

Preface

I am grateful for the success of “Advice to the Young Physician: On the Art of Medicine.” This has given me the opportunity to write a second edition. I reviewed the first edition and recognized that most of the material was applicable not just to young physicians but physicians and clinicians of all ages. There was also a need to broaden the diversity of figures highlighted. Therefore, the second edition has been substantially augmented with material that looks to reach a wider audience. Clinicians have a lot in common. We can and do learn from each other. Physicians, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, social workers, psychologists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and others are collectively joined in a unique brother and sisterhood. They have responded to a calling to care for our fellow men and women. This second edition was written to inspire all clinicians, young and not so young.

One reviewer noted that the first edition was really two small books in one. He was right. To highlight this duality, the second edition has been divided into two sections. Part I focuses on inspirational perspectives from history to include new healers. In Part II, I have expanded on inspirational advice for the modern-day healer.

A major change in the second edition is the inclusion of material that highlights women and healers from other cultures and caring professions. Here are some brief descriptions of this new material:

- There were no women highlighted in the first book. In researching the women who have been most influential to us in the caring profession, one woman stood out from the rest—Florence

Nightingale. Because clinicians have much to learn from “the woman with the lamp,” I have included a chapter about her fascinating life.

- The intriguing and inspirational stories of “The Three Physicians of Jian An” were added, highlighting the benefits we enjoy to this day from the contributions of ancient Chinese medicine.
- Although we are not therapists we do counsel, and therefore I have added a section on the clinician as counselor.
- The section on Osler has been expanded to include many of the keen observations made by Charles S Bryan.
- Osler also noted that it was Imhotep who “was the first physician to stand out in the midst of antiquity,” and I think you will enjoy the chapter on the everlasting contributions which this Egyptian physician made to the field of medicine.

So much of what is communicated in the consultation room or on the wards of a hospital between a patient and his or her physician, nurse, or therapist is the telling of a story. Our ability to appreciate these stories helps not only the patient but enriches us immeasurably. I have added two stories of patients which I think will entertain and educate you. You’ll read about a special love between Joe and Elsie in “A Modern Family” and what keeps Ted, a man suffering from tardive dyskinesia, alive in “A Meaningful Life.”

Few things stop and give me reason to pause more than when I hear about the incredible acts of kindness and caring by ordinary practitioners. I wanted to highlight the extraordinary random acts of kindness and the daily practices of unselfishness and altruism shown by non-famous clinicians. In “Unsung Heroes and Heroines,” you will read about the greatness of those who are anonymous but to their own patients. In addition to the original material included in the first edition, I’ve also included an image of the painting “The Doctor” by Sir Luke Fildes. The reader will feel like he or she is standing in the dirt floor cottage with this healer as I review the iconography of what has been one of the most influential works of art showcasing the field of medicine.

Advice to the Healer

On the Art of Caring

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