

Letters to the Editor

Curiosity

I read with interest the recent editorial on curiosity (Curiosity: The cornerstone of physicianship, professionalism, and life, Winter 2025, pp. 2-4). A natural underpinning of personal curiosity in medicine is the recognition that you don't know everything, and that you need to seek new ideas to find new solutions. Joshua Hartzell, MD (AQA, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine, 2001) an AQA Fellow in Leadership graduate, captures this same concept in his new book on leadership in medicine, *A Prescription for Caring and Healthcare Leadership: Building a Culture of Compassion and Excellence*.¹ Hartzell emphasizes that a leader needs to have the "strength" of "humility" to recognize they don't know everything and need to engage the assistance of those they lead.

The successful use of personal humility and curiosity requires that you follow an aphorism that I learned from Gerald Levey, MD (AQA, Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, 1961), Dean Emeritus David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, and that I emphasize in my annual presentation during the orientation of AQA's Fellows in Leadership.² I quote Levey as part of a story I relay wherein I needed to remember that, "There is always

time to think." Levey originated this phrase long before it was described as slow thinking in the seminal work of Kahneman.³

When a leader uses humility and curiosity to find a new solution, they need to follow a second aphorism of Levey, "Never be afraid to do the right thing."⁴

Thanks to Bynny and Hartzell for their continuing effort to improve the field of medicine.

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References

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2. Robinson AG. Presentation: Management (A personal Experience): Effective Tools Developed Over 20 Years While Managing a Medical School.
3. Kahneman D. Thinking, Fast and Slow. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 2011.
4. Levey GS. Never Be Afraid to Do the Right Thing. Bozeman (MT): Second River Healthcare Press; 2011.