

TALKS

TOPIC: "Techniques for Lay
Hospital Calling."

Source: "The art of ministering
to the Sick", Richard C. Cabot
and Russell L. Sicks, Macmillan,
1952.

Places used

Stenidaw, myo; WSCS callers,
Oct 5 & 18, 1960.

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NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

Talking about visiting in the hospital as lay representatives of the church: not as special friends or in any other capacity.

The purpose of lay visitation, representing church, is same as ministerial visitation: to help the person grow. The food of growth are love, learning, beauty, service (giving the sick a feeling of usefulness -- seeing sick blossom in expression when told about fine example she sets), suffering (but not always)

In so helping growth may provide opportunity from which a person starts a new life.

But as lay people you must observe visiting hours more faithfully than perhaps the minister (who should observe them when he can). You will not have as full confidence of the doctor or family of the sick, or perhaps of the sick one. On the other hand, your visit will be appreciated more by some simply because they recognize that you are doing this because you want to and "for free."

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Special advice:

Don't go into any room without first checking with the duty nurse. Especially is this true for seriously ill persons.

Don't stay very long. Short frequent visits are best. Even if the patient seems to be enjoying your visit.

Don't allow any alarm, horror, or sorrow to appear in your face or in your voice. This may be hard, but is necessary.

Don't give too much sympathy. It undermines courage and self-respect.

Remember that the sick have a sharpened awareness of sights, sounds and smells. Tobacco smell may irritate a sick person who would not mind it if well. Loud, harsh laughs or talking are bad, but so is too soft, purring or crooning. Sudden swift movements sometimes annoy.

Don't kick the bed in entering or leaving. Don't lean on it or sit on it. In some cases the slightest jar may hurt the patient.

Stand or sit where it is easy for the patient to see you. Don't make him face a strong light by standing in front of a window. If visiting a sick person at home don't sit in a rocking chair and rock, for it may tire a person very much

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The chief object of your visit may be to make the sufferer feel that somebody cares for him.

Don't apologize for anything-- your own deficiencies, fewness of your visits

In talking choose topic which do not require close or prolonged attention, or that range far from the interests of the sick person. Choose topics near hi in time, space, and affection. His family and friends, his own past and future, objects in his own house or in his own room, his favorite hobby and tastes.

Put variety into your visits: "something different." Flowers, literature, news, etc..

Sometimes it is good just for you to chat, giving the sick something to listen to but calling for no response from him. But observe carefully, and don't keep the patient from talking if he wants to, unless the nurse has told you not to let him. But don't ply him with questions

Don't talk of depressing or alarming subjects. Leave out knowledge of similar sickness, etc..

Sometimes just a friendly presence is all the company the sick person needs. Conversation then is not necessary.

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Do not advise treatment or tell of another doctor whom you might recommend.

~~xxxx~~ Keep confidence on any secrets shared, unless you are supposed to tell the minister, doctor, or some family member. But don't tell outside to others anything you may overhear.

Don't give your opinion on how the patient is. To say that "you're looking better" may be encouraging. But it may also raise false hope (I'm guilty here, I'm afraid).

Don't whisper or speak in low tone to anyone else in the room if there is the slightest chance the patient will hear you. He may think you are talking about him and be alarmed, imagining all sorts of bad news about himself.

Don't walk on tiptoe unless the patient wants you to, or unless he is dozing or asleep. Many patients are irritated or alarmed by tiptoeing.

Don't be insulted by anything the patient says or does. If you feel enraged, pass it by simply because he is a patient.

Believe that there is something good in every patient, no matter how ~~much~~ you are irritated~~x~~ by his repelling manner.

Go in the right mood -- a good one. Pray briefly and silently before visiting.

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Don't argue -- listen.

Don't carry gossip.

Let the minister know about the ill,
especially if emergent conditions are
present

If people complain don't comment or
sympathize. But if you're convinced
it may be honest complaints see that
someone -- minister, hospital adminis-
trator, doctor, family -- ~~who~~ can
investigate and act knows of it

Don't weaken the patient's powers by
doing for him what he can do for him-
self.

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