

Marilyn Simard

Book Review #3

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Title: The physician as Teacher

Author: Neal A. Whitman, et al.

Publisher: Whitman Associates, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1997

ISBN: 0-9647117-0-2

Pages: 275

Price: CDN\$ 65.48 (https://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/0964711702/ref=olp_f_new?s=books&keywords=The+physician+as+teacher&qid=1578767963&sr=1-2&f_new=true)

Overall rating: Good

Audience:

All physicians, particularly at the beginning of their teaching career.

Summary:

The aim of this book is to help academic physicians and practitioners to become better teachers. In addition, the authors believe that by improving their teaching skills, physicians will learn as well. This book is divided into two main sections. The first part focusing on the importance of communication skills in education. According to the authors, "teaching is an interpersonal communicative event that occurs because of the physician's concern and desire to help". They define the roles of teachers and learners and describe the characteristics of the relationship between them. They also explain how our personal experiences (e.g. the parent-child relationship) can be applied to the teacher-learner relationship. The second part offers teaching tools to help the physician become a good teacher in different teaching situations. One of the important aspects here is the use of the communication skills described in the first part. Finally, the authors believe that doctors with good communication abilities have the potential to become very good teachers!

Strengths:

This book is clear and concise, which makes reading enjoyable. The sections are well divided and at the end of each chapter a summary presents the most important notions to remember. Also, the addition of several figures facilitate the understanding of more theoretical concepts of the book. Finally, if necessary, bibliography and quotations provide interesting resources to go into more depth on certain subjects.

Weaknesses:

The subject of this book is very broad and that is why some sections lack depth. For this reason, I believe this reading is less appropriate for physicians with extensive teaching experience. Moreover, although this second edition includes

several new studies on medical education, some aspects of our reality are absent. Indeed, nowadays, technology is very important in medical education and unfortunately, this point is not addressed in the book. Finally, I wonder if it is realistic to apply all the methods proposed by the authors in our busy daily life at the hospital.

Recommendation:

I would recommend this book for physicians interested to improve their teaching skills at the beginning of their career.