The Healing Connection

Category: Bedside Manner
written by Angelina Sony | September 8, 2023

I've heard my grandparents say, "If you spend some time with certain doctors, half the disease will be gone." They were the first to teach me the importance of good doctor-patient communication, and that when a doctor listens closely, it makes a huge difference. Years later, in my early days as a junior doctor, this lesson was driven home to me by one of my patients.

Amidst the hustle and bustle of a busy outpatient clinic, I encountered a patient who seemed guarded and hesitant. However, armed with the Calgary Cambridge method — a tool that emphasizes compassionate communication — I embarked on a journey to truly understand her. As we delved deeper into her story, the walls she had built around her vulnerabilities slowly crumbled, revealing a narrative intricately tied to her family dynamics. The symptoms she initially expressed were not her actual problem; rather, it was the complicated, broken family dynamics and the financial constraints. She sought a safe space to share these issues and also had anxiety regarding her health, which required an examination and reassurance.

This encounter served as a profound reminder that behind every patient is a unique human being, with their own life experiences, struggles and triumphs. It emphasized the importance of fostering a connection, built on trust and empathy, to uncover the underlying truths that may not be immediately apparent. In a world where health care can sometimes feel impersonal, this experience reminded me that every patient's journey is unique, and as healthcare providers, we have a responsibility to approach them not just as cases, but as individuals deserving of our understanding, compassion, and care.

In the end, it's not just about diagnosing and treating diseases; it's about healing the whole person. This lesson has stayed with me throughout my medical career, a testament to the enduring power of the human connection in the practice of medicine.

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