

Caraka's oath of initiation

The teacher should instruct the disciple in the presence of the sacred fire, Brahmanas and physicians:

“Thou shalt speak only the truth,. . .be free from envy.. . There shall be nothing that thou oughtest not to do at my behest except hating the king or causing another's death or committing an act of unrighteousness or acts leading to calamity.

“Thou shalt behave and act without arrogance and with undistracted mind, humility and constant reflection... thou shalt **pray** for the welfare of all creatures.. .

“Day and night however thou mayest be engaged, thou shalt endeavour for the relief of patients with all thy heart and soul. Thou shalt not desert or injure thy patient even for the sake of thy life.. .

“Thou shalt not commit adultery even in thought. Even so, thou shalt not covet others' possessions.. .Thou shouldst speak words that are gentle, pure and righteous, pleasing, worthy, true, wholesome and moderate. Thy behaviour must be in consideration of time and place and heedful of past experience. Thou shalt act always with a view to the acquisition of knowledge and the fullness of equipment.. .

“When entering the patient's house thou shalt be accompanied by a man known to the patient and who has his permission to enter. Thou shalt be well clad and bent of head, self-possessed and conduct thyself after repeated consideration.. . Having entered, thy speech, mind, intellect and senses shall be entirely devoted to no other thought than that of being helpful to the patient and of things concerning him only.

“The peculiar customs of the patient's household shall not be made public. Even knowing that the patient's span of life has come to its close, it shall not be mentioned by thee there, where if so done, it would cause shock to the patient or to others.

“Though possessed of knowledge, one should not boast.. .”

(Çaraka Samhita Vol. I, Shree Gulahkunverba Ayurvedic Society, Jamnagar, 1949. Pages 163-164)

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