

From Our Readers



Tom Janisse,

I'm not caught up on all of my reading. I did just get through the article "Are All Physicians Leaders." What a great article. I made an additional copy of the article and sent it to all of the Salem Primary Care physicians to make sure they saw it.

Dan Roth, MD
NW Primary Care Service Area
Director

Tom Janisse,

The Permanente Journal lives up to the challenges laid out in the Institute of Medicine report *Crossing the Quality Chasm*. The KP Hawaii Region Health Care Teams recently focused on such at a recent Regional Health Care Team Leaders offsite. *TPJ* is a balance of not only clinical/scientific medicine, but of systems and operations, issues about leadership, new methods of care delivery besides the 15-minute MD appointment, communication, and issues that are patient-centered.

A very enlightened approach.

Ben Tamura, MD
Chief of Internal Medicine, Hawaii Permanente Medical Group

Dear Editor,

In regard to the picture taken by Dr Ahmad Abdalla in *The Permanente Journal*, Vol 6, No. 4, Fall 2002, p 38, "A Gathering of Crabs," this picture is an insult to the many people who respect life of any form on this earth.

People who care for animals and the environment would like to see animals in their natural habitat and not in a fish market pending trauma by human beings, by boiling them to death and then eat them for enjoyment.

I do not see any healing for the soul and any soul in a healer who perceives a pile of once-living animals hunted away from their natural habitat by humans to be sold for a profit as an "attractive" scene.

Yes, there is mesmerizing beauty in beings and "gathering" of beings in the nature but there is no beauty in any gathering to be killed soon.

Sincerely,
Zarin Azar, MD
Gastroenterology, Kaiser Permanente, Bellflower, CA

Response:

Thank you for bringing your viewpoint to our attention. It is far from our intention to insult anyone. The connection between ourselves and the world around us, our environment, is often easily overlooked. We will consider diversity of opinion in future issue decisions.

Editor

The Permanente Journal,

Thank you for a very stimulating article "Can Some Clinicians Read Their Patients' Minds? Or Do They Just Really Like People? A Communication and Relationship Study," Vol 6, No. 3, Summer 2002. Are you aware of a thoughtful essay on intuition by a young Eric Berne? It may have been his first published work. I appreciated your reinforcement of the fact that effective treatment hinges on a positive treatment relationship. One of my concerns in a mental health program, where treatment is usually extended over more than one visit, is the effect of the interval between sessions on the quality of the relationship—ie, can it be sustained by either the provider or the client when the interval gets to be four- or five-weeks long? I don't find many studies of this factor, except in connection with the issue of managing antidepressant medication. Any references you are aware of would be most appreciated.

Bertram R Barth, LCSW
Mental Health, Santa Rosa Medical Center, CA

Response:

Thank you for your letter to The Permanente Journal. I was unaware of the Eric Berne essay¹ and your mention piqued my interest, thus sending me on a search to find it. It is interesting that he made comments 45 years ago about the importance of alertness and receptivity that are not unlike our findings of the importance of attention and presence.

I agree that the interval between mental health visits is very important, although I don't know of any recent research in that area—it is out of my field. Since you are in Northern California, you may want to contact Dr Robin Dea, Chief of Psychiatry to see if she has any information or resources.

I appreciate your interest in our article. We are glad you read the journal and found something of value.

Editor

Reference

1. Berne E. Intuition and the ego states. San Francisco (CA): TA Press; 1977. Originally published as: Berne E. Intuition V: the ego image. *Psychiatr Q* 1957;31:611-27.