

## Great Visions and Little Miracles

"One of the things we must make every effort to accomplish, and to feel ourselves a failure if we do not accomplish, is to find and give pleasure, to enjoy ourselves, and if possible to give a little courage. The little embellishments of our work, the smile, the tone of voice, the jokes and the courtesies of our fleeting contacts with individual patients, should be just as precious to us as any of our far reaching plans and deep-plunging attempts to study cases. The least of these opportunities is infinitely precious and we are making a grievous mistake if we do not take it so..

"The necessity of joy in one's work, and the necessity of seeing the momentary and infinitely precious opportunities come to the same thing. If you are "in it," you get your chance. To have sufficient presence of mind to seize one's chance is surely the crucial act in social work or anywhere else, for the chance does not recur..."

"One of the dreary things in a human beings' work is that sometimes, after a month or a year, they cannot see that they have accomplished anything. It is all a mass of details. I remember a very marvelous social worker saying to me, "I do not want to die thinking I have never done anything but casework." But casework seems to me as great a thing as any one can do. One might as well say, " I have never done anything but miracles." ...

"We ought to give and take... We can only give what we have taken. If We allow our lives to get cooped up, narrow and stifled, so that we are not taking in steadily, or not getting fresh energy out of what we have already taken in during the years that are past, we soon have nothing to give.... I have written of the ugliness and the depression that I have seen too much in social workers' lives. That is partly because they are often led into giving without providing for any adequate source of renewal. They are no longer taking in enough to have anything to give out. They give until they are drained dry, squeezed out..."

Consider the perspective: "We give not as a people who find the world so pitiable, so miserable that we want to diminish its misery. We give as people who find the world so glorious, so overflowing, in what it has done for us, that we want to even up, to pay out. We need to share our enthusiasm."

These words were written in 1918 by Richard C. Cabot MD in a book titled, DOCTOR AND SOCIAL WORKER: Essays on the meeting-ground of doctor and social worker.