Transition to Practice: A Journey to Authenticity

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February 22, 2007
Objectives

To enjoy some poems
To examine the formation of health professionals as a journey
To imagine institutional culture as it ought to be
To imagine how we might redesign relationships in ways that may be helpful
Before we begin....

A moment of gratitude
The Way It Is

There’s a thread you follow. It goes among things that change. But it doesn’t change. People wonder about what you are pursuing. You have to explain about the thread. But it is hard for others to see. While you hold it you can’t get lost. Tragedies happen; people get hurt or die; and you suffer and get old. Nothing you do can stop time’s unfolding. You don’t ever let go of the thread.

--William Stafford
The Task...

Substance is enduring; form is ephemeral. Preserve substance; modify form; know the difference.

Dee Hock
The Tasks...

How can we be both faithful and effective trustees of the values our professions offer society?

...and how can we prepare the next generation of doctors and nurses to be faithful and effective?
The Context of the Work of Healthcare

Relentless economic/time pressures

A focus on safety, quality, transparency....

More regulation, duty hours, etc.

New knowledge and technology

Fragmentation of care, alternative medicine, consumerism

Demographics - population, generational gaps...
Three Naming Problems (Batalden)

The doctor-patient relationship
- From one-one to many-to-one

The science of disease biology vs. the science of clinical practice
- From naming diseases to relieving burdens

The Cost/Value equation
- Until we get it right others will continue to offer us things like DRGs, HMOs, P4P, etc.
The (Internal) Context of the Work of Healthcare

Truth telling (or lack thereof)
- The 38/54% problem

Promises and forgiveness

Seeking goodness ... for whom???

Imposed external controls

Discontent

A need for authenticity
The National Context of Health Professional Formation

Students or employees?
National or corporate standards?
Impending workforce shortages
Outmoded educational models
Expedient vs. improving patient care?
Individual formation: role of context
The Institutional Context for Healthcare Work

Frenzy
There is a pervasive form of modern violence to which the idealist ... most easily succumbs: activism and overwork. The rush and pressure of modern life are a form, perhaps the most common form of its innate violence.
To allow oneself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns, to surrender to too many demands, to commit oneself to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything is to succumb to violence.
The frenzy of the activist neutralizes his (or her) work ... It destroys the fruitfulness of his (or her) work, because it kills the root of inner wisdom which makes the work fruitful.

Thomas Merton
From frenzy to wisdom...

...as individuals and as professions
A Journey to Authenticity...

...it begins as an inner journey
Another Poem
The Journey

One day you finally knew
what you had to do, and began,
though the voices around you
kept shouting
their bad advice-
though the whole house
began to tumble
and you felt the old tug at your ankles.
“Mend my life!”
each voice cried.
but you didn’t stop.
You knew what you had to do.
The Journey (cont.)

...little by little,
As you left their voices behind,
The stars began to burn
Through sheets of clouds,
And there was a new voice
Which you slowly
Recognized as your own,
That kept you company
As you strode deeper and deeper
Into the world,
Determined to do
The only thing you could do—
Determined to save
The only life you could save.

Mary Oliver
“Journey to Authenticity?”
Authentic

...conforming to fact or reality; trustworthy; not imaginary; not an imitation; genuine; bona fide
The Journey to Authenticity…

As a person
As a professional
As a profession
“We exhaust ourselves supporting our illusions.”

Thomas Merton
The Journey to Authenticity

Sorting out False Self from True Self

Hearing your own wisdom....
Journey to Authenticity
The Whole Nurse/Doctor Shows Up

Incomplete Self vs. True Self

Inviting the whole person to show up

The inner teacher

Life on the Mobius strip
The Journey to Authenticity

Values – From the Inside Out

**Individual Values**

- **Unconditional imperative – Karl Jaspers**
  - A command of my authentic self to my mere empirical self; defines who I am; timeless

**Professional Values**

- Shared assumptions
- Foundation for action
Working with Nature: Three Faculties and Their Objects

Intellect – seeks Truth
Will – seeks Goodness
Imagination – seeks Beauty
Human Faculties and the Work of Medicine

**Intellect**
Discerns the truth

**Will**
Makes good clinical judgments

**Imagination**
Does so with harmony, creativity and beauty
Primary Values with which to Arm Oneself

**Integrity**
Discerning and telling the truth

**Altruism**
Putting what is good for the patient before what is good for the professional

**Practical wisdom (Prudence)**
Beauty in judgment

**Arete:** Integrating all the virtues to excellence
The Dreyfus Model and Transitions

Novice
Advanced Beginner
Competent
Proficient
Expert
Master
The Dreyfus Model and Authenticity

Learning the rules
Learning Context
Prudence (Phronesis)
Getting things done
Improving
Integrating with style
Arete: Excellence
Integrated Virtue in Action

The quality of patient care, the quality of professional formation and the quality of system performance are inextricably linked.
A Question: Relationships...

What types of relationships invite authenticity?

...to improve patient care?
As We Consider the Journey...
Think about Organizations:

As they were
As they are
As they might become
As they ought to be

Dee Hock
Authentic Community: The Cohesive Forces

Purpose
Principles
People

...or scapegoating
Purpose

Improve patient care
Principles:

Integrity
Altruism
Practical Wisdom
Arete
Clarify Assumptions

Using people to get work done, or...

Using work to develop people.
People:
Another Aspect of the Journey

Character
Character is determined by community; community is determined by character.
Another Consideration:

Authentic leaders are not made nor are they born; they are enabled or disabled by the organizations in which they work.
How would we begin?

We must become the change we wish to see in the world....

Gandhi
We have something else to offer the larger society...

Why it’s really important that we get this right....

especially now.
At this time we live in a culture....:
Postmodernism vs Critical Realism

**Postmodernism**
- Reality cannot be known with certainty
- Reality is a social construct
- Perception is reality
- Analogy - spin doctors

**Critical Realism**
- Reality does exist
- It can be known
- Analogy - real nurses/doctors
Avoiding Fundamentalism
The role of humility

Those who have no absolute values cannot let the relative remain merely relative; they are always raising it to the level of the absolute.

Flannery O’Connor
Values are enduring; rules are ephemeral; preserve values; modify rules; know the difference

Dee Hock Modified
Community leads to clarity; clarity leads to courage
I Will Not Die an Unlived Life

I will not die an unlived life. I will not live in fear of falling or catching fire. I choose to inhabit my days, to allow my living to open me, to make me less afraid, more accessible; to loosen my heart until it becomes a wing, a torch, a promise.
I Will Not Die an Unlived Life

I choose to risk my significance,
to live so that which came to me as
a seed
goes to the next as a blossom,
and that which came to me as
blossom,
goes on as fruit.

Dawn Markova
To Teach is to create a Space in which obedience to truth is practiced.

Abba Felix
To Teach/Learn/Lead is to create a Space/Community in which obedience to truth is practiced.