Research is Fun!

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“Seize the moment of excited curiosity on any subject to solve your doubts; for if you let it pass, the desire may never return, and you may remain in ignorance.”

William Wirt
Why are the British called “limeys”?

Dr. Lind conducted what is believed to be the first clinical trial (with citrus) that resulted in the cure for scurvy in the 1700s.
Research is going beyond simple curiosity…

• The ideal critical thinker is habitually inquisitive, well-informed, trustful of reason, open-minded, flexible, fair-minded in evaluation, honest in facing personal biases, prudent in making judgments, willing to reconsider, clear about issues, orderly in complex matters, diligent in seeking relevant information, reasonable in the selection of criteria, focused in inquiry, and persistent in seeking results which are as precise as the subject and the circumstances of inquiry permit.
  – APA Delphi Research Project on Critical Thinking
Give and Take

• How many of you have read a research paper?
• “It is every man's obligation to put back into the world at least the equivalent of what he takes out of it.”
  – Albert Einstein
The Joys of the Research Process

Peer-Review
Thomas Edison, when asked why he had a team of twenty-one assistants:

“If I could solve all the problems myself, I would.”
The Joys of Statistics

This pie chart shows how much pie I ate while making this chart.
The Joy of Getting Results

It's a rather interesting phenomenon. Every time I press this lever, that post-graduate student breathes a sigh of relief.
If you drop a cookie on the floor would you eat it ("5-second rule")?

- Jillian Clarke winner of the Ig Nobel Prize in 2004 researched the validity of the "5-second rule"
  - Sampled bacteria counts on the floors of “elevators, kitchens and cafeterias, labs, bathrooms, classrooms, everywhere” and found very little bacteria
    - Conclusion: public floors are cleaner than we think and you could probably eat the cookie
  - But a floor inoculated with bacteria did contaminate gummy bears and cookies within 5 seconds
    - Conclusion: don’t eat the cookie if the floor isn’t “clean”
What it Takes

• Unending curiosity
• Persistence
• Support
Why be Cool? Do Research Instead!

• You can add value to your work, your department
• There is a movement in healthcare to move toward evidence-based practice...make a contribution
• Can be interesting
• More fun than you think!
How Do You Do “It” in Your Department?

• Step #1:
  – Bring team together
    • Discuss during staff meetings
    • Replace one education session with a research planning meeting
  – Discuss plan for the year
    • Quality improvement initiatives
    • Adopting best practice
    • Explore innovative ideas
    • Align research projects with your department’s strategic plans
My Suggestion…

• Ask a student but DON’T say…
  “Would you like to help me do a chart review?”
My Suggestion…

• Provide a student with “the opportunity to participate in exciting research…”
How Do You Do “It” in Your Department?

• Step #2:
  – Get a “handy dandy notebook”
    • Write down ideas
    • Write down questions
      – Practice formulating good, focused research questions
  – Prioritize based on team’s “needs and wants”
  – The challenge…
    • Finding measurable outcomes
    • Applying the findings into practice
How Do You Do “It” in Your Department?

• Step #3
  – Divide up tasks
    • Find each person’s strengths and get them to work on an associated task
  – Start the team working together on a proposal
    • If you engage them, they will be happier, and more productive
  – Apply for ethics approval
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• "Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Unievtsisy, it deosn't mttae in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a total mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe."
A Word of Caution…

- Sometimes research yields more questions than answers
  
  - New questions are potential future research projects
  - Helps people “know what they don’t know”
  - It is still a step in the right direction
Recognition

• Publication
  – Poster at a conference
  – Oral presentation
    • maybe even 2
  – Full article publication in a peer-reviewed journal

• Good for your curriculum vitae

• Looks good if you are applying for grants
The Benefits

• Encourages team work
• Answers questions applicable to daily practice
• Contributes to the biomedical literature
• Improves patient outcomes
• Engages each member of the team
  – Recognition through publication or presentations
Questions

- In dwelling, live close to the ground. In thinking, keep to the simple. In conflict, be fair and generous. In governing, don't try to control. In work, do what you enjoy. In family life, be completely present.

When you are content to be simply yourself and don't compare or compete, everybody will respect you.

– Tao Te Ching (Excerpt from Verse 8)