

How Every Physician Should Be

A graduation letter on medicine as an art practiced with love and respect

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ABSTRACT

The text reproduces an affectionate letter addressed to Alexandre by his aunt, Dr. Ana Cecilia de Toledo Arruda Amato, on the occasion of his graduation from the Sorocaba Faculty of Medicine. The author defines medicine as an art that is well practiced only by those who perform it with love, and she urges the newly graduated physician to treat each patient according to their age, as if they were a grandfather, father, mother, brother, best friend, or child. She holds that love, affection, sincerity, and a welcoming smile already offer a cure for the greatest ill of our times, the absence of love, and that the rest is up to science and books. She stresses that love and respect are not learned from books but are a gift of people with a big heart, and she closes by wishing her nephew happiness and success on the path then beginning.

KEYWORDS: *medicine; love; humanization; doctor-patient relationship; graduation; ethics*

Alexandre, Medicine is an art, and like all art it is only well practiced by those who perform it with love. If an elderly person knocks at your door, treat them as if they were your grandfather. If a man or a woman knocks at your door, treat them as if you were dealing with your father or your mother. If a patient of your own age comes to you, look upon them as if they were your brother or your best friend. And if a child comes to you, care for them as if they were your own child. With love in your heart, with tenderness in your gaze, with sincerity in your handshake, and a welcoming smile on your face, you will

already be offering them the cure for the greatest ill that has afflicted all humanity in these latter times: the absence of love. And the rest? That is up to science. Books teach. But love and respect are not learned from books. These exist only in privileged people: those who were born with a "big" heart. And you are one of them. Therefore, I know you have everything it takes to be a successful physician. Be happy on this path that begins today. Congratulations! Loving kisses from Cilinha (A letter I received from Dr. Ana Cecilia de Toledo Arruda Amato, my aunt, when I graduated from the Sorocaba Faculty of Medicine)