

# People Care: Professionalism in the Profession

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# EMScconnect, LLC

- Est 2012
- Started in Spokane, WA
- Web-based CE for EMS providers
- Used by over 7,000 users across the US
- Live/recorded lectures
- Podcast
- EMT Programs





# Disclaimer:

I believe this presentation will be unlike any other that you've ever had before. It's not about how to run that code or intubate that trauma patient...instead, it's about how to save ourselves, from ourselves.

If you think that this is me "preaching" to you because I have my act all together you would be significantly wrong!!!!

If you think this is my bragging, trust me I am not. I truly believe that transparency is the key to education and setting others up for success.





I think WE need to CHANGE!



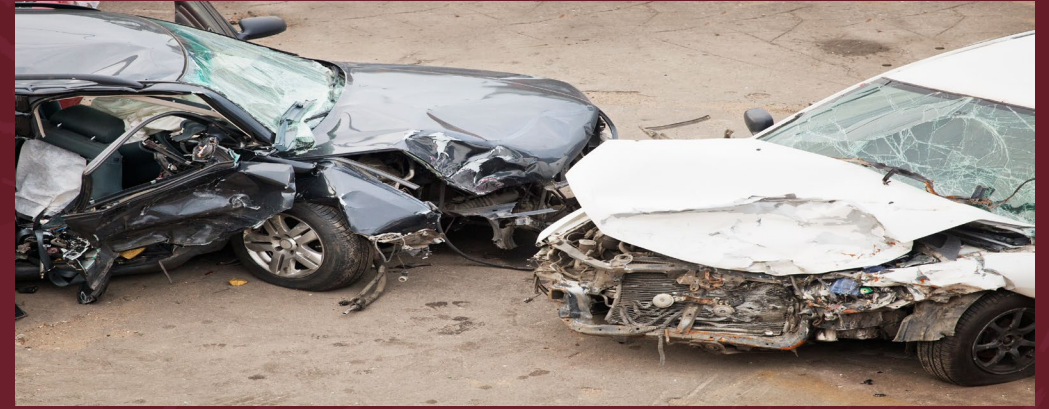


# Three Major Mistakes by EMS Industry

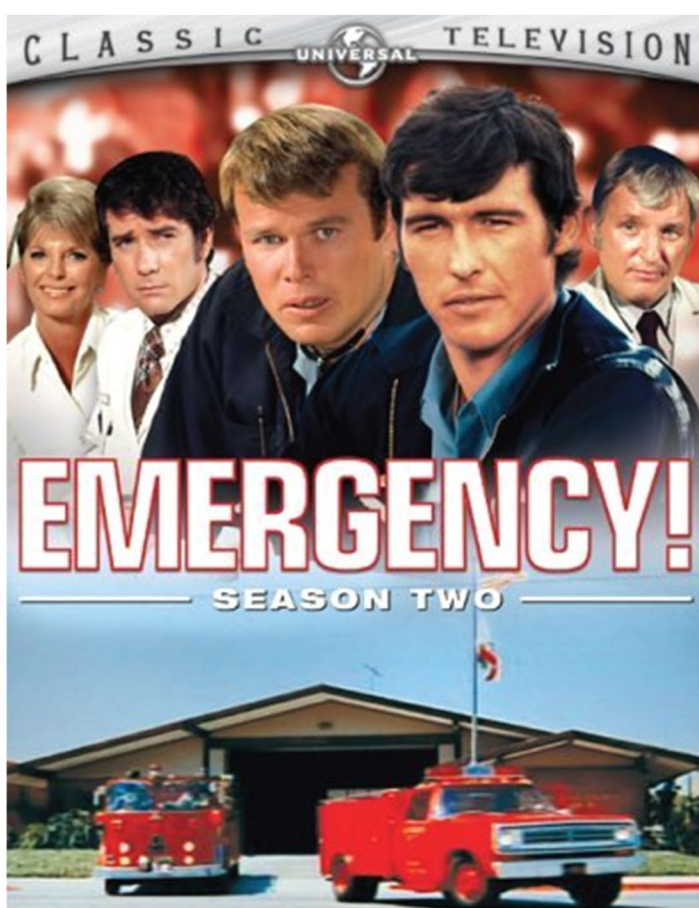
**Mistake #1** – We select people who were sure to hate their jobs.

**Mistake #2** – We taught people to expect the wrong things.

**Mistake #3** – We treated our patients with disrespect.



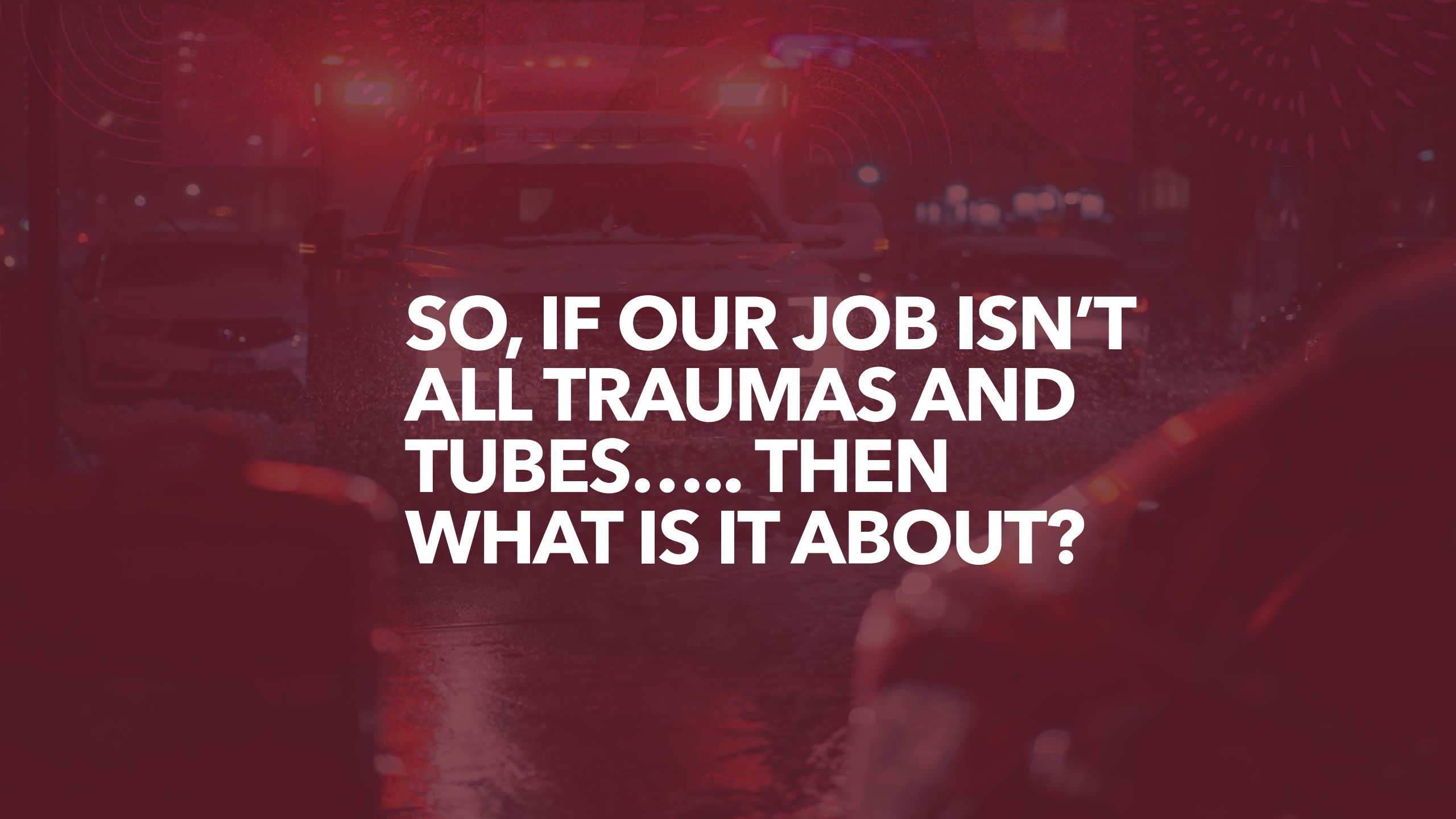












**SO, IF OUR JOB ISN'T  
ALL TRAUMAS AND  
TUBES..... THEN  
WHAT IS IT ABOUT?**



# Three Major Mistakes by EMS Industry:

How do you find joy in treating people who may be having the proverbial “worst day of their lives”?

- You need to naturally like people!
- Those certificates that you worked so hard for are really on loan from the public...they can be recalled at a moments notice (and your money to go with it).

It is about helping others!



# Three Major Mistakes by EMS Industry

As instructors, we can teach the best medicine in the world.  
But not even the most brilliant one can give others the  
things that need to be in their hearts!



# What did you really get into?

What if you were honest about EMS?  
When you were approached by an 18-year-old intrigued about EMS.....

- Rank 4th from the bottom in the Bureau of Labor Statistics salary rankings
- Line-of-duty death rate is comparable to firefighters and police officers.
- Divorce, suicide and substance abuse rates soar far higher than the general population.
- Average career expectancy of an EMT is five years.

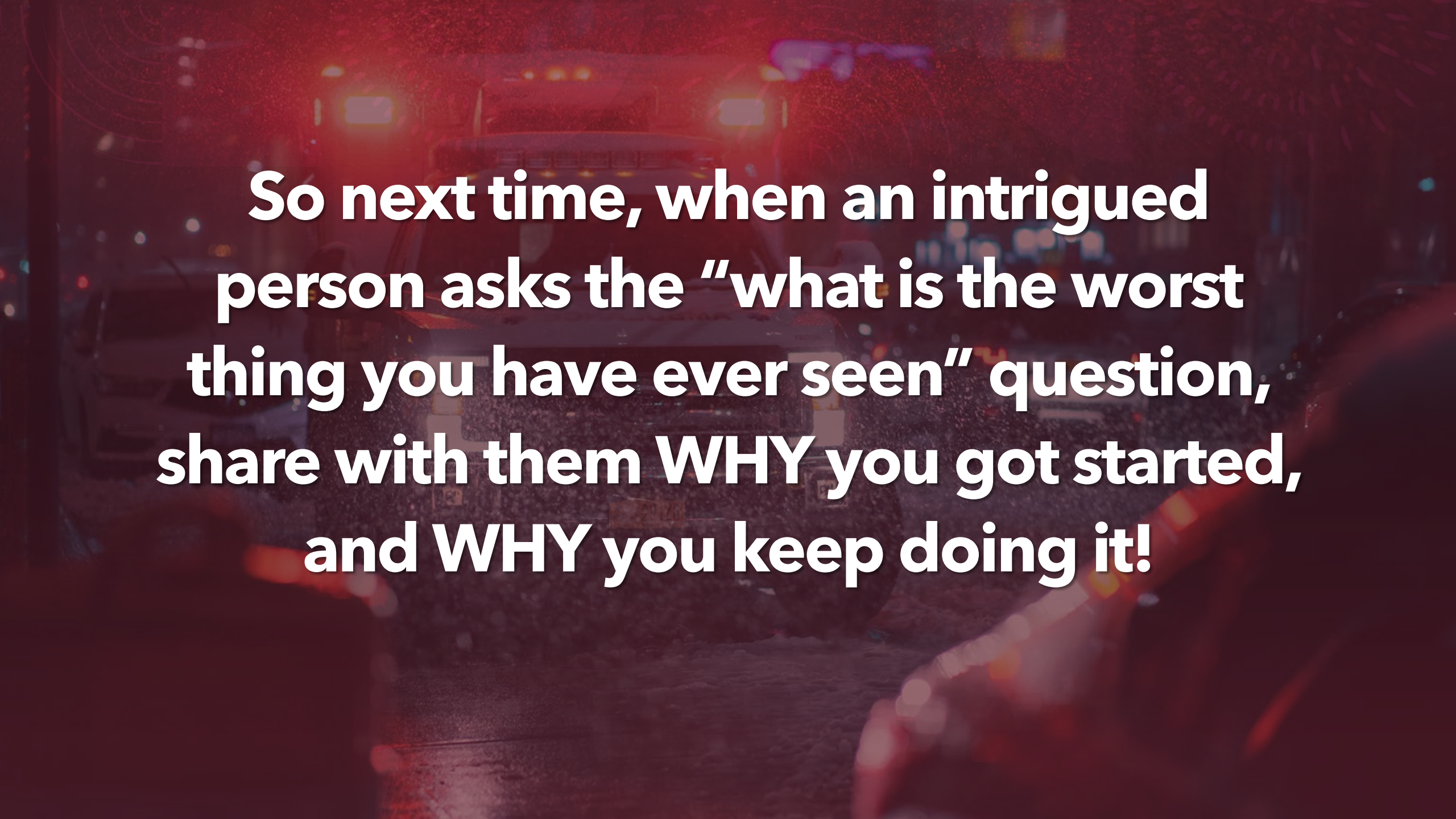


# 4 Truths About EMS

Let's tell  
them the  
truth!

- i. You'll be disrespected
  - i. You will sift through broken glass and twisted metal, wade through urine and feces and vomit, hearing verbal abuse from the people you're trying to help.
- ii. You won't save that many lives
  - i. Other than a handful of exceptions, I can't state with any certainty that my actions were the difference between life and death. In that handful of exceptions, all but one or two were saved simply by applying the techniques that any John Q. Citizen with a basic first aid course or CPR could have done.
- iii. The reality of the profession
  - i. Even if we're not saving lives, what we do matters. It matters in ways unnoticed by us, to people you may not even remember tomorrow.
- iv. You'll be remembered
  - i. They'll remember you because, even though they were just another call to you, you were a major player in a defining event in their lives. They'll come up to you, years after the fact, and say, "I remember you. You took care of me when I had my heart attack."





**So next time, when an intrigued person asks the “what is the worst thing you have ever seen” question, share with them WHY you got started, and WHY you keep doing it!**





**So, lets dive into this mind set  
change!**



# Three Major Mistakes by EMS Industry


We are emergency responders, right?  
Well define emergency....

EMS exists for the public (not the other way around despite our wishes)...therefore we need to check our attitudes at the door the next time it's 0 dark thirty and we're roused out of a sound sleep to kneel next to an 87 y/o lady to simply comfort her because she's scared after losing her husband of fifty-eight years last month. Instead like it or not "emergencies" are defined by our patient population.






# Let's look at what we call the people that required our services....

 **pa·tient**  
/'pāSHənt/  
*noun*  
plural noun: **patients**

1. a person receiving or registered to receive medical treatment.  
*synonyms:* sick person, **case**, **sufferer**, **victim**; [More](#)

 **cus·tom·er**  
/'kəstəmə/  
*noun*  
noun: **customer**; plural noun: **customers**

1. a person or organization that buys goods or services from a store or business.

So what do customers expect from us?

- **Care** – right kind of medicine – delivered properly & promptly by people who are competent and properly equipped to do their jobs
- **Caring** – treating others the same way that you would expect to be treated in the same position → empathy
- **Our personal best** – not perfection – The public is amazingly tolerant of honest mistakes





How good of a caregiver can you be?...the possibilities are endless!

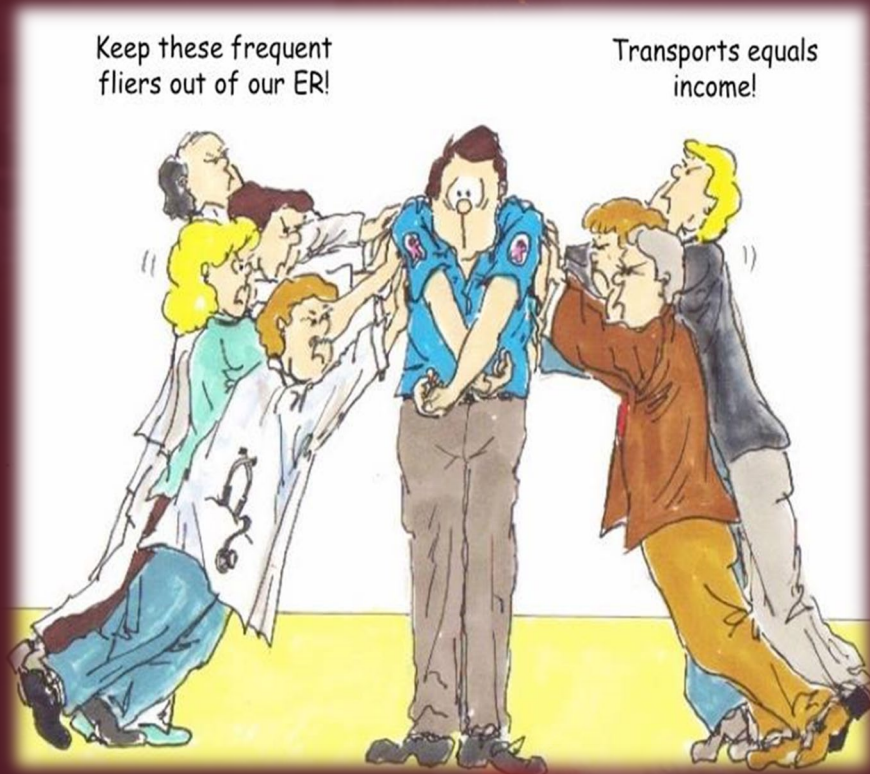
Did you do your very best for your patient? Hmm...sometimes a tough question but try this next time you're finishing a patient care report and you're getting ready to sign it, imagine yourself standing in front of your patient and saying the following words "I did my very best for you"...make that your routine and your medicine will become anything but routine.

**Can you say....  
"I did my very best for you"**



# Other things that burn us up..

## **Mistake #3 - We treated our people with disrespect**



The industry (both fire & EMS) can destroy good providers with the push for profits and /or productivity and in doing so the push becomes centered on getting the job done versus the reality that EMS is and always will be a people business.

The unfortunate thing is that careers (and good providers) have been destroyed in that process.



# **Mistake #3 - We treated our people with disrespect**

- So, if our customers expect “professional” EMS providers, shouldn’t we act like professionals?
- Think about your favorite championship team. What makes them champions?

**Let me introduce you to a list**



# 10 THINGS TEAMMATES DON'T LET TEAMMATES DO IN CHAMPIONSHIP CULTURES

1. TEAMMATES DON'T LET TEAMMATES CUT CORNERS
2. TEAMMATES DON'T LET TEAMMATES WHINE OR COMPLAIN
3. TEAMMATES DON'T LET TEAMMATES MAKE EXCUSES
4. TEAMMATES DON'T LET TEAMMATES ACT SELFISHLY
5. TEAMMATES DON'T LET TEAMMATES DISRESPECT EACH OTHER
6. TEAMMATES DON'T LET TEAMMATES DIVIDE OR DESTROY THE TEAM
7. TEAMMATES DON'T LET TEAMMATES TRASH THE COACHES
8. TEAMMATES DON'T LET TEAMMATES EMBARRASS THE PROGRAM
9. TEAMMATES DON'T LET TEAMMATES GIVE UP OR GIVE IN
10. TEAMMATES DON'T LET TEAMMATES DOWN



# So, what does that mean for EMS?



- CHAMPIONSHIP CULTURES = Growing Agencies
- TEAMMATES = EMS Providers
  - Unless you are a one-person agency, you are a teammate to someone else.
- TEAM = Agency
- PROGRAM = EMS Profession



# 10 THINGS EMS PROVIDERS DON'T LET EMS PROVIDERS DO IN GROWING AGENICES

1. EMS PROVIDERS DON'T LET EMS PROVIDERS CUT CORNERS
2. EMS PROVIDERS DON'T LET TEAMMATES WHINE OR COMPLAIN
3. EMS PROVIDERS DON'T LET EMS PROVIDERS MAKE EXCUSES
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10. EMS PROVIDERS DON'T LET EMS PROVIDERS DOWN



**SURROUND YOURSELF WITH PEOPLE WHO  
FIGHT FOR YOU IN ROOMS YOU AREN'T IN.**

**Wow....**



# Train more, talk about it less!

## **So, what does that mean for us as EMS Providers?**

- Does CME training have to be boring?
- Does your monthly meetings have to be filled with the same damn courses we have all attended repeatedly?
- What if, just what if, it was fun... realistic, challenging, and we learned something!



# **We got to start acting like professionals!**

- EMS employees terminated over Facebook posts
- Ambulance Crashes After Canada Medics Fall Asleep
- Ind. Paramedic Fired After Allegedly Stealing Meds
- Paramedic charged with sexual assault in ambulance



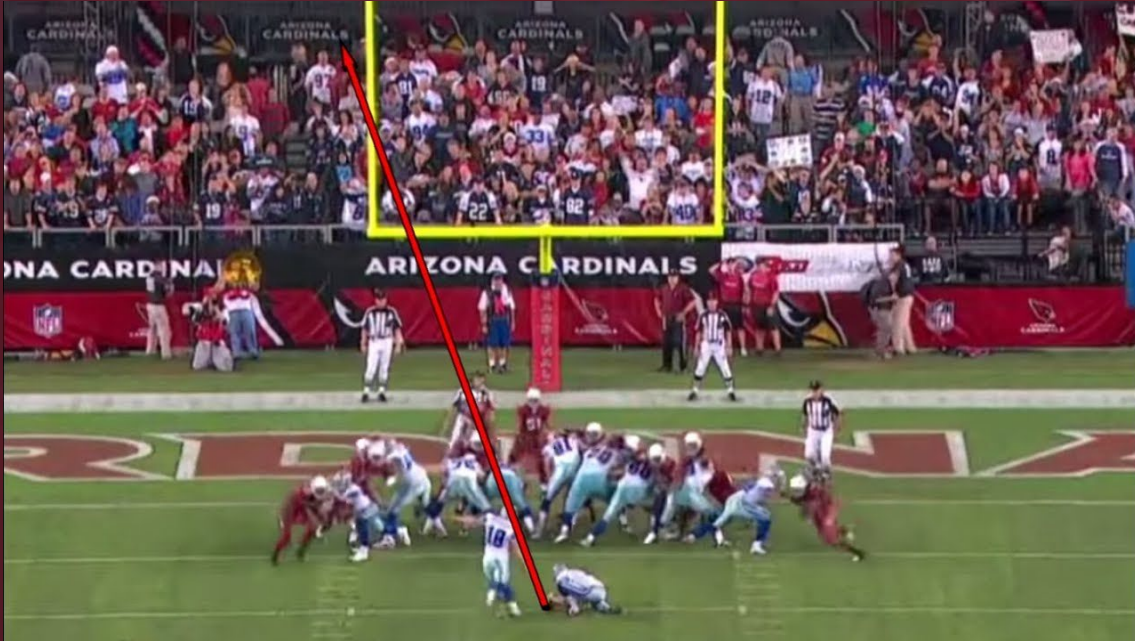
# Think of professional athletes and how they treat:

- Sleep (We are going to spend time together about JUST this!)
- Training
- Off-season Rituals
- Asset Protection (this is aimed at your leadership)





# Training



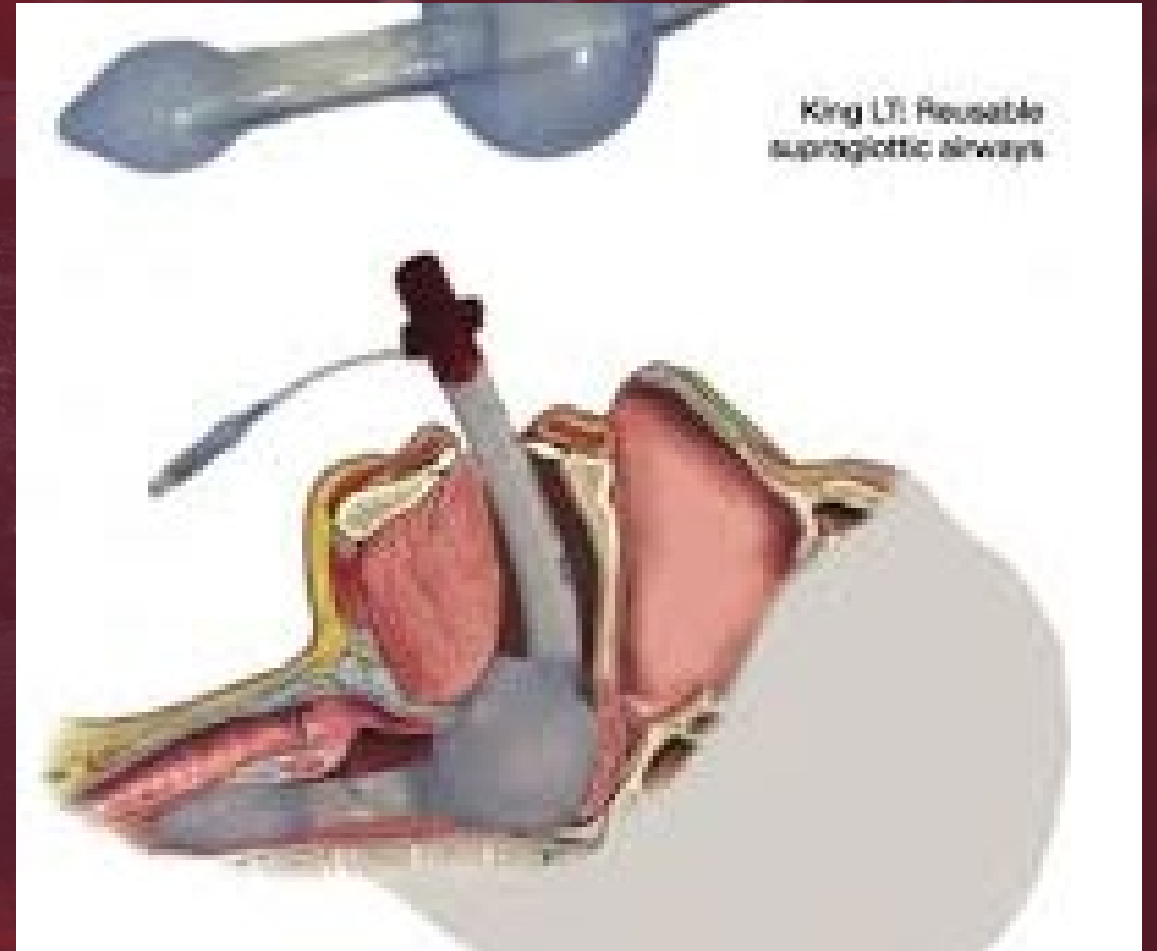
- What do you notice about Professional Athletes and training?
  - "I am not great at IV's"
  - "I don't remember the last time I got a successful intubation"

I guess the bottom line is, do you consider yourself to be a professional or a volunteer?

"I guess that is on us.."



# We can do skills drills.....





**But you know what we don't do enough?  
HINT: Every championship team does it....**







Just add smoke...





**It is time to raise the bar of our training!**





*What is described as **elite performance** is mostly just the **fundamentals** taken to the limits of their **vast potential**.*

– John Danaher



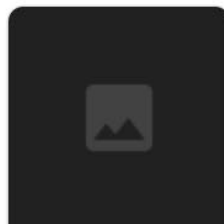
## Podcast series / EMS



Inside EMS



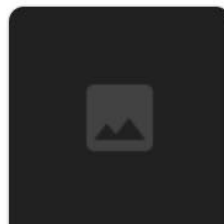
Medic  
Mindset



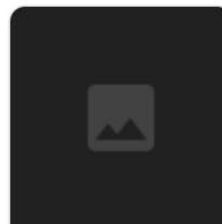
EMS Nation  
Podcast



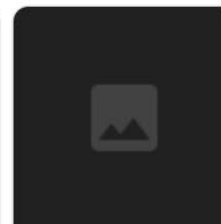
MCHD  
Paramedic  
Podcast



EMS World  
Podcasts



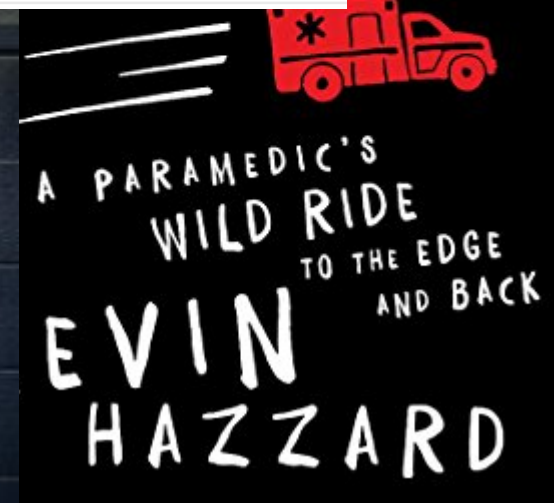
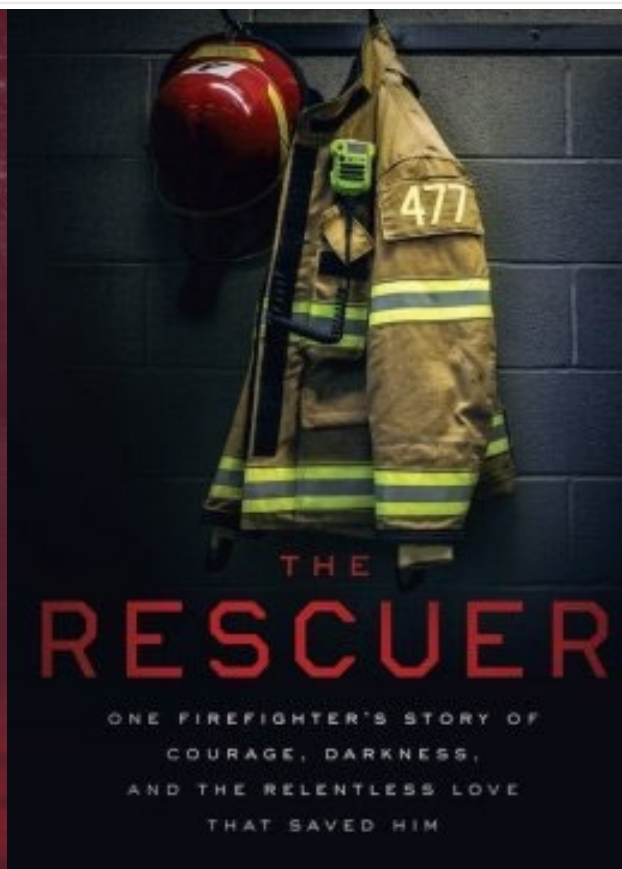
EMS Office  
Hours



Pragmatic  
Paramedics



The EMS  
Lighthouse  
Project





# Off-Season

- What do other professions do when they are not working?
- What about the true off-season for athletes?



# DeeDee Trotter (2012 Olympic 400m Bronze Medalist and 4 x 400m Gold Medalist)

- Takes six to eight weeks completely off.
- “absolutely no running,” she said. “The only running I do is if I’m running from my bed to my fridge.”
- She’ll use her last week to start some easy runs and drills before real base training begins “just so I don’t go out and completely combust,” she said.



# Jen Rhines (2000, 2004, and 2008 Olympian)

- Three weeks completely off is a good time to take a vacation and do “nothing I would consider work.”
- She doesn’t worry about what she eats and takes a mental break from stressing about race schedules. “You can’t be on your game all the time,” she said.



## Jeff Cooper's Color Codes for Situational Awareness

**White**

Unprepared

*Unaware of threats  
Potential victim*

**Yellow**

Relaxed Alert

*Threat awareness  
Relaxed alertness*

**Orange**

Specific Alert

*Aware of a threat  
Decision to act*

**Red**

Fight!

*Conflict begins  
Act accordingly*

**THINK ABOUT THIS WHEN IT  
COMES TO THE STRESS OF OUR  
JOBS AS EMS PROVIDERS**



# Get a Life!!!

Therapist: You need to start removing all the stressors in your life.  
Me:



Let me tell you something that you won't read in any EMS textbook. EMS (and the fire service also) will take everything that you have to give and will ask for more. It has the capability to chew you up and spit you out like ground sausage.

Think of it this way: ***EMS is much bigger than your certificate. But...your life is much bigger than EMS (and the fire service)...like taking care of and enjoying your family.***





Begin with Physical and Mental Rest

Develop and Gain Focus

Improve in New Ways

Learn More

# Why is Off-Season Athletic Training Important?



**ALWAYS PUT YOUR FAMILY BEFORE YOUR JOB.**

**WHEN YOU LEAVE YOUR JOB, THEY WILL  
REPLACE YOU INSTANTLY, BUT TO YOUR  
FAMILY, YOU ARE IRREPLACEABLE.**





# Asset protection

- This last one is more about your needs and less about you.
- Have you ever quit a job?
  - Why?
- Ask yourself when you get that job, what do you require to stay there?
  - And then make sure that happens!



# Mistake #3 - We treated our people with disrespect



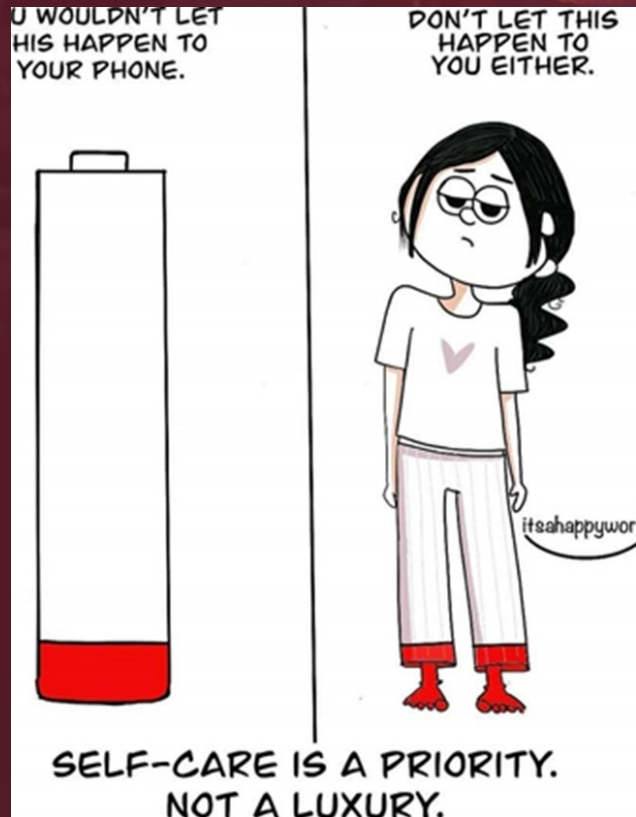
One other thing in this arena...you know those really bad calls, the train wrecks, the child that dies in your arms, the mom who dies way to early, etc. etc. etc.

- it's **normal** to feel crappy about those calls
- we're vulnerable when we least expect it

Take care of yourself and use your observational skills for those around you and support them like the brothers or sisters that they are.



# First Thing First - Take Care of Yourself



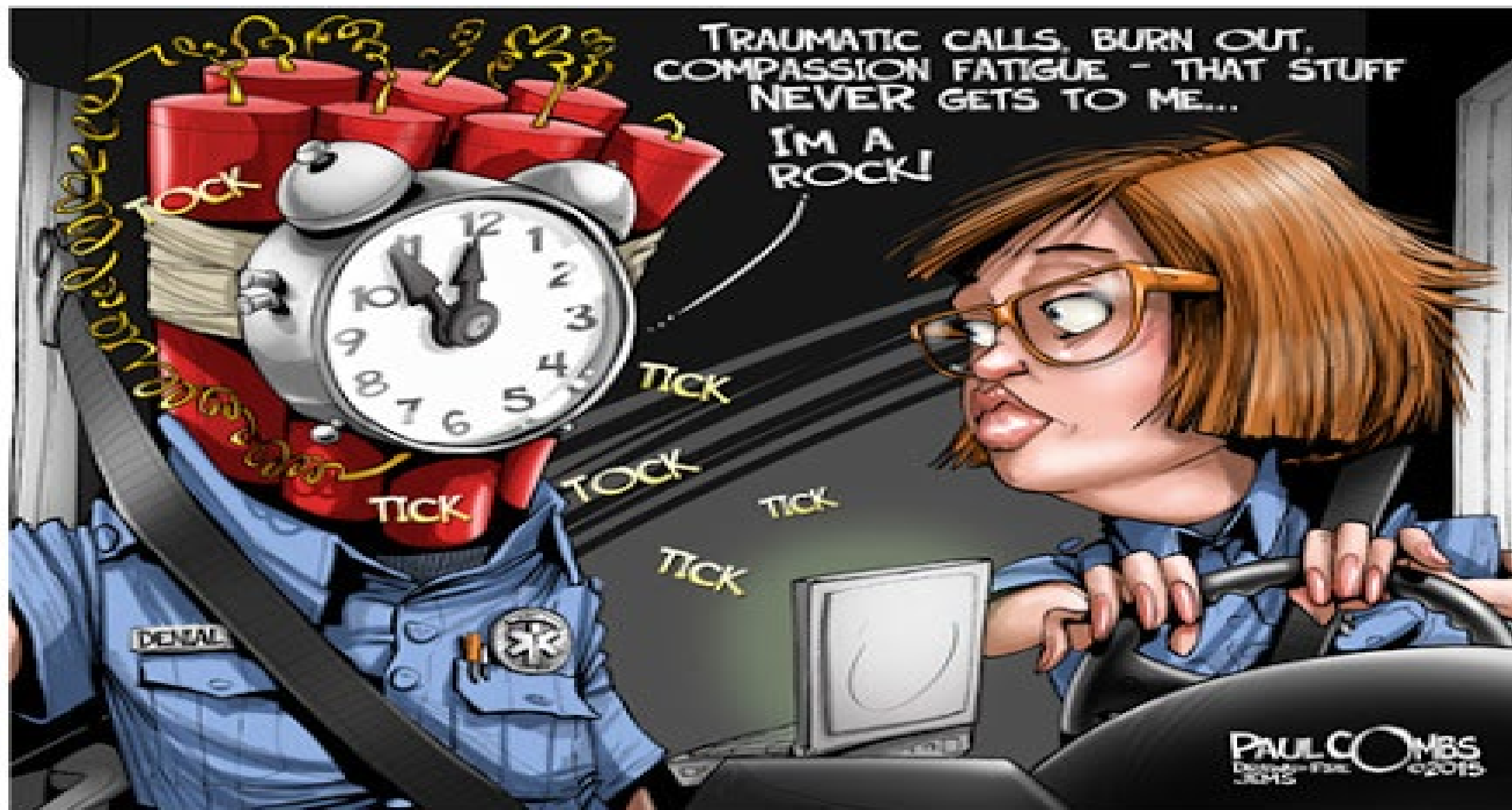


- Rule # Uno reminder – For all we're talking about here, your patient doesn't come first...**You Do!!**
- You have to stay safe and value yourself...even more you need to develop a professional intentional balance and perspective

# First Thing First – Take Care of Yourself







THERE IS NO SHAME IN ADMITTING YOU'RE HUMAN.

# Nick K.

- 02/03/2021: Second run of the day and feeling great!  
#fitforduty2021  
#spartanstrong!
- Committed Suicide  
02/15/2021





# Ok, back to us as providers!

***You're Ok (and I hope) I am too -  
Accepting people as they are***



## **The judge mode:**

- Makes it easy for us to miss some important assessment observations
- Makes us bitter
- Makes it so that inevitably that the care that we deliver to our patients is tainted
- It shortens our life as a caregiver (and maybe even our life span as well).
- Makes us susceptible to being dragged into court because we become sloppy



# You're Ok (and I hope) I am too

## Accepting People as They are

But here's the thing...

- Those same patients are loved by their family members or friends and guess what – they are **normal**.
- Oh, on top of this they get scared, irrational and addicted. They make bad choices sometimes over and over. They get themselves into all kinds of trouble. Many live in abject poverty, worse than what most of us can imagine. And they may do terrible things to themselves, their family members and others.



# What about more personal:



- Think of how we look lecturing patients about health choices..
- How can you judge others about their addictions?
- Shouldn't we be billboards for health?
- Models for safety?



Something happens to us as we think of people as problems. After only a few years, we start to see them as nuisances and interruptions and eventually we stop listening altogether.

They become invisible, nameless and faceless; we get tired of dealing with them too and their uniqueness disappears for us.

Finally, we stop caring about them and we get tired of running calls altogether.

**When that happens, we cheat them, their families and ourselves**

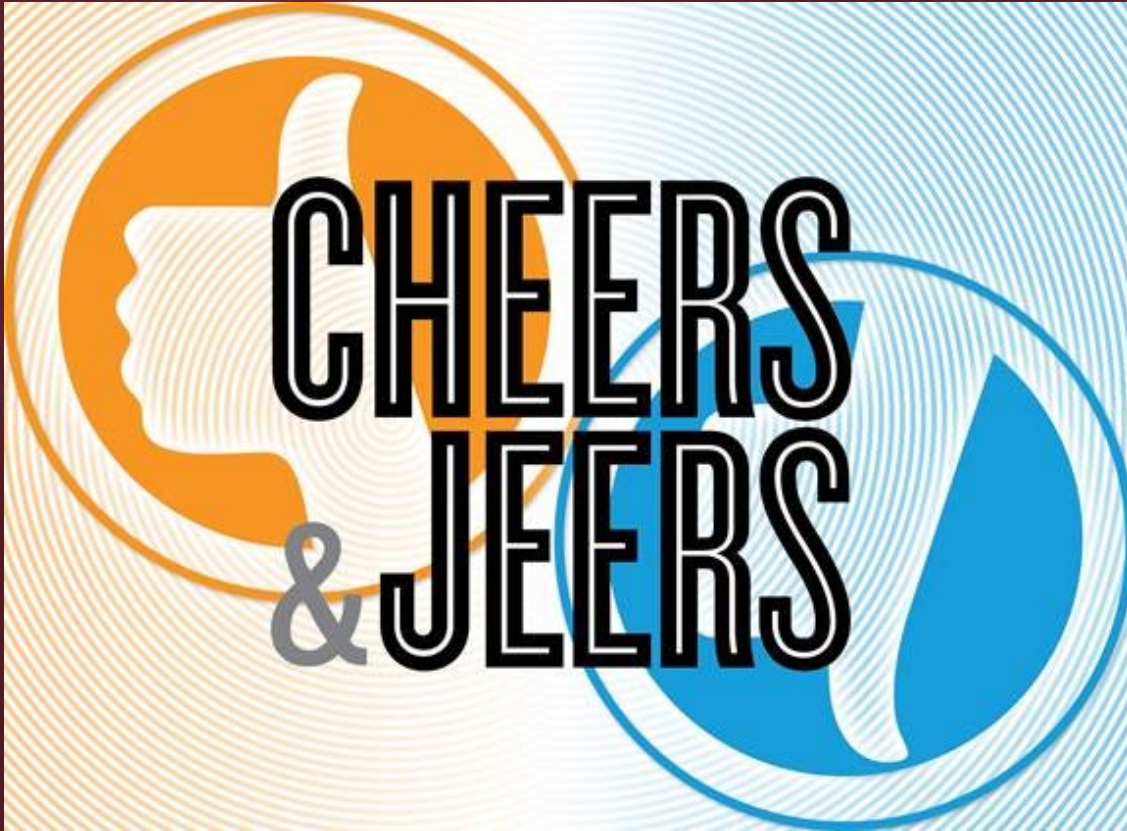




**SEND ME**

**Treasure all around you - becoming a good  
caregiver**

# Treasure all around you - becoming a good caregiver



Consider the TY / FY Ratio!

- In this profession you're usually underpaid and under appreciated in dealing with people on their bad day(s).
- Do yourself a favor and keep track of the little things that reward you - the thank you notes, newspaper clippings of scenes that you were on, your first certificate as a paramedic or some other memorable event.



# Treasure all around you - becoming a good caregiver - People are Sacred

- As a caregiver be disciplined to remind yourself that people are sacred. If you believe in God this usually isn't hard to do...but even if you don't, as a caregiver there should be something within your heart that perceives what is uniquely special about every human individual.
- **But, what about that question.... That one we all dread.....**

## Treasure all around you - becoming a good caregiver - People are Sacred

# DIGNITY

*From the Latin word dignitas,  
meaning "to be worthy."*

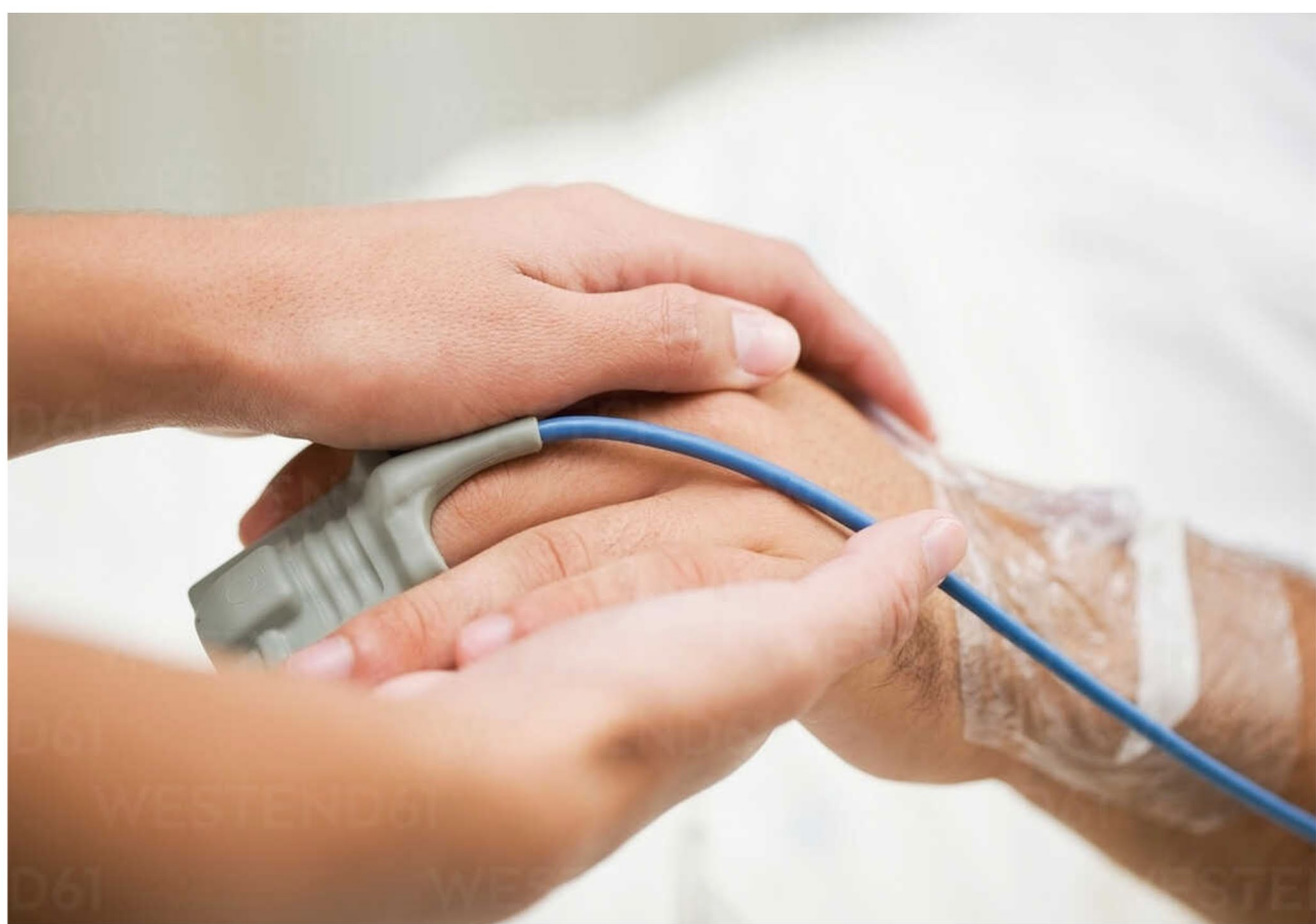
**All people have the right to  
be recognized for their  
inherent humanity and  
treated ethically.**

**Dignity is a given.**

Perhaps you've never thought about it, but people honor us when they invite us into the inner sanctums of their bedrooms at 2:00 in the morning. Whatever their crisis they are making themselves completely vulnerable to us. They are depending on us to be competent, caring and willing to respect their dignity and their privacy.



# **We are Family - treating the family (and bystanders) as customers**



Make no mistake about it; every life that you touch is significant. Every act of kindness you offer to the poorest, least powerful, most anonymous person is important. Everything you do has the potential to affect people you don't know in ways that you'll never comprehend (and usually will never know).

I've been blessed beyond belief by some of the people who have been placed in my path who taught me, mentored me and who I greatly benefitted from.

And yet every single day I am reminded how little I know about medicine. I want to try hard to learn from those who know more than me and share with those who know less.

*"Remember, be nice to everyone because everyone is having a tough day".*



# People Care: Professionalism in the Profession

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# Contact

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