Taking Care of Ourselves in Order to Better Care for Children

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Faculty Non-Disclosure Information

- In the past 12 months, I have had no relevant financial relationships with the manufacturer(s) of any commercial product(s) and/or provider(s) of commercial services discussed in this CME activity.

- I do not intend to discuss an unapproved/investigative use of a commercial product/device in the presentation.
Disclosure

- I am not a role model for physician wellbeing but this exploration has been a life long journey
Objectives

- Understand that humanism is a core concept in medicine, in pediatrics and the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Recognize that physician wellbeing is critical to humanistic care
- Explore intrinsic wellbeing factors to maintain joy and meaning in our work
- Journey with me and reflect on our profession and your contributions
We are at a critical juncture
We must respond to the warnings
What inspired you to pursue a career in pediatrics?
Potential Reasons

- To help children and families
- To serve others
- To address suffering and provide comfort
- It was a calling
- Advocate for children, underserved patients/families
- Resiliency of children and ability to adapt
- Working with children is fun
What does humanism mean to you?
Humanism

Set of deep-seated convictions about one’s obligations to others, especially those in need. Encompassing a spirit of sincere concern for the centrality of human values in every aspect of professional activity.

-Edmund Pellegrino, MD
Humanism

The physician’s attitudes and actions that demonstrate interest in and respect for patients that addresses the patient’s concerns and values. These generally are related to patients’ psychological, social and spiritual domains

- Branch JAMA 2001
History of Humanism

- Hippocratic oath- Physician’s duty to benefit the sick and keep them from harm and injustice
History of Humanism

- Hippocratic oath - Physician’s duty to benefit the sick and keep them from harm and injustice
- Sir William Osler
“It is much more important to know what sort of person has a disease, than what sort of a disease a person has.”

- Sir William Osler
History of Humanism

- Hippocratic oath- Physician’s duty to benefit the sick and keep them from harm and injustice
- Sir William Osler
- Francis Peabody- “The Care of the Patient”
History of Humanism

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- Sir William Osler

- Francis Peabody- “The Care of the Patient”

- Arnold Gold Foundation
Humanism in Pediatrics

- Included in the Pediatric Milestones Project under Professionalism

- Humanism: “The ability to maintain human values that permeate altruistic patient interactions”


- [https://www.abp.org/professionalism-guide](https://www.abp.org/professionalism-guide)
AAP Mission Statement

Mission Statement. The mission of the AAP is to attain optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. To accomplish this mission, the AAP shall support the professional needs of its members.

-Jan 5, 2017
AAP Agenda for Children
Examples of Humanism within AAP

- Health Equity
- Medical home concepts
- Poverty and child health
- Children and youth with special health care needs
- Access and financing of health care
- Profession of pediatrics
- Accomplish through direct patient care, research, education, advocacy, administrative leadership
• “Send the message that it is time for pediatricians to cultivate a culture of wellness better aligned with their responsibilities as role models and congruent with advances in pediatric training”.

• Shift from burnout treatment to preventive physician health and wellness

• Identify factors that will increase career satisfaction

- McClafferty H, Pediatrics 2014
Distinguishing Professionalism from Humanism

Professionalism

- Way of *acting*, observable behaviors that meet the expectations of patients
- Examples: competency, confidentiality, fulfill responsibilities.

Humanism

- Way of *being*, set of deep seated convictions of others, especially those in need.
- Examples: altruism, integrity, respect for others, compassion.

“Humanism is the passion that animates professionalism”

Dimensions of Humanism

- Intrapersonal:
  - Mindfulness, Reflective Practice

- Interpersonal
  - Communication, Empathy

- Systemic
  - Improving systems and cultures to allow humanism to thrive

- Population
  - addressing biases, assumptions and ingrained practices that affect health outcomes

Gaufberg and Hodges: Medical Education 2016 from Haidet P. personal communication.
The Habit of Humanism: A Framework for Making Humanistic Care a Reflexive Clinical Skill

Steven Z. Miller, MD, and Hilary J. Schmidt, PhD

1. Identify multiple perspectives
2. Reflect on how they converge or conflict
3. Choose to act altruistically

Miller S et al. Acad Med, 1999
I Wish You Knew…

Anne Wills
Jeff Wills

In 2001, Anne and Jeff Wills lost their son Ryan at just 9 months of age as the result of complications of pulmonary hypoplasia. In this article, they share their experiences and great wisdom to both acknowledge and educate nurses who care for children and their families. The Wills address the exhaustion, confusion, fear, anguish, sense of displacement, and sense of helplessness experienced by many parents of critically ill and hospitalized children. They discuss vital issues for all parents, including decision making, balancing medical care and family life, and a father’s perspective. They express gratitude for kindness, caring, transparency, and support received from nursing and medical staff. Finally, they share their grief, hope, and the impact their son has on them to this day.
I Wish You Knew… (parent perspective)

- “that the bedside was my home while in the hospital. I lived here, ate here, rested here”.

- “how scared I was, though I fully tried to put on a show of complete competence.”

- “that as a parent I will review all my decisions over and over and question whether I did the right thing.”

- “how tough things can be for a dad. I felt impotent throughout his life. I felt my job as a father should be to provide and protect my family but I couldn’t do this for my son.”

I Wish You Knew... (parent perspective)

- “how much the simplest acts of kindness meant to me.”
- “how much difference your caring and support can make. We encountered so many people who were truly fighting for us and Ryan while our family was being bombarded. It is these relationships that gave me the strength to be brave, the strength to endure, and in some cases, the inspiration to be a better person.”

-Wills A, Wills J. *Pediatric Nursing* 2009
I Wish You Knew... (resident perspective)

- “that spending time with you and your family is the best part of my day”
- “how inspired I am by my patients and their families”
- “how much we enjoy learning from your children and you”
- “that I keep every piece of artwork your children draw for me and they are all proudly displayed on the fridge”

- Personal communication
1. Identify multiple perspectives
2. Reflect on how they converge or conflict
3. Choose to act altruistically
Man’s Search for Meaning

- “Forces beyond your control can take away everything you possess except one thing: the freedom to choose how you will respond to the situation."

- We have a choice in our actions

- Our lives seem most fulfilling when we have meaning in our lives
The word physician comes from “Physis” which means:

“to study the individual nature of each person”
The word patient comes from the Latin word “Patiens” which means “To Suffer”
Suffering is an essential part of being human

Health care providers routinely witness suffering every day and try to relieve it

The way in which a man accepts his suffering adds a deeper meaning to his life

Experiencing suffering may help to develop compassion

- Cassel E, *NEJM*, 1982
To journey with a patient through their suffering may be the most rewarding privilege of our profession.
The Wounded Healer

“All health care professionals are wounded healers. They cannot escape suffering themselves. Moments of pain, loneliness, fatigue and sacrifice are intrinsic to the human condition. The physician or nurse’s own suffering can become the source of compassion in the healer’s art.”

-DP Sulmasy, *Healer’s Calling*, 1997
Suffer in Silence
“Doctors, more often than not, are left alone to struggle with their suffering. Many find it hard to ask for help, to acknowledge needing it: they are trained to be independent, to be accountable for decisions that cost or save lives, and to assume an undue portion of the miseries of others.”

- Jamison KR, Night Falls Fast, 1999
Imagine the following...
Physicians must address emotional toll of patient’s death

by Janet Serwint, M.D., M.S., FAAP

My first experience with a patient’s death occurred during my internship. Although her death occurred 22 years ago, I still remember her with amazing clarity.

Heather was a 3-year-old, full of curiosity, who was admitted to the oncology unit secondary to relapse of leukemia. One day during rounds, she coughed a single time. She didn’t look sick, but the attending asked that I order a chest X-ray (CXR), which I did. However, I forgot to check the results.

The next morning when I returned to the hospital, I saw Heather and suddenly remembered. I ran to radiology and to my sadness, Heather’s CXR showed she had pneumonia. Although the attending and I health care provider. I needed an opportunity to review my decision-making, to face the reality that I wouldn’t always cure patients, that sometimes patients get worse and sometimes I would make mistakes. Yet, I still had an important role with the family to support them in their suffering.

These topics are rarely addressed in medical school and residency. I don’t know which was the bigger failure to me: that I hadn’t checked the CXR or I hadn’t supported Heather’s mother during this tragedy. I had failed to be a healer.

Addressing the emotional needs of both the bereaved family and the health care profes-

One way to nourish ourselves is to share our experiences with others. We need to have the advantage of others’ perspectives, to have an external barometer to process our reactions, to get an external reality check in order to integrate these experiences into our lives. It is benefi-
cial to talk about these experiences for many reasons: to acknowledge and bear witness to the life and death of a patient, a fellow human being, to acknowledge responsibility and review our decision-making if needed,
I Wish You Knew... (resident response)

- “that your loss brings me tears”
- “how often I stay up at night second guessing myself on if I made the right decisions today”
- “how much documentation is needed for each encounter, (therefore time stuck behind the computer)”
- “there are days when a child dies in the morning and I have to continue on with my day”
- “how hard it can be to leave sick loved ones at home to come to take care of your loved ones in the hospital”
From Where Do you Get your Nourishment?
How do we renew ourselves to maintain the joy and meaning in our work?
Wellbeing Factors

❖ **Extrinsic (Individual and Organizational)**
  - Optimal work conditions
  - Community and work relationships

❖ **Intrinsic**
  - Humanism/ altruism
  - Intellectual challenge
  - Sense of Calling
  - Self Compassion

-Vyoon J, 2016
Common Themes

- Amidst situations of suffering, we have a choice to have joy in our lives
- Discovering the opportunity in perceived adversity
- Finding meaning in our lives
- Most joy is found in relationships with others
- Helping others releases endorphins which leads to euphoric states—“helper’s high”
8 Pillars of Joy (Book of Joy)

Qualities of mind
- Understanding perspectives
- Humility
- Humor
- Acceptance

Qualities of heart
- Forgiveness
- Gratitude
- Compassion- suffering with
- Generosity
Is Being a Pediatrician a Calling to You?
The Concept of Calling

“A career that involves having an external summons, provides a sense of meaning or purpose, and is used to help others in some capacity.”

- Intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation
- Nourishing a proper sense of self-fulfillment

Association Between Physician Burnout and Identification with Medicine as a Calling

Physicians who were burned out had lower likelihood of:

- Finding work rewarding
- Thinking their work makes the world better
- Enjoying talking about work


- 42% strongly agreed practice of medicine is a calling
- Ways to nurture sense of calling
  - Understand moral communities in our culture
  - Highlight during training and later in career
  - Balint groups, narrative medicine, reflections
  - Further study intrinsic factors such as sense of calling

-Yoon, Acad Psych, 2016
Back to Bedside: Residents’ and Fellows’ Perspectives on Finding Meaning in Work

- Appreciative inquiry exercise
- Participants: 37 resident and fellow members of ACGME’s Council of Review Committee Residents
- 1) Discuss best of what is 2) Dream about what might be 3) Design what can be 4) Develop a path to what should be
- Review of *When Breath Becomes Air*
- Identified themes

- Hipp DM. *J Grad Med Educ.* 2017
Themes-Finding Meaning in Daily Work

1) More time spent at bedside
2) Shared sense of teamwork
3) Reduced time on nonclinical or administrative tasks
4) Supportive, collegial environment
5) Learning environment conducive to developing clinical mastery and progressive autonomy

- Hipp DM. *J Grad Med Educ*. 2017
Forever Moments

- Pivotal experiences reaffirm our commitment
- Remind us of the privilege of our profession
- Reflect on these values and how they shape us as a doctor

-Merriman N, STAT news, 2016
What are your forever moments?
Create a Culture of Caring

- Everything matters—every person, every time
- Compassion to self and to others
- Build a culture of shared purpose
- Do what is right
- Tell our stories
Create a Culture of Caring

- Check in on how everyone is doing along the way
- How are you?
- Are you thriving? From where do you get your nourishment?
- Reach out to those who may be struggling
- Requires trust and receptiveness for honest disclosures
- Need to address legal reporting issues
Don’t just survive
Aim to thrive
The Role of Mentoring

- Be an example
- Be your best authentic example
- Demonstrate humanism to self and to others in our profession
- Acknowledge our imperfections, fatigue, mistakes, discomfort with medical uncertainty
“We have an obligation as educators to share with learners how we have coped with feelings of anger, anguish, shame or uncertainty in caring for patients.”

- Novack DH, Acad Med, 1999
Concept of Time

- Unassigned time
  - To think about your patient
  - To sit with your patient
  - Ask what you can do and do it
- “Let doctors be doctors”
- Time to learn about colleagues’ stresses, challenges
- Time to cultivate healthy habits to encounter challenges rather than survival skills

- Epstein EM, Acad Med, 2013, Sweet V. God’s Hotel
Create Culture Change

- ACGME
- National Academy of Medicine
- Federation of Pediatric Organizations
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Other pediatric organizations
- Your own institution/practice
Determine definition of “well-being” for pediatrics and identify appropriate measures that can be used across all career paths.

Refine messaging of wellness for pediatrics.

Identify, catalogue and disseminate resources (and successful programs) addressing pediatric wellness by topic area and target audiences.

Further define gaps in pediatric knowledge and resources in the areas of education, research, and the culture of medicine.
Determine factors of burnout relative to pediatrics using National Academy of Medicine icon and categories as a potential template.

Determine how pediatrics initiatives can be informed by, and linked to, other specialty-based initiatives on wellness.

Commit to creating a culture of caring.

Follow up with leadership from individual pediatric organizations to address specific initiatives and accountability within each recommendation, including short-term goals (this year) as well as longer strategic initiatives.
Call to Action for Pediatricians
Culture Change

- Reduce suffering in silence
- Remove stigma of asking for help
- Cherish your forever moments
- Create a culture of caring
- Be your true and authentic self
- Address perfectionism- tell your stories
What is one thing to which you will commit?

Seize this opportunity!

- Individual
- Organizational
- Leadership
- Change policy
- Research
Conclusions

- Humanism is a key concept to our profession as pediatricians
- Physician well being is critical to maintain our humanism
- Find and maintain joy and meaning in your work
- Contribute to the vitality of our profession
- Don’t just survive- Aim to thrive
“The secret of the care of the patient is caring for oneself while caring for the patient.”

- Candib L, 1995
Courage does not always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, “I will try again tomorrow.”

- Mary Anne Radmacher