

Doc Talk

New!

Get to know your peers in Doc Talk, CME's new interview department! Join us every month as we talk to GPs across Canada about their careers, their lives and... their quirks.



Affiliations:

Clinical Assistant Professor,
University of Calgary

Based in:

Calgary, Alberta

Special interests:

- Nutrition and weight management
- Co-founder of Well Woman Clinic

1. If you weren't a doctor, what other profession would you choose?

If I weren't a doctor, I would be an actress. I really enjoy entertaining people. My interest began in junior high school when we would have to participate in yearly held speech days. My strength was in impromptu speaking. It is great fun to stand up and talk about something and try to keep your audience interested. Interestingly, when I give talks, I still get nervous for the first few minutes but then I feel like I am flying around the room imparting knowledge with humour.

2. What is the least enjoyable job you have ever had?

During my undergraduate degree at the University of Calgary, I worked as a blackjack dealer to cover the costs of my education. The only good things were the pay and my lack of luck. I always seemed to lose. The players loved it. The job was challenging and unenjoyable because you would see people who were troubled with an addiction. Some of the stories the players would share about their troubles with money were very difficult and heartbreaking.

3. Who is your most memorable patient?

March 16, 2003, I was just beginning my Saturday shift at my community walk-in clinic. Jan, my nurse asked if I could see a baby first, because the mom was worried. I agreed. Around the corner came a young mom with a baby in a car seat. The baby was blue and lifeless. I recall taking the baby from the car seat and asking Jan to call for help. The mom was crying in the hallway as I performed CPR on the infant. I would get a heart beat and then I would lose it. Finally the baby took a breath on its own. It seemed like hours before help arrived. The baby lived and is well.

4. How did this patient affect your life?

I considered leaving medicine. You may wonder why such a joyous event could lead me to this decision. The next few patients that I saw and the police who came to take a report, also could not understand why I was upset. Now I understand that the public thinks we do that kind of stuff all the time. They expected no less of me. On the other hand, the intensive care unit physicians asked me which pulse I was feeling before I made the decision to do chest compressions. They assumed I was a general person doing CPR in the community. I told them I used my stethoscope to evaluate the heartbeat. They said, "Oh, that pulse." The expectations of society and my colleagues were diametrically opposed and left me feeling uncertain about me, the physician. I resumed duties immediately the next day, which was the best thing to do. I finally realized that all the sleepless nights in London at the University of Western Ontario allowed me to do what I needed to do. I even remembered 80 or less compress!



5. What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

The best piece of advice I have ever had in life, was from my cousin Jack. Never say anything bad about your partner or children to your family. Your family is never present when you make-up. And, your family cannot forgive what your partner does to you. The best piece of medical advice was from my grandmother, Dr. Catherine McKenna (one of the first female physicians). She said to always listen to mothers. The mother knows more about their child's health than you will ever know.

6. Do you have any hobbies that others might be surprised to know about?

I am currently consumed with raising my children and running my office but one day. I plan on taking up golf and attending the Culinary Institute of America in New York. That way on the weekends, I can be at the Waldorff Astoria and attend shows on Broadway. Would anyone like to come along?

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Stay Tuned...

Join us next month as we *Doc Talk* to **Dr. Stephen Glenn Miller**, who is an Emergency Physician, and a Medical Officer in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Wanna be interviewed?

If you'd like to talk to our readers or would like to nominate a colleague, feel free to contact us at cme@sta.ca.

You could be the next to *Doc Talk*!