



Hoping for the Patient

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Commentary

After 25 years of ordinary psychological abuse by her husband, Mrs L., 50 years old, was suffering severe anxiety and intense despair. She was hospitalized after a suicide attempt and released few days after. In the two following months she was readmitted three times for other suicide attempts. Each time, emergency staff had the same defeated reaction: “Eventually, she’s going to succeed in killing herself.” This attitude is more common than we would think among caregivers. But if caregivers themselves do not hope for better, who will? It was vital for her that someone believed she would live. So when I met her, I started to hope instead of her, in spite of her. After one year of intensive psychotherapy, hope was restored and Mrs L. was able to start over. If we want to help patients, first, we must hope that something can be done.

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