, does not lead to happiness, just obesity



## 6. Competing Species Can Not Coexist Indefinitely

- Economists feel that competition is beneficial, maintaining diversity and allowing for choice
- In nature, one of the competing species will be ultimately eliminated from the ecosystem
- Successful species cooperate

## 7. The Law Of The Retarding Lead

- Adaptive changes, do not come from species that are dominant in their niche, but from species and individuals that are forced to be more resourceful because they exist on the fringe
- Behavioral scientists, often seen as on the fringe, help to make a difference in Family Medicine today and tomorrow

# Summary

- Peace of mind comes with acceptance of ourselves, others and our jobs “as is” with no option for a refund
- The opportunity to serve, to practice our profession and influence residents and medical students is a gift
- Because we are not “dominant”, we can make a major difference



# THE BEGINNING

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