

THE GENTLEMAN MEDICAL PRACTITIONER

Plato defined moral philosophy as the seeking out of the correct manner of life a person should lead. Closer than priests and lawyers to their clients are the doctors. To be a good doctor one has to have moral integrity and purpose. His high sense of principles should not be altered by the lower consideration of expediency and attempts by others to any course of action that clashes with one's own ethics and critical judgments.

As the practice of medicine is becoming dehumanized because of the emphasis on laboratory procedures and domination of medical schools by researchers against true clinical teachers, it is becoming more and more necessary to earnestly stick to a good ethical code.

For this current era of mad race for prominence and wealth amongst the doctors, the biggest casualty is the ethics. Earning money is no sin but a sentence from the code of Paracelsus. The 16th Century Swiss Physician, "not to collect any money without earning it" should be the leading principle.

To practice fair and ethical medicine one has to be a gentleman. The best description of a gentleman

doctor is in my opinion by sir Benjamin Brodie. The 19th Century British Surgeon and the first President of the General Medical Council (GMC) UK in 1858. He said "you must feel and as a gentleman but let there be no misunderstanding as to who is to be regarded as a gentleman, it is not he who is fashionable in his dress, expensive in his habits, fond of equipages, pushing himself into the society of those who are above himself in their worldly stations, that is entitled to the appellation. It is he who sympathizes with others and is careful not to hurt their feelings even on trifling occasion, who in little things as well as great, assumes nothing which does not belong to him and yet respects himself. This is a kind of gentleman which a medical practitioner should wish to be. Never pretend to know what can't be known, make no promise which is not probable that you will be able to fulfill".

I wish and I am confident that my community has the will to become and practice like a gentleman.

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