

THE LANGUAGE OF RHINOLOGY

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The life-time desire of Dr. Maurice H. Cottle has been to be, as he has so successfully become, a Rhinologist, or, as he says, "a nose doctor". During the last twenty years or more, he has, however, devoted most of his efforts to the teaching of Rhinology. This at a time when Rhinologic teaching is almost at a stand-still in this country, at least. So successful at his efforts has he been, that, at present, there are all over the world, and, particularly in the Western World, literally hundreds of his grateful and admiring students.

He has done this by utilizing, and spending to the full, his many talents as a surgeon, a clinician and a teacher, certainly a rare combination. During this time he has conducted many courses in Rhinologic Surgery and Practice, and during these courses, which he has carried on in many different medical school facilities and hospitals all over the world, Dr. Cottle has spared no effort, physically, mentally or even spiritually. He has lectured, operated, demonstrated and donated to the one goal of establishing the Science of Rhinology as part of the abilities and skills of the Otorhinolaryngologist in this country and abroad. His success can be measured by the many good Rhinologists he has taught, and those of us who are so much better for his teachings.

What follows in this article is a compilation, or abstraction, you might say, of some of the language or words that he has used in his lectures. There is no attempt at presenting this in a chronologic order, but, rather, they are gleanings from the notes and memories of those selfsame lectures given at many different places at different times during the past twenty years. It is my hope that you, the reader, will get as much pleasure out of reading these notes as I, the writer, do in recalling them.

Dr. Cottle uses one teaching method which is almost unique, he uses axioms, or pithy sayings, punctuating his lectures. These his students affectionately call "Cottlysms", and many of them are sprinkled freely throughout his lectures, and are so recorded here. Each "Cottlysm" has a particularly vivid point or point of reference to something important in understanding the nasal structure or function. Together, these constitute a fairly complete foundation for the beginning, at least, of knowledge of the nose, according to Dr. Cottle. It is a fundamental concept that a person is oriented around his nose. The infant's nose tells him of the approach of his mother, food, and of the materials

of creation, such as excreta, etc. To give a person a new nose necessitates allowing him time to establish a new fixed point, by which he orients himself. The time needed varies with individuals, of course.

The nose is the guardian of the whole being, neither the eyes, ears or the touch do this. The nose's great job is to connect up the World in which we live. Nasal breathing is unconscious, like opening and shutting the eyes. When one becomes concerned about breathing, he will forget about nasal breathing, and breath through the mouth.

Every nose operation is harmful to the patient, as you are trading one hardship for another, and the total may do a lot of harm, due to the autogenicity of one's own self, as each incision kills a few cells.

Technique is the conscious control of all of the factors involved in performing an activity. You have entirely conceived in advance what is meant to be and what it can finally become.

There is a need of artistry in teaching. Art is not beauty, particularly, it is form and function. One cannot teach without an artistic approach, the willingness to work and give in direct proportion to artistic development.

Teaching is a catalytic agent, which turns the man of knowledge into the man of wisdom.

The word "doctor" means "teacher". The teacher is the alchemist of our lives. Happiness comes only from an active life, full of purposeful activity. The great teachings have been handed down for generations and ages, 10,000 years. They are all the same in different words. The teachers are Moses, Confucius, Buddha and Christ. "If you do good, you will be repaid by good, even if the Devil wants to prevent it. If you do bad, you will be repaid in bad, even if God wants to forgive you for it." "If there are things you do not understand, wait it out. If you have got it coming to you, you will get it." "If I believe in God, then I would believe that God loves me. It is not enough just to believe in God's love you have to first learn to love to be able to receive it."

Breathing is living. It may have nothing to do with the passage of air through the nose. Nasal respiratory insufficiency is absolute or relative. It is a state in which one has difficulty or cannot provide enough passage of air through the nose necessary for satisfactory lung ventilation. When this pertains with the person in repose, it is absolute. When it only occurs when demands are made on the nose, it is relative.

The human nose requires definition. The human nose is a pair of noses. It is unique in the animal kingdom. The nose will get along with the vicissitudes of life, but a sub-standard nose, like a sub-standard heart, will not do it very well. The function of the nose, when the animal lived in water, was to smell. When the animal lived on land, it had to have some way to have a solution, so, now, the important function of the nose has changed and is not smelling, but is respiration.

The nose is not an empty hall, with a lot of balconies filled with bacteria perched around ready to jump down your throat; it is a dynamic organ, living, functioning.

Anatomy is not static, it is dynamic. Knowledge of anatomy is as important to know in finishing an operation as in the beginning of it.

It is difficult to separate emotional factors from physical factors, hence, difficult to obtain a unit of measure of the function of the nose.

The nose on the face is an empty space; you can tell about the race and face if you look at the base. According to Hooton in "Up From The Apes":

If he lives where the ozone is rare,
the nose is constricted and spare.

If he breathes air which is humid,
his beak becomes tumid and
his nostrils exceedingly flaired.

The nasal spine is the hook upon which the face is hung; it is the bumper of the brain. The lobule does not belong to the nose, except as the nozzle belongs to the hose.

The whole secret of septum surgery is the roof attachment. The valve guards an empty space. Ballooning is when the valve cannot come in contact with the septum. It is often caused by a very common injury or bump on the nose. A wide nose does not do well with a thick septum. You can cut down space, or walls of the nose, but not the valve. Much of the common ailments and ills are caused by disturbances of this area. This area receives more injuries than all of the rest of the body put together. Slight injuries plus time, produce deformities.

The injury may be to the genes, and thus be qualitative, as well as quantitative. The word "caress" should describe the relationship of the valve to the septum. "If this spot it not fluffy, the nose will be stuffy." At times a ballooning, with a deviation of the septum, may be a good thing. "One man's meat is another man's poison".

From the larynx down, one needs an airway; from the larynx up, it is different, one needs an air passage plus resistance. The expired air must be permitted to linger a little while in the nose to repay back the hospitality it received on the way down. Nasal surgery is an exchange of one set of symptoms for another.

The mucous membrane is the home, and the bones and cartilage are the house. One may rearrange the house, but should not violate the home. The mucous membrane should be at peace, not at war and tension.

Don't do anything to a nose that you cannot undo. Do the operation with your head, not your brachial plexus.

No one can do everything, but everyone can do something. Because you can do a lot, doesn't necessarily mean that you do a lot.

It is our duty to preserve anything or structure until we agree that it has no purpose, examples are mucous membrane and membranous septum.

Anesthesia of the nose changes a person absolutely and completely. There is an olfactory vertigo and a lack of nasal balance.

Technique is "tricks", but if the concept is tricky, it had better be discarded. Think about the problem of the concept, not just the technique. Both are important, but neither should be unduly emphasized. An error in concept is far more serious and difficult to correct than an error in technique.

In nasal surgery, never do in one movement what you can do in two. Never do in two what you can do in four, etc.

In this country, almost anyone can make a living, but it takes both God and man to make a life.

Study the difference between two things; sometimes this is the way you can understand each.

An expert is one who, through his own painful experiences has learned all of the errors that can occur in his field.

A book should be a beginning of something, not the end.

ST stands for "student", study, steal, stagnate and stink.

There is a "no nose" lecture, cases in which:

- no one nose,
- there are no developments
- no two noses
- no posterior choanae
- no human development
- no external nose,
- no nasal frontal space
- no nasal bones
- no lobule
- no septum
- no upper lateral cartilage
- no caudal septum

There should be no routine remonstrance, excuses, regrets, and, finally, no end to effort and obligation to study.

"Fundamental" may mean that it is fun to be mental. Offending common sense is the road to learning, but one must not offend good taste.

Years ago, Virgil said, "All of this we saw, part of this we were, and some of this we will always be".

Dr. Cutler of the Mayo Clinic said that everyone living has a cross to bear. "It is best to make it a well-balanced cross, with love balancing faith and work balancing leisure. Depreciation of one of these factors gives you a cock-eyed cross, which is more difficult to bear".

This article is, by no means, complete, and should be considered as a sampling of how Dr. Maurice Cottle teaches, and these are not all of the ways that he uses.

It is written to commemorate Dr. Cottle's 70th Birthday, and perhaps a quotation from one of his revered philosophers, Confucius, would be a fitting end. Confucius said: at fifteen, my mind was bent on learning; at thirty, I could think for myself; at forty, I was no longer perplexed; at fifty, I knew the decree of Heaven; at sixty, my ear was attuned to the truth; and at seventy, I can now follow my heart's desire without transgressing what is Right".

All this and more, I wish for my revered friend and teacher, Doctor Maurice H. Cottle.