

2019

Giving hope: best healing power in medicine

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Recommended Citation

Zgheib, Nadim Bou (2019) "Giving hope: best healing power in medicine," *Marshall Journal of Medicine*: Vol. 5: Iss. 3, Article 2.

DOI: [10.33470/2379-9536.1239](https://doi.org/10.33470/2379-9536.1239)

Available at: <https://mds.marshall.edu/mjm/vol5/iss3/2>

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Unlike any other profession, medicine is not a job that you can take a break from, or step away from. It is indeed a true representation of our existence, which stays with us forever. It is a selfless, lifelong mission of helping people and caring for them and putting their interests much before ours.

I have always wanted to be a doctor, but I didn't fully realize my passion until my experiences doing clinical rotations in a hospital situated in a zone of conflict in Lebanon. As one of the few medical students to show up in an area of Beirut under siege, I was asked to help cover all the floors. We were not allowed to leave for safety reasons and I spent many weeks at the hospital doing whatever needed to be done from cleaning patient rooms to collecting blood and urine samples among other things. Despite being extremely tired physically, I felt mentally and emotionally energized. During this rotation, I realized the power of compassionate care. Many times I had nothing else to offer to the patients, yet they still appreciated my presence and my help. I learned to listen, truly listen to the patients while trying to collect every bit of information that I thought might be valuable for their care. I read and researched to find answers to their clinical needs and make a positive impact on their lives. I learned to appreciate every staff member of the hospital. I saw the importance of humility. It was then that I felt the greatness of medicine and developed new perspectives on human life.

It was very humbling to realize how much I didn't know in medicine and how much healthcare providers have to depend on each other and have to work together as a team to resolve a clinical problem. Observing suffering, listening, interpreting, and analyzing, I was inspired by my patients' stories and realized that patients are the best teachers and that the biggest healing power that we have as physicians is to give hope to our patients. As Mark Twain says "medicine has its office, it does its share and does it well; but without hope back of it, its forces are crippled and only the physician's verdict can create that hope when the facts refuse to create it".