Acceptance

A Mentor's Joys and Responsibilities

SAMUEL L. KATZ, MD

Department of Pediatrics, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, North Carolina, U.S.A.

Truly, I am overwhelmed, grateful, and humble in accepting your John Howland Award for the Year 2000. Undoubtedly there are a significant number of equally deserving or more meritorious individuals among you, and I am especially appreciative of my friends who deserted Bill Bradley and John McCain to campaign in this election on my behalf. Seriously, I am deeply honored and accept the Award not only for myself but on behalf of all the patients, students, residents, fellows, faculty, and my partner and wife, Cathy Wilfert, who have made my professional career joyous and productive during my years in Boston and at Duke. With apologies to the many others who are not depicted, I would like to show you our department photo at the end of my second complete year at Duke. (Fig. 1) By that time, we had already been able to initiate a nurturing environment for diverse career development. Here are a few of that group:

Jerome Harris, my predecessor as Chairman at Duke

Rebecca Buckley, President of your American Pediatric Society

Catherine Wilfert, President of the Infectious Diseases Society of America (only the second woman in its 38 years) and Scientific Director of the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation.

George Brumley who became Chair of Pediatrics at Emory and is now Director of the Whiteford Community Foundation in Atlanta

John Griffith, later Chair of Pediatrics at University of Tennessee, Dean at Georgetown University Medical School and currently a Dean at the University of Cincinnati Medical School

Eric Ottesen, Director of the World Health Organization's Filariasis Program

Elaine Belmaker, Regional Medical Officer for the Negev in Israel and faculty member at Ben Gurion University Beer-Sheva

Stanley Porter, first Chair of Pediatrics at Eastern Virginia University Medical School

David Lang, later Chair of Pediatrics at University of Maryland, and now at Children's Hospital of Orange County

James Sidbury, an Intramural Program Director at NICHD, National Institutes of Health, recently retired

Jonelle Rowe, University of Connecticut neonatologist, currently at the Office of Women's Health, Department of Health and Human Services, and the National Institutes of Health

Figure 1. Department of Pediatrics House Staff and Faculty, Duke University School of Medicine, 1970.

Lois Pounds, who left us for Pittsburgh Children's Hospital, married their Chair (Tim Oliver), and brought him back to North Carolina where she became Duke's Dean of Admissions while he worked at the American Board of Pediatrics

Last, but not least, John Modlin, Acting Chair of Pediatrics at Dartmouth Medical School And Chief of Pediatric Infectious Diseases

In considering the many rewards I have enjoyed throughout these years, and trying to select that one which might best serve as the focus for my brief remarks today, I cherish most my role as a mentor for many of you. The word mentor appears so frequently in publications and in addresses these days, I often wonder how many of those who use the word know its derivation. Because I attended a public high school in Manchester, New Hampshire, where my freshman course in Ancient History was taught by Ms. Connie Coutchoucas, a vibrant and stimulating woman of Greek descent, we read Homer, both the Iliad and the Odyssey. Greek civilization was the foundation of all that was good in the world today, according to Ms. Coutchoucas. Mentor, as I trust some of you already know, was the friend (Fig. 2) to whom Odysseus entrusted the care and education of his son Telemachus, when Odysseus left to participate in the Trojan War, and after its conclusion to spend 10 years wending his peripatetic and adventure-filled way back home to Ithaca. An added aspect, which pleases me in this era when at least 60% of the residents entering Pediatrics are women, is the belief that Mentor was really the Goddess Athena in disguise.

In reviewing the list of the 50 previous recipients of the Howland Award, I can identify four of my own mentors. Charles

Correspondence: Samuel L. Katz, Department of Pediatrics, Box 2925, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, North Carolina 27710, U.S.A.

Accepted at the 2000 Pediatric Academic Societies' Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, U.S.A.

Figure 2. Télémachus Listening to the Advice of Mentor. From an oil on canvas by Charles – Joseph Natoire, 1740. Cliché: Musées de Troyes photographie: Jean-Marie Protte.

Janeway, the 1978 honoree, was the Chairman of Pediatrics who guided me through my residency, fellowship, and initial faculty years at Harvard and Boston Children's Hospital. Henry Kempe, 1980 awardee, was the individual to whom I turned when thoughts of assuming a Department Chairmanship became paramount, because I admired him as the epitome of the successful Department Chair in his role at the University of Colorado. He counseled me both before and after I took the position at Duke. Saul Krugman, 1981 recipient, although he was in New York where I never worked, nevertheless was the individual who in multiple collaborations indoctrinated me in the conduct and the ethics of clinical investigation. The 1994 awardee, Sydney Gellis, was the person who first attracted me to Pediatrics, deserting my internal medicine residency because of his charisma as a clinician and teacher at Boston's Beth Israel and Children's Hospitals. The one person missing from the list is John Enders who was my laboratory mentor and scientific father (Fig. 3). Although he was neither a pediatrician, nor a physician, he fulfilled all the criteria for the Howland Medal. I need not recount his many contributions to Pediatrics. However, at the risk of repetition for those of you who may have heard me previously recite his virtues, I cannot refrain from describing his approach to investigative leadership and to the role and conduct of a biomedical scientist.

John Enders' character and standards are those I would hope all mentors would exemplify to their students. Candor, professional humility, intellectual breadth, compassion, sharing, and generosity to others typified his approach. When you joined his laboratory, you became part of his academic family, and you worked *with* not *for* him. He was astute, imaginative, and

Figure 3. John F. Enders, PhD, 1954 Nobel laureate.

intuitive in his approach to science. Because he felt daily personal contact was essential to mentoring, he accepted only a handful of fellows so that he could talk with each one every day and thereby hopefully stimulate them. In addition to science, he provided an exposure to music, literature, history, and politics, not as diversions but only to ensure that he nurtured you in more than a parochial scientific environment. Results of laboratory studies were published only after experiments had been successfully repeated numerous times to assure their reliability; manuscripts were written and rewritten to fulfill his criteria as a former graduate student in English philology. There were no press conferences or advance media releases—reports appeared in journals with critical editorial review, with full credit and authorship to all members of the team, not just the director of the laboratory. Data and materials were shared with all who had legitimate credentials because the overarching concept was that biomedical science advanced more rapidly as more investigators were able to pursue new directions. Since the eventual goal was the betterment of child health, this ecumenical approach resulted in more rapid achievement of advances to improve the lives of children throughout the world. He was the exemplary mentor who succeeded over nearly 50 productive years while maintaining unwaveringly impeccable standards of personal and scientific honesty. Because of his superb mentorship, I and dozens of other pediatricians, internists, microbiologists, and epidemiologists chose the less traveled path, as beautifully phrased by Robert Frost (Fig. 4), that of academic medicine and investigation. At a time when the American Board of Pediatrics tells us fewer pediatricians are choosing the academic path, I can only urge, entreat, those of you in leadership positions to consider your roles as mentors and demonstrate to your students the gratifications, even in these difficult years, of an academic career.

This may be an appropriate moment to apologize to my children, most of whom are here today, because the hours spent

**Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth.**

**I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.**

Robert Frost

Figure 4.

WHAT IS MENTORING?

- MENTORING IS A PERSONAL AS WELL AS PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIP
- GOOD MENTORS ARE GOOD LISTENERS, GOOD OBSERVERS, GOOD PROBLEM-SOLVERS
- MENTORING IS CHARACTERIZED BY MUTUAL RESPECT, TRUST, UNDERSTANDING, AND EMPATHY

Figure 5.

GOALS OF THE MENTOR

- TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATIONAL AND PERSONAL GROWTH OF THE STUDENT
- TO NURTURE SELF-SUFFICIENCY
- TO DEMONSTRATE THE NEED FOR SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY
- TO HELP STUDENTS BECOME COLLEAGUES

Figure 6.

MENTOR→ROLE MODEL

- TO BE A ROLE MODEL THROUGH BOTH WORDS AND ACTIONS
- TO ASSIST STUDENTS TO FULFILL THEIR POTENTIAL; NOT TO BE A DUPLICATE OF THEIR MENTOR

Figure 7.

with my professional children diminished the hours, but never the love, I lavished on them.

In trying to summarize those aspects of mentorship that can be articulated, I have relied on a 1997 publication of *The National Academy of Sciences* (1). These features are depicted in the next three tables (Figs. 5–7). The best advice I can offer any neophyte is to identify a mentor who embodies these characteristics. I am not so proud to believe that I have successfully achieved all these goals; but truly, I have tried. In Walt Whitman's poetry, I found words more poetic than my own to express the epitome of the Mentor's hopes (Fig. 8). Put more simply and personally, "My pride is in your achievements not in my own." Thank you all so very much.

**"HE THAT BY ME SPREADS A
WIDER BREAST THAN MY OWN
PROVES THE WIDTH OF MY OWN,
HE MOST HONORS MY STYLE
WHO LEARNS UNDER IT..."**

**Walt Whitman
Song of Myself**

Figure 8.

REFERENCES

1. Committee on Science, Engineering, and Public Policy (COSE PUP), "Adviser, Teacher, Role Model, Friend," National Academy Press, 84 pages, Washington, DC, 1997