



## Doctor and Patient: Time Travelers

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From ancient times to the present day, the doctor-patient relationship has maintained certain characteristics intact. One of these characteristics is conversation, which has been preserved, in essence, in an unaltered manner.

Diseases in antiquity were attributed to religious and magical causes. In ancient Persia, a magician, connoisseur of the hidden forces of nature, conversed with his patient and prescribed potions or concoctions to heal his ailment (which eventually occurred if the wrath of the angry god was appeased). This ancient magician, an ancestral version of a modern doctor, remained the same for many centuries, until the Renaissance. During this era, the priests (a variant of the magician), with their vast knowledge of plants, rituals and astrology, began dedicating themselves to the healing of diseases [1].

The Renaissance is a curious case. In the hands of artists and the world of culture, rather than through the doctors themselves, the development of medicine found an evolution and contribution. Renaissance Patrons left their mark (and offspring) in many areas. With their fortune, they promoted the arts and thought in general, and the new conception of the world at that time (a conception based on the individual), motivated their search and study. Nevertheless, great advances, such as surgery, would have to wait for many years to come. The subsequent Baroque era and Industrial Revolution paved the way for modernity. Modern medicine transformed the cause of an ailment, attributed at that time to divine punishment, into one of cellular biological origin. The works of Virchow, Pasteur, Koch, and many others were fundamental in determining the causes of the disease, starting from the description of the patient's symptoms (or the specific complaint) [2]. Modernity has enriched the doctor-patient relationship with tangible advances. They are as numerous as they are important. Let us take one, for example, X rays. Electromagnetic waves, which produced black and white tones, would allow you to "see" what was going on inside the body.

The wrath of the gods of antiquity became limited to evidence revealed by archeological investigations. The complexity of the world and what surrounds it was made, in time (over centuries), understandable and approachable. A complexity that accompanied the human being himself, made up of body and soul. With the

development of "physical" medicine: surgeries, examinations and instrumentation, theories about the consciousness (or unconsciousness) of the human being were also developed. Sigmund Freud, Fritz Pearl, and Carl Jung played a fundamental role in psychoanalysis and Gestalt, among others, which targeted the human mind. Today, in retrospect, those contributions to psychotherapy and the treatment of mental illnesses were of enormous value [3].

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the doctor-patient relationship has been further enriched by concepts such as: Translational Medicine, Holistic Medicine, and a current, fashionable concept and technique, coaching. Coaching is a technique-tool widely used today, not only by doctors but also by professionals from various fields (although the current focus is oriented towards a medical doctor). Coaching is a process of personal change, which helps overcome a situation and progress to a desired one. It achieves faster and more efficient improvements. Obviously, coaching has roots in psychotherapy [4]. The coach, (a professional who practices coaching), needs extensive experience and technical knowledge, especially in the area pertaining to the coaches. In addition, the coach must use a neutral and lucid language that allows him to form an understanding of the patient's world; both in his social and physical environment as well as within the scope of his illness. For example, the correct use of an orthopedic cane or the care required after hip surgery in a city with transportation problems. Profound changes of habits, such as changes in eating habits, alcohol consumption, proper management and care of the glycemic apparatus (diabetic patients); and, in patients undergoing bariatric surgeries, psychotherapeutic management of their relationship with food, post operation.

Difficult diseases, such as fibromyalgia, have demonstrated a strong link between body and mind. The medical literature shows us the work of Dr. John Sarno, who spent many years dealing with the link between physical pain and our mind [5]. Unconscious emotions can be an important triggering agent. I do not know, for sure, if Dr. Sarno felt like a coach, but if we search the Internet, it is easy enough to realize that many of his patients are grateful for his approach. The coacher does not challenge the patient but gets involved with him instead. The coach celebrates his progress (however small they may be) and guides him to a specific objective. In the book "Coaching and Health", the author Dr. Jaci Molins

describes the skills that a professional must have: the ability to listen, ask assertive questions and empathy [6]. In this process, it is important to provide feedback to the patient, and work with one another and not against each other. There are patients who can say or affirm one thing and the doctor can understand something entirely different. In the same way, sometimes you have to untangle a knot that not even the patient himself is aware of, because he has not externalized his subconscious. The doctor, as a coach, must help the patient relate what happens to him to his pain, and help him find new paths and actions. If ancient magician-healers could travel back in time to this day, they would be astounded by our modern knowledge and progress [7]. They would recognize certain elements that remain to this day, but others have clearly changed. Without a doubt, they would apply new techniques if they took them back to the past. They would have more elements to face the wrath of the ancient serpent-god.

Regarding time travel ... there are oral healing traditions that have been handed down to this day. Some kept secret, others edited in self-help literature ...- “Visualize it and you’ll have it!” –

A modern coach with the papyrus of the secret formulas practiced by the ancients ..., good mix, don’t you think?

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