

Lighter Side of Medicine

INSPIRATIONAL STORY

JUST LISTEN...

I suspect that the most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention. And especially if it's given from the heart. When people are talking, there's no need to do anything but receive them. Just take them in. Listen to what they're saying. Care about it. Most times caring about it is even more important than understanding it. Most of us don't value ourselves or our love enough to know this. It has taken me a long time to believe in the power of simple saying, "I'm so sorry," when someone is in pain. And meaning it.

One of my patients told me that when she tried to tell her story people often interrupted to tell her that they once had something just like that happen to them. Subtly her pain became a story about themselves. Eventually, she stopped talking to most people. It was just too lonely. We connect through listening. When we interrupt what someone is saying to let them know that we understand, we move the focus of attention to ourselves. When we listen, they know we care. Many people with cancer can talk about the relief of having someone just listen.

I have even learned to respond to someone crying by just listening. In the old days I used to reach for the tissues, until I realized that passing a person a tissue may be just another way to shut them down, to take them out of their experience of sadness and grief. Now I just listen. When they have cried all they need to cry, they find me there with them.

This simple thing has not been that easy to learn. It certainly went against everything I had been taught since I was very young. I thought people listened only because they were too timid to speak or did not know the answer. A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well intentioned words.

HUMOR

AT NINETY-NINE

When a grandmother was in her late eighties, she decided to move to Israel. As part of the preparations, she went to see her doctor and get all her charts. The doctor asked her how she was doing, so she gave him a litany of complaints - this hurts, that's stiff, I'm tired and slower, etc.

He responded with, "Mrs. Siegel, you have to expect things to start deteriorating. After all, who wants to live to 100?"

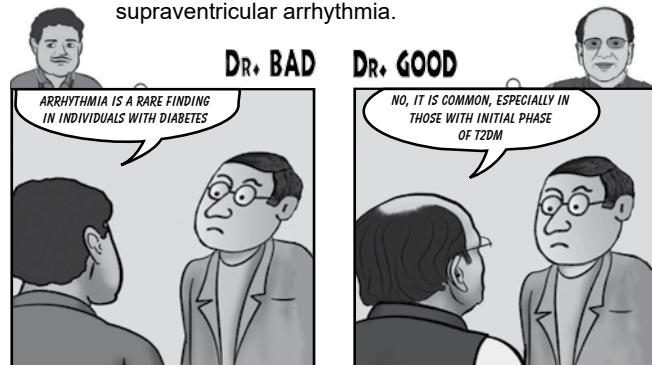
The grandmother looked him straight in the eye and replied, "Anyone who's 99."

HOPE YOU SAID HELLO TO THEM

Wife comes home late at night and quietly opens the door to her bedroom. From under the blanket she sees four legs instead of two. She reaches for a baseball bat and starts hitting the blanket as hard as she can. Once she's done, she goes to the kitchen to have a drink. As she enters, she sees her husband there, reading a magazine. "Hi Darling", he says, "Your parents have come to visit us, so I let them stay in our bedroom. Hope you said Hello to them."

Dr. Good and Dr. Bad

SITUATION: A 49-year-old male with recently diagnosed T2DM had supraventricular arrhythmia.



LESSON: A retrospective case-control study demonstrated the signs of morphological restructuring of the right chambers of the heart and a high prevalence of supraventricular arrhythmias in the early stages of T2DM. In addition, it was reported that the incidence of some kinds of supraventricular arrhythmias and the occurrence of tachycardia in type 2 diabetics could be majorly attributed to the restructuring of these chambers, which may, in turn, be caused by the peculiarities of the cardiac innervation, with the higher density of choline and adrenergic plexuses in the right chambers.

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