10 Hallmarks of a Great Psychiatrist
A great psychiatrist

... 

1. Knows the disease, the person with the disease, and the way they interact
2. Intuits the right question, the time to pose it, and best mode of inquiry
3. Listens—and not only listens but hears—with mind and heart conjoined
4. Presents risks and benefits, and encourages autonomous decision-making
5. Admits mistakes and tries to learn from them—practice makes progress
6. Practices the Hippocratic Oath: “Primum non nocerum (First do no harm)”
7. Remembers: in the etymology of physician, Greek *physi* means “nature”
8. Finds himself “in” the patient, creates a trusting bond, then changes himself
9. Chooses to be a participant-observer: neither bleeding heart nor cold fish
10. Prescribes the best medicine—love; if that doesn’t work, increases the dose
About the Author

Michael Sperber, MD is a Consulting Psychiatrist, Neuropsychiatry/Behavioral Neurology Service of McLean Hospital in Belmont, Mass.