Introducing Hygieia

The family tree

In Greek mythology, Asklepios was the god of healing. He was the son of the Olympian god Apollo and a mortal woman named Koronis.

According to some ancient sources, Apollo's twin sister Artemis caught the pregnant Koronis having an affair with another man. Artemis punished the betrayal of her brother by killing Koronis. Apollo rescued the unborn child Koronis was carrying, but could not bear to look upon the symbol of his wife's adultery, so sent the child away to live with the wise centaur Chiron. The child was Asklepios, and over time, Chiron taught Asklepios the art of medicine and healing.

Some legends also tell of a meeting with two snakes that taught Asklepios how to bring the dead back to life. Asklepios, it is said, came across a snake tending another, ailing snake. As he watched, the snake died, but then an amazing thing happened. The snake went off into the bushes and returned a few moments later with a herb. The snake placed the herb on the dead snake, and after a short time, the snake revived.

A balanced public health practitioner should be neither exclusively a doer, nor observer nor analyst, the artificial dichotomy between public health practice and academic life has not served us well, we need to strive for synthesis.

JRA

APHORISM OF THE MONTH

Making things happen versus watching them?

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