

On Care of Mental Patients

In the course of the several months that I have been employed at Central State Psychiatric Hospital, I have found that the psychiatric aides can easily be divided into two classes - those aides with the custodial attitude and those with a more psychological viewpoint.

The wheels of government turn in mysterious ways. Length of service is good, and those aides who have been here for long periods of time find themselves in charge positions. The trouble with this arrangement is that attitude is not considered of paramount importance; therefore we find charge aides with attitudes appropriate for sanatoriums.

Those aides who have the custodial attitude tend to treat the patients like so many cattle. The patients are members of a group - not individuals. These aides preach, "Don't get involved," not realizing that getting personally involved is vastly different than getting emotionally involved. For this reason they refuse to accept the patients as people and talk to them of their troubles.

The moral standards of these people are

somewhat less than appropriate for a mental hospital. Moral standards like theirs are the reason for so many patients today. These people treat homosexuality as a dreaded disease; they do not get to know the homosexual patient and get to the bottom of his problem. They treat the patients like children and yell at them for ridiculous reasons - if a patient indulges in a behavior that they consider inappropriate (i.e. lying on the floor) he is scolded or punished.

Those aides who do try to understand and help the patients run constantly into brick walls when they try to psychoanalyze the patients they are met with ridicule by older aides who think that because they have worked there for a long time, they know all. Bullshit!

Dallas
Denny

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