



What Patients Say, What Doctors Hear

Danielle Ofri

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How refocusing conversations between doctors and their patients can lead to better health

Despite modern medicine's infatuation with high-tech gadgetry, the single most powerful diagnostic tool is the doctor-patient conversation, which can uncover the lion's share of illnesses. However, what patients say and what doctors hear are often two vastly different things.

Patients, anxious to convey their symptoms, feel an urgency to "make their case" to their doctors. Doctors, under pressure to be efficient, multitask while patients speak and often miss the key elements. Add in stereotypes, unconscious bias, conflicting agendas, and the fear of lawsuits and the risk of misdiagnosis and medical errors multiplies dangerously.

Though the gulf between what patients say and what doctors hear is often wide, Dr. Danielle Ofri proves that it doesn't have to be. Through the powerfully resonant human stories that Ofri is celebrated for, she explores the high-stakes world of doctor-patient communication that we all must navigate. Reporting on the latest research studies and interviewing scholars, doctors, and patients, Ofri reveals how better communication can lead to better health for all of us.

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