



On Fraud



By Eleanor Rodgerson, MD

FRAUD IS OFTEN HIDDEN and a mystery. Several synonyms describe it: deception, trickery, double-dealing, duplicity, deceit, guile, dissimulation, swindling, cheating.

The words encompass much action. There seem to be little frauds and big frauds, visible and invisible, spoken and silent, some criminal, most minor and many overlooked.

Now, we wonder, should deceit go unpublicized?

No matter the reason for it? Does it make much difference if the truth is bent a little? Is earning a living, making money, always primary? Perhaps sliding by the truth becomes a habit and little frauds are unimportant until they become big embezzlements. The deception we ignore can turn into tragedy.

Frauds can, of course, occur in the medical profession, and now and then unscrupulous physicians reach the headlines. They say money is the usual object, earning a living.

Like, there's the medical group that divides a procedure to double the charges to the patient's insurance company; the dipstick user who tests a urine specimen and calls it "urinalysis" for a bigger fee; the doctor who boosts the difficulties in a woman's normal delivery to add to the bill. Truth is given a twist.

It is known we cheat continually under cover of bringing pleasure, aiding friendliness, introducing self preservation. We begin to think honesty is not really practical. Stretching the truth, adding a lie, comes so easily. Does dishonesty matter? Maybe big crimes have their start in individuals who slighted the truth early on, who started their deceptions as little boys and girls. Certain schools are now known for teaching what turns into terrorism. Emphasizing honesty instead should produce better results.

There are frauds everywhere, in various businesses and enterprises, as well as in medical practices. Note advertising and politics especially. Where is the honesty among the speeches "for the good of the government," for Democratic and Republican Party elections, for raising needed money?

Truth, it is said, is keeping close to the facts, but these are often concealed, or transformed.

Is fraud always to be with us?

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