

One early Friday morning, while scribing with the hospitalist, a code blue alarm blared across the floor. My father was the lead intensivist and had been rounding in the ICU, but when the code was called, I watched him bolt toward the emergency. As I saw him move instinctively, I felt not only a deep sense of pride, but also a lasting inspiration to embody the same heroism and self sacrifice. The speed and decisiveness left a lasting impact, reinforcing the importance of staying composed and making quick decisions. Their responsibility was not just to save a life; it was staying calm, poised, and leading under pressure. This moment of organized chaos solidified my desire to rise to challenges, take on responsibility, and make a difference in people's lives.

While scribing with a hospitalist from Iraq, I saw him engage an anxious patient and his wife, both of whom spoke little English. Sensing their unease, the doctor asked if they spoke Arabic, rapidly shifting their expressions from nervousness to relief. As an Arabic speaker myself, I saw how language and cultural understanding can ease anxiety and create a safe environment for patients. Medicine is not just about treating, it is about understanding the humanity involved and providing support that transcends the physical.

Carrying this sense of responsibility, I founded a chapter of the National Arab American Medical Association at the University of South Florida. As president my perspective on healthcare disparities evolved. Coming from a medical family, I initially lacked awareness of the challenges faced by students without this support. During my tenure, I encountered students from diverse backgrounds, including those unfamiliar with the medical world and, for many, the American system at large. They participated not just to gain knowledge but to find community. Connecting these people with mentors, guiding them to important resources, and giving them a safe place to call home, a place where they could understand and be understood, was something they were grateful for, and I was grateful to be a part of. Providing this desired sense of community to others was fulfilling to me and increased my importance for the broader purpose of medicine: connection and community.

Similarly, the journey of starting LV8 was a major goal of mine, driven by my passion for fitness and a desire to create a supportive community. I wanted to create a brand that delivers clean, effective products backed by science. My first product, an electrolyte stick pack, was designed for convenience and energy, with the right balance of electrolytes and B vitamins. However, I quickly learned the financial challenges of running a business. Without a clear financial plan, my

cash flow was draining fast. I reworked my approach to minimize spending and plan for savings. Although progress is slower than anticipated, I'm hitting milestones and learning that the journey is as important as the goal. A mentor once told me that business, like medicine, requires adaptability, flexibility, and resilience to manage different aspects like finance, distribution, and marketing while being prepared for setbacks.

At an orthopedic practice, One patient I worked with who stayed with me was an immigrant father who had suffered from neck and shoulder trauma from a car accident, significantly impeding his ability to work and run his own business.

More than anything, he sought someone to listen as he shared the emotional toll of being limited in his work. His laborious career had been the foundation of his identity and among his greatest sources of pride. As we exchanged career goals, he shared his life lessons with me, offering invaluable advice about work ethic and perseverance. Despite the chaotic clinic, I spent extra time with him absorbing advice I will carry with me. I found myself reflecting on the depth of his perseverance and the work ethic that had sustained him through the years of challenges. His story forced me to confront my own ambitions and how I would navigate future struggles in my career. As he shared his life lessons, I realized that what he valued most was not just the ability to work, but the strength to push through adversity. This experience taught me that resilience is more than just enduring hardship, but about embracing the challenges with the same determination that defines us.

Medicine is more than treating physical symptoms, it is about understanding the human behind the diagnosis. Emotional intelligence, genuine concern, and bedside manner are crucial. As a medical assistant, I strive to create a welcoming environment where patients feel at ease by listening attentively with concern and a genuine appreciation of their humanity. I do so because I've learned that knowledge takes a physician far, and is surely important, but it is compassion and human connection that truly turns medicine into healing.

My journey in the dynamic clinical setting, building community, and connecting with patients has deepened my commitment to medicine. I've learned that being a physician requires more than clinical knowledge; it demands emotional resilience and human connection. I look forward to dedicating myself to a lifetime of learning and making a meaningful impact in my patients' lives.