

Medicine and philosophy with supreme humanity and achievement by great physicians, Schweitzer, Osler and Hinohara

Abstract

From a medical and human perspective, there are three great physicians, which are Dr. Albert Schweitzer, Sir William Osler and Dr. Shigeaki Hinohara. As common aspects, they had the Christianity circumstances and the experiences with learning art, natural science and medicine. They estimated that medicine has to include the aspects of science and art in certain proportionality. Compared differences between science and art would be as follows: disease vs illness, case vs patient, cure vs care, evidence-based vs narrative-based. Hinohara developed music therapy that combines science and art. This article is expected to become some reference in the future.

Keywords: Albert Schweitzer, William Osler, Shigeaki Hinohara, science and art, aequanimitas, new elderly association (NEA)

Volume 4 Issue 3 - 2020

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Received: May 05, 2020 | **Published:** May 13, 2020

Abbreviations: NEA, new elderly association; JMTA, Japan music therapy association

Text

The development of healthcare and medicine involve the presence of historically outstanding physicians. From a medical and human perspective, there are three great physicians, which are Dr. Albert Schweitzer, Sir William Osler and Dr. Shigeaki Hinohara. The author has majored in general medicine and primary care medicine, and would like to introduce their humanity and achievements in this article. Dr. Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) was born in Kaisersberg, which was now in Alsace in France.¹ The village of Gunsbach was characteristic for its religious tolerance of Protestant and Catholic. His

father, who was the local Lutheran-Evangelical pastor, had taught him how to play music. He was brought up in the circumstance where Christianity exist in the basic of people with working for a unity of faith and purpose.²

He entered the Kaiser Wilhelm University, and studied theology, philology, and the theory of music.³ He had studied for his Ph.D. in theology in 1899 at the Sorbonne. After that, he entered medical school in Germany to become a physician and went to Africa to provide medical and surgical services at the age of 38 (Figure 1). He founded one of the first modern hospitals in Lambaréné, a small town in Gabon in 1913, and continued medical practice.⁴ He was provided Nobel peace prize in 1952.



Figure 1 Medical service, music play and Nobel peace prize of Dr. Albert Schweitzer.

His words carry weight, because he has changed his career from art to science.^{2,4} He has said as follows: “Medicine is not only science but also an art”, and “Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful”.

Sir William Osler (1849-1919) is a physician born in Ontario, Canada. At that time, there were “Big Four” great doctors at Johns Hopkins Hospital, including Welch, Halstead, Osler, Kelly.⁵ He initially sought priesthood at the University of Toronto, but later became interested in natural science and turned to medicine. He studied abroad, and finally had made significant contributions for the development of medicine in US, UK and Canada.⁶ He was also professional in medical education for bed side teaching and become the Fellow of the Royal Society in 1898.

There are 10 qualities taught and modeled by Sir William Osler in the following: i) possess your ideas in writing, ii) spare time effectively, iii) take care from physical and psychiatry aspects, iv) think positively, v) continue interest in the work, vi) estimate education the first, vii) read well and think, viii) improve your humanity, ix) thank your colleagues, x) accept the situation of others. Later, his comments have been summarized into other tips for becoming a good doctor.⁶

Those factors include compassion, understanding, empathy, honesty, competence, commitment, humanity, courage, respect and optimism.⁷ He said that “medicine is an art based on science”.⁸ He wrote down 2 famous textbooks, which were “the principles and practice of medicine” and “Aequanimitas” (Figure 2).

Dr. Shigeaki Hinohara (1911-2017) was born in Yamaguchi, whose father was a catholic priest. When he was medical student in Kyoto University, he suffered from severe tuberculosis. After recovery, he had worked in St. Luke International hospital, Tokyo.⁹ When abroad in US, he came to know Dr. Osler, and started to develop his philosophy and primary care medicine in Japan¹⁰ (Figure 2). He has taught the fundamental theory and actual practice of medicine for long. Then, all Japanese medical staffs and people have respected him. He had lived up to 105 years old, and made great achievements in medicine. Hinohara was a father of primary care medicine and music therapy in Japan. Further, he established New Elderly Association (NEA) for developing social movement as a prominent physician, philosopher, educator, musician and peace advocate.^{11,12} When he was dead, there were many obituary articles from British Medical Journal (BMJ), the Osler Library, New York Times, and so on.^{13,14} They introduced him as longevity expert, Oslerian scholar, prolific author and peace advocate.^{14,15}



Figure 2 “Aequanimitas” written by Sir William Osler, and translated by Dr. Shigeaki Hinohara.

From his vast knowledge and experience, he said that “medicine has both aspects of science and art.” We can compare the differences between science and art. They are disease vs illness, case vs patient, cure vs care, evidence-based vs narrative-based and effect of treatment vs skilled art manner.

Three physicians mentioned above showed characteristic aspect. Schweitzer has contributed to community health care in Africa.¹⁴ Osler has taught young doctors the basis of general medicine by bedside teaching.^{5,8} Hinohara has showed medical and educational care for patients, and a meaningful life awareness for the elderly.^{12,14} On the other hand, three physicians revealed the common basic background for religious circumstance and excellent personality. In addition, they have majored in common regions, such as arts, sciences, and medicine

for many years. Among them, the coexistence of art and science would be important. The ratio of art and science would be different in the ancient medical practice and in the modern medicine.

Furthermore, Hinohara has long been the chairman of the Japan Music Therapy Association (JMTA) and developed music therapy that combines medicine and music.⁹ As a disciple of Hinohara, the author has been enlightening people for Hinohara-ism, music therapy, and anti-aging medicine with the concept of NEA.⁹ In the future, the philosophy and medical mind of the three great physicians will continue to exist in the basic heart of doctors and medical staffs.

Acknowledgments

None.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

Funding

None.

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