

OUR TRADITION OF MEDICAL LEARNING – A CHAOS WITHIN ITS OWN STAGNATION

DR. HAMID HASSAN

MANAGING EDITOR, JNMU

Since the beginning of time, for as far as human race's origins go, it has been evident that the human race survived on this weird rock of our visible universe, solely, on the base of its capacity to observe, reflect and later evolve towards a state that was better than its previous one. It has kept its genus thriving because it could cut and prune its defective traits and because it could nourish and bloom its prestigious facets. Surely, it has been a process spanning over millions of years in which the human race kept on enhancing its observation, improving its reflective capacity and evolving its techniques, based on those reflections, that made every other day of its existence a bit ahead of its previous one. Without this continuous adoption of evolutionary trends in a hostile environment and without abandonment of practices that needed to be left back, survival in a better way could not have been possible. It has been a charade of a mastery that we know as innovation.

Medical practices, like every other aspect of human evolution based on its peculiar ability to evolve and innovate, have improved along the pathway of human history. Based on their observations and reflections, regarding the maladies and afflictions ravaging human race, the most advanced minds of every

human age, over the millennia, have pulled humanity through the pits of darkness to the bright avenues of awareness, advancement and innovation.

Existing in a part of the world, that has now traditionally been shunning innovations and promoting a stunted intellectual state for decades on a grand scale, consists of an Orthodoxy exactly like the Christian church of the Middle Ages that has been very resistant to anything that could be termed different or else beautiful. It follows orthodox ideas in a stern fashion and strongly looks upon anything or anyone out of its set line. This system does not allow question or a finger raised, strongly rejects critique on its ways and practices and remarkably resists the change that could make the people slip away from its firm grasp.

Medical education in our institutes is run through teachers and trainers who are self centered and self oriented with least desire to get out of their orbit and with least motivation to actually deliver the knowledge. Groomed by the orthodoxy, they have a mindset that stands on the sole idea that knowledge makes them superior to the public around them and if they will let it slip out of their grasp, the practice will not only reduce their superior stature, as more centers of knowledge will arise, but will perhaps threaten their very existence too. The result is obvious; knowledge is kept within a tightly controlled circle. Teachers, facilitators, guides or trainers let only a trickle flow away from their grasp sacrificing the enlightenment of minds over the altar of their personal ego and interests.

It is a system that favors a blind following, where a teacher's word is revered sacred, and where a question, an idea, an innovation, a wandering away from the set line, a slipping away into the unknown and a waking up to the wonders of knowledge is considered nothing but blasphemy. Teachers within this system favor those pupils who, like "good kids", follow their instructions without even raising an eyebrow, who keep on ingesting the words of the books or teacher as such and who keep on divulging those words, exactly as ingested, over a sheet of paper or over the table of the examiner. Perhaps it does

satisfy the ego of the system that it has created photocopies of its own self, and perhaps that will be the reason why individual intellectual awakening, grooming and growth has neither been a goal nor a sought after commodity, of this system, unfortunately.

With a notorious habit of clinging on to the rotten practices, it alienates and marginalizes those pupils who have a spark within them and who want to ignite others with their spark too. Such individuals are ridiculed, made fun of, considered stupid and pulled by their legs, down the ladder of progress, at every level. The resistant ones, as a result, die trying to make an impact and the less resistant ones perish or are made to perish without a trace. A fate over which, the system and its ruling class, triumphs with sickening delight. The result thus is an educational system that stands devoid of innovations within medical teaching and demotivation to enhance its fronts through viable medical research, thus lagging its pupils at every spectrum of international frontiers.

The need, hence, is to educate the educationists to wake them up to the vistas dawning through the enlightenment of the evolved nations so that they could amalgamate themselves into their myriad and start evolving an educational system of learning and research that produces health professionals with the desire to create self-evolving generations through continuous betterment of the norms of knowledge sharing as well as research based learning.