

Dental Ethics: Reviving the Lost



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The first step in the evolution of ethics is a sense of solidarity with other human beings. Action indeed is the sole medium of expression for ethics. We as dental professionals have opted for a vocation where our knowledge and skill is to be used for the beneficence of others. Dental ethics comprises of all the moral values, duties and obligations towards our patients or in simple words morality is the attitude we adopt towards people. The "Hippocratic Oath" taken at the beginning of this noble professional career mandates us to be responsible and compassionate towards the society.

Becoming a professional is a lifelong process of consistent behavior affirming the principles of your beliefs. While dentistry is first a profession, the financial benefits from it has converted it into a business. These financial compensations make dentists vulnerable to have a conflict of interest, whether actual or perceived. However, the patients' interest should always be considered before any professional recommendations. If this principle is ardently followed, then the profession of dentistry can ethically exist within a business structure.

Integrity, veracity, tolerance, justice and compassion are the core values that a clinician should cultivate. Doing the right thing does not automatically bring success, but, compromising ethics almost always leads to failure.

"Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do."

Potter Stewart

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