Mind & Arts as Essentials for Internists: Beyond Evidence and Technology

Jack Ende, MD, MACP, Immediate-Past President of the American College of Physicians (ACP)

What is mind and art necessary for internists? And what kind of practice is mindful practice (MP)? According to some dictionaries, mind includes intelligence, reason and soul, different from heart which has more sense of emotion. On the other hand, art means "the practice of medicine is an art, based on science," and from that, it is the skill to practice medicine. When TV, smartphones, and the Internet became popular, people need both the power of reason and emotion.

In this session, we will talk about their attempts and we will discuss and speculate the theme of ACP-Japan Chapter 2018 annual meeting, "Minds & Arts as Essentials for Internists: Beyond Evidence and Technology".

Professionalism: How Can It Be Learned?

Few topics in medical education challenge us as does Professionalism. Clearly, as teachers, we have an important responsibility not
only to encourage professionalism in our trainees, but also to identify and correct instances of non-professional behavior. Why is this so difficult?

First, compared with other lessons we hope to instill in our learners, professionalism is different. Part of that difference is that professionalism is not easy to categorize. In this session, we will examine accepted definitions of professionalism, including the highly regarded and well-accepted Physician Charter on Professionalism. But then we will ask, Is knowing the definition of Professionalism sufficient to change behavior? Likewise, we will consider, Is professionalism a competency like interpreting a cardiogram or delivering bad news a competency?

We will have the opportunity to explore professionalism as virtue, that is, as moral behavior. A working definition of professionalism as “doing the right thing when no one is watching,” will be considered. If we accept that working definition then the very interesting question arises: What can we do, as medical teachers, to instill professionalism in our trainees?

We will explore a three-pronged approach to encouraging and assuring professionalism. Those three overlapping strategies are: attending to the Hidden Curriculum; Mentoring; and Role Modeling.

The Hidden Curriculum refers to the customs, rituals, and accepted behaviors that our learners see around them, and that strongly affect how they behave and what they accept as appropriate. While it is easy for medical teachers to regard the Hidden Curriculum as outside their sphere of responsibility, in fact, just the opposite is true. We will examine how we, as teachers, can impact the Hidden Curriculum and our learners’ concept of what should be considered professional behavior.

Next, we will explore what medical teachers can learn from the literature on Mentorship. As it turns out, Mentors play a very important role, perhaps an essential role, in encouraging professionalism. Mentors provide feedback, and so we will also examine the not-so-easy task of providing feedback on behaviors that fall within the sphere of professionalism.

Finally, we will examine Role Models. Role Models, as we will see, are different than Mentors, but like Mentors, they are likely to be essential for our trainees’ development as professionals. Examples of the impact Role Models can have upon professionalism will be provided. In the question and answer period we should have time to discuss our own strengths and weaknesses as Role Models, particularly Role Models that represent and point the way towards professionalism.

(Jack Ende)