

How to Cultivate Compassion - from the Paediatric Palliative Care Trenches

Dr Anthony Herbert^{1,2}

1 Paediatric Palliative Care Service, Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service, South Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
2 Children's Health Queensland Clinical Unit, Faculty of Medicine, University of Queensland, Queensland, Australia

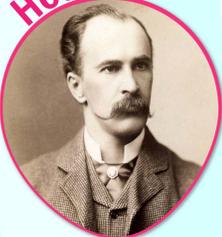
Definition of Compassion:

Compassion unfolds in response to suffering, beginning with our recognition of it, then conjuring change to elicit empathy and concern. This, in turn, motivates us to take action, and help relieve that suffering¹.

Definition of Palliative Care:

Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problem associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychosocial and spiritual².

Holism⁴



"It is much more important to know what sort of person has a disease, than to know what sort of disease a person has" – Sir William Osler

Presence



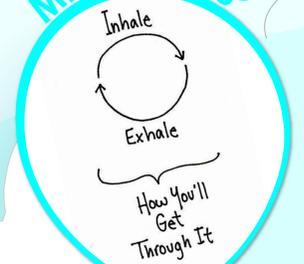
"Sometimes we need someone to simply be there. Not to fix anything, or to do anything in particular, but just to let us feel that we are cared for and supported" - Unknown

Competences

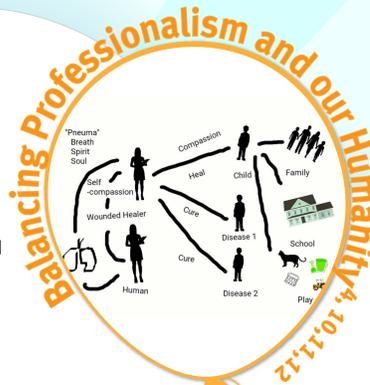


Clinical Competence is a pre-requisite to providing compassionate care

Mindfulness⁹



"As flower blooms in spring, compassion grows in mindfulness" – Amit Ray
"Smile, breathe and go slowly" – Thich Nhat Hanh



"A model of dying with dignity would include ... dying in the presence of people who know how to drop the professional role mask and relate to others simply and richly as a human being" – Roy, 1986
Show compassion by neither being distant nor by taking the patient's suffering on - Levin, 2015

Effective communication takes place when practitioners move fluidly between their position as experts and their position as curious and respectful human beings – Browning, 2002

Simple Steps³



#Hellomynameis
"I firmly believe it is not just about knowing someone's name, but it runs much deeper. It is about making a human connection, beginning a therapeutic relationship and building trust. In my mind it is the first rung on the ladder to providing compassionate care" – Kate Granger

Education and Training^{14,16,17}



"A process with both cognitive and affective components which enables individuals to understand and respond to others' emotional states and contribute to compassionate behaviour" – Riess et al 2011
e.g. Empathy Training, Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT)

Relationships



Nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care – Theodore Roosevelt

Reflective Practice^{4,13,14,15}



Professional competence is "the habitual and judicious use of communication, knowledge, technical skills, clinical reasoning, emotions, values, and reflection in daily practice for the benefit of the individuals and communities being served" – Epstein and Hundert, 2002

Recall of pivotal moments that re-affirm our commitment to the values of our profession

- Both during impactful events and after
- Share the emotional impact of patient's stories on your own self
- Acknowledge your individual struggles
- Use such reflection as teaching opportunities with colleagues

Spirituality^{6,7}



Providing excellent clinical and physical care as a critical component to providing spiritual care

Individual	Group
Continuing Professional Development	Quality Improvement
Reflective Essays	Morbidity and Mortality Meetings
Supervision	Case-based Discussions
	Journal Clubs
	Schwartz Center Rounds, Balint Groups

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