

## EDITORIAL

# The need for career landmarks

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**I**n a world where imposture and upstartism have become a "normality", where "success" is not often the result of intellectual or motor skills acquired in time by work and perseverance, but rather a result of conjuncture and speculative capacity, there is a need, both for my generation and for younger generations, for the existence of morality and value landmarks to make sense of the individual sacrifice in order to obtain the desired result.

This is even more acute in the medical field, where personal deprivation is a continuous presence among those who wish to succeed. Sleepless nights, the lack of family, material shortcomings that a young doctor has to go through in his/her attempt of improvement at the beginning of his/her career, often make him/her wonder if this is the way forward, if all these sacrifices are meant to lead to a concrete and desirable outcome: professional success. The road to success is often long and sinuous, sprinkled with temptations that divert many of them, making them choose easier ways. Those who succeed are most often those who have with them models, unwavering landmarks, who confirm them daily that "it is possible". Targets of normality, mentors are for the younger generation the supportive pillars on which their quarries are built.

I was lucky. I had the chance to have the landmarks both in the clinic and in my life, present every day with me. Their personal example was the impulse I needed to overcome the moments of uncertainty. At the same time, my mentors knew how to show me that the values they are trying to inspire have their roots deep in the past. I was among the privileged ones who have heard a whole series of "stories" about the life and activity of my mentors' forerunners, thus understanding that there is a certain pattern of dedication and consistency, which represents a constant of their career.

However, I have often wondered... How many people are like me?

The need for career landmarks is an acute one in Romanian otorhinolaryngology, the need for an oxygen supply for the younger generation drowned in contemporary mediocrity being really felt.

Going back in the past, in the history of the Romanian ENT, and bringing into the spotlight emblematic figures

of Romanian medicine, we can notice the continuity of the concerns of our forerunners in the otorhinolaryngology field to integrate this specialty into the European or global medicine even in times when this was not easy, due to political constraints. Knowing these aspects, we might appreciate the efforts of some people who have often put the interest of the specialty above personal interest and we might try not to allow them to be buried in the dust of oblivion and indifference.

A first step would be to learn from the international medical world, where the example of their predecessors and keeping them alive is a gesture of normality. Knowledge and appreciation of forerunners is considered an integral part of the training of each physician, since it was concluded that the medical present in which we live is a consequence of the efforts of such personalities. In this regard, in each clinic, in every university hospital or not, there is prominently displayed tangible evidence of those who have made their mark on the development of the respective institution. Each scientific event begins by paying tribute to the masters who, through innovation and scientific "unease", have perpetuated a specialty. All these translate into respect, a characteristic feature deeply embedded in the intrinsic structure of the Western medical world.

Respect for values must also be a constant of the ENT scientific society in Romania. But in order to respect, we need to know. But most importantly, I think, is that we can choose models. We can set up landmarks that make sense to our everyday struggles.

Teachers about which many of us may have just read in specialized books can be discovered both from their professional and human perspective. Through knowledge, they become tangible, giving the feeling that they are "like us"! This timeless "closeness" between our forerunners and us is the key to the progress of our scientific society. "Like them" most often means sacrifice, abnegation, humility, tenacity, that is, in a word, value.

Moreover, as the disciple, through human nature, tries to overcome his master, by choosing such landmarks in our career, we only have to win! Both we, personally, and those for whom we do all these efforts – the patients!