

The Companion of the Patient in the Family Doctor's Office: Making Visible The "Guardian Angel"

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1

not to neglect the information that we can bring if we want working in a bio-psycho-social framework [6,7].

It is known that the guardian angels have several tasks: guide us, give us protection, inspiration, company, give advice, intercede for us, clarify our intellect, so that we can better grasp the truth, assist us in disease, etc. Similarly, the companions of patients, those guardian angels, have several functions: give information on the severity of the disease, prevent anxiety, build trust, promote the production of more information about the patient, family and context, helps family dialogue, aid to decision-making improves satisfaction, implies a value as carers of the sick, provides support, and improves patient health outcomes. These positive effects appear to be particularly valuable for older people who are usually perceived as more vulnerable, the sickest, the oldest and those with less education [4].

Although most angels are "good", there are rebel angels that were cast out of heaven with Lucifer: Thus, the companion can be an ally if we need him, or it may be "a problem." There are aggressive companions. And there are affectionate companions. The triadic communication in medical encounters can be useful, but it is difficult [8]. With the experience the doctor can become familiar with them and can use them for the benefit of achieving a "good practice."

How the companion communicates with the doctor and patient? As the guardian angels, companions can differ greatly in their participation [9], and they can choose different ways to communicate and give messages with the family physician. It is important that the doctor be careful and be aware that each companion is seeking ways to make their presence felt, and is constantly giving messages. The companions can speak loudly with loud and powerful voice when they believe that the doctor needs to know unequivocally something important about the patient, or have a special message to give to the doctor. The companion can talk quietly gently, like a whisper, or through non-verbal communication [10]. These messages are usually strong and clear, despite the silence in the consultation. The companion can speak through indirect messages: suddenly his eyes rest on an object, or are open when a certain word is spoken in the interview, or there is a smile at any given time; the doctor immediately feels it's a message or a reply. Also, the companion can talk to the doctor through their patterns of behaviour over time.

Case Reports

Some examples of the variants of companion of the patients in the family doctor office are shown in Boxes 1-5

How can the "companion type" be described? The most frequent companion is the collaborative woman. But, there are many different ways to describe or represent angels. In classical paintings, the angels differ significantly in their shape, colour, tactile properties; their expressions of emotions are different and thus provoke us in various ways, etc. [11]. Some types and characteristics of the companions have been described from the point of view of the doctor (associate, passive, intrusive, ill, observer, etc.). There are different situations that may occur in the office when the patient comes with a companion. But, perhaps, a "companions type" could be described. These usually come behind the patient. They sit outside the main line of conversation. And they usually listen. Preferably are women. Often they are quiet when the patient explains, and when the doctor speaks. They know what their role is. They are not intensely involved in the interview, at least verbally. In the end, they salute to the doctor, and leave.

As in the classification of angels regarding the companions of the patients, there is no consensus. Some authors suggest four variants of the "companions type" that seem to be the most important:

- The female patient that comes with male and active companion, who is involved in the interview. His presence means usually a support force. The

e) **The observer companion:** it is the role that the child takes accompanying his parents to the office, or the companion male adult partner.

f) Two companions for one patient or one companion with two patients: as with angels, where it is extremely rare to find a painting with two adults angels, it is rare that occurs two or more companions with the same patient or a companion for two different patients -for

its comprehension. They are a means of generating ideas, promoting creativity, and constructing concepts and theories. Thinking based on metaphors and comparisons is a way of transforming a concept into something that is so suggestive, interesting and surprising that it reaches people more easily.

Family doctors have to look at the companion. It is, as the painter Paul Klee said: "to make the invisible visible" [13]. The family doctor has a h