

Evolutionize Your Health!™



EoMedigram July 2015.

Notes on the evolution of health care.

Happy Medical Independence Day!

“When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.”

– Declaration of Independence

The Founding Parents (we are not gender biased!) pledged their lives, fortunes and sacred honor to this cause and knew the stakes. They knew it meant going to war. But they made this public declaration because they needed more than soldiers to win. Widespread understanding and support were even more important than arms. They had to convince Americans to reject England's tyranny and join the fight. Win the battle of minds, and arms would follow. So they declared their mission and made their argument. It worked, and they won.

Why did they win? Because Americans paid attention and learned the facts. Why did Americans pay attention and learn the facts? Because they knew it really mattered.

Tyranny threatens more than mere individual lives: It threatens the freedom and way of life of families and future generations. When people get fired up over something bigger than their own lives, watch out – the world's gonna' change!

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*“... the monthly premiums for such month for 1 or more qualified health plans offered in the individual market within a State which cover the taxpayer, the taxpayer's spouse, or any dependent (as defined in section 152) of the taxpayer and which were enrolled in through **an Exchange established by the State under 1311 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act...**”*

– Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Sec. 1401. [Emphasis added.]

For the second time in two years, the Supreme Court disregarded plainly written law and created new law to support the PPACA. Compare the last half century of medicine with the last half century of British rule in America, and you will find striking parallels. In both cases a powerful government steals freedom bit by bit. And just as in pre-Revolution days, some folks notice the problem sooner than others. Like our founders, they learn the facts and take action. They sound the alarm, trying to awaken others from the comfortable slumber of ignorance and apathy.

Many physicians began sounding the alarm decades ago, no doubt frustrated that their voices seemed to fall on deaf ears. The idea of comparing our current health care with our nation's birth (like most of my great ideas) is not mine. Dr. Richard Amerling, a New York nephrologist, created and revised his “Physicians' Declaration of Independence” for 15 years until the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons published it on July 3, 2014. It's well written.

More importantly, it gets to the heart of diagnosing our sick system. “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that the Physician’s primary responsibility is toward the Patient...”

I know the frustration of sounding the alarm to comfortably ignorant comrades. Many of my physician colleagues complain about health care while grabbing a bite in the doctors lounge, chatting before meetings or performing procedures on anesthetized patients. But few of them turn their dissatisfaction into action. They feel enough pain to complain about the broken system, but not enough to learn more or actually do something to fix it.

In fact, our healthcare system and nation share more than just historic parallels. Both are threatened today by the same potentially lethal dose of apathy. Through growing complacency, patients and doctors have lost sight of the tremendous value of their relationship with each other. Rather than coming together to protect and preserve that core of medicine, they drifted apart and allowed government and insurers to divide them and conquer. In the same way, Americans lost sight of the precious gift of self-government. Rather than informing ourselves, arguing vigorously over issues, and holding elected representatives accountable, we hand over to government more control than Washington, Jefferson and Madison ever could imagine.

Medicine and government evolved for thousands of years to arrive in their modern American forms. Just as patient and doctor are the beating heart of medicine, the life force of freedom and self-government is an informed, involved citizenry. Remove the heart of medicine – divide it by government-insurance takeover – and you no longer have medicine as we’ve always known it. Remove informed, active citizens controlling the process and you no longer have government of the people, by the people, for the people. We still have health care and government, but they are not what they were. And they are not as good.

The American colonies figured out that King George threatened their livelihood and their freedom. These larger than life stakes motivated them to risk their lives in revolt.

Times are different now. Even while most frustrated, I must admit that we’ve got it a lot better than Washington’s Continental Army. But that only means we will remain apathetic and ignorant longer than our prerevolutionary forebears did. And our enemy today, an ever-encroaching government among us, is more difficult to isolate and oppose. So I have no doubt that these bad trends will continue awhile. Until things get bad enough to jolt us awake, our health care and government bureaucracies will become more suffocating, impersonal and wasteful. We must love our sleep to pay so dearly for it in resources, suffering and shortened lives.

But my message is not all doom and gloom. When I started EoMed ten years ago, there were about 400 private physician or concierge practices in the country. Now there are more than 12,000 making this by far the fastest growing type of medicine. We are awakening.

My patients are not apathetic and ignorant! By their own free will, they measured conventional health care against what they envisioned for true medical care, and when they found the status quo lacking they took action. That’s the American way – freedom and independence. With that spirit and courage, tens of thousands of Americans make healthier, better lives for themselves. And they contribute to something bigger than their own lives: By preserving their medical independence they preserve and advance freedom in all its forms for the rest of us, now and in the future. Not a bad thought to ponder this Fourth of July!