Ideas on the Faith Journey

Love makes the world go around: but faith holds it together.

We are in our churches, synagogues, and mosques, a congregation of the faithful, not necessarily a congregation of the loving.

It is faithfulness that holds a marriage together and unfaithfulness that tears it apart.

It is not love of country but faith in the man standing next to him that propels a soldier into deadly battle.

It is faith in our leadership and the laws of our country that civilize us as one people.

Many have remarked that our stories are of men and women of great courage.

Webster defines courage as: “the quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face danger, difficulty or pain without fear.”

It is faith that embodies that quality of mind and spirit that both binds us in our physical humanity and frees us in our human spirit.

And so I would posit that our stories in Tattoo are those of faith journeys; both our patients and our own.

The doctor patient relationship is one of the few arenas where trust and faith prevail and flourish. Without faith in each other’s trust, there can be no true healing physical, mental, emotional or spiritual.

Often our patients entrust us with their naked selves along with their naked bodies. Our exam roots are the confessionals of healing. Diagnosis and treatment is the easy part.

In “Blue Healer” it is faith in a dog’s loyalty. In “Dancing on Air” faith in the elderly woman’s desire to live, and in “David” it is a father’s faith in his son that lead to miraculous results.
Conversely in *Tattoo* and the “Boy in the Giant Man’s Body,” lack of faith unravel the connectedness between doctor and patient and lead to near disastrous results.

Some reflections on David:

There is nothing harder than seeing your son or daughter critically ill.

Forced to see healthcare from the patients perspective I learned about fear of the unknown, the frustration of poor communication and uncertainty, the power of family, friends and prayer.

Faith in David’s will to live and overcome despite great adversity and do so with humor and joy.

David writes:

“And one of the forever changed lives portrayed in a chapter of this book is my own. Along with all the pain that he endured, my father stayed with me and believed in me even when it seemed the entire remaining world had given up hope. With his determination at staying by my side, his daily conversations with me my father willed me to live. And it is possible that I am alive today because my dad never gave up on me and because he communicated with me and because my respect for him is paramount.”

Faith enables courage. Faith gives hope. And hope which gives way to love, spiritual forgiveness and healing.

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