

Doctor-Centered Care

Category: A Fresh Start

written by Zohar Lederman | January 1, 2019

"I realized with alarm that I hadn't learned how to save anyone at all, not Dr. Sanders or Lazarus or Jimmy or Saul or Anna O., and that what I was thrilled about was learning how to save myself." (House of God)

Two years ago my life drastically changed for the worse, and I faced an intersection in destiny. I chose the clinician's path, knowing it is going to be demanding, hoping it will be satisfying. Life now is harder than I imagined, and every single day is a struggle. I live in a house that is no longer my home, and in a country that is no longer my own. Time has become my most precious resource, and yet the end-goal is vaguer than ever, even for a disciple of existential philosophy. Fighting to stay afloat, there is a light source, almost seen from my house: the hospital. There, constantly bustling with life, and occasionally death, stands the emergency department, young and proud.

Some people go there because they are ill, and they seek treatment. Most people go there because they are lonely, and all they seek is company. I am of the latter. Some patients wear gowns, some wear scrubs; some patients present with fever and cough, some present with a stethoscope. We all need care. I need the patients just as much as they need me, perhaps even more. They provide me with a healthy perspective, and the privilege to be involved in their lives in intimate ways. They trust me enough to see them in their lowest moments, and to touch them while they are most vulnerable. They occasionally entrust me with their lives, or those of their loved ones, and thank me even when, not "if," I fail.

For some people, merely talking helps. For some, doing is a more effective cure. The most common questions asked by my patients, other than *why do I need to wait for so long?* and *why not a CT?* are: how long my shift is, or why I do not sit down, or when last I slept. Then we turn to talk about them, and I forget about my life. Forgetfulness is occasionally the best cure.

Zohar Lederman

Moshav Bitsaron, Israel