The Restitution of Pathology –The Real Professional–

STEPHANIE HINO*1, OKIO HINO*2)

*1) Client Care & Marketing Manager, GR Home Team, USA, *2) Department of Pathology and Oncology, Juntendo University Faculty of Medicine, Tokyo, Japan

I have often been posed with the question, “What does your father do?” I pause, not knowing quite how to answer. I refer to the titles on his business card – an oncologist – a pathologist, then revert to the simple answer, “He’s a doctor.” If someone were to ask me the same question today, I would respond with, “Among many things, my father is a philosopher.”

As defined by the Merriam Webster Dictionary, a philosopher is “a person who studies ideas about knowledge, truth, the nature and meaning of life.” Knowledge comes from education, doing the research and knowing the facts. Truth is accepting those facts, deciphering between what is and what is not. Nature is how the physical world responds to such truths, the essence of what the world feels, sees, tastes, hears, and smells. And the meaning of life, above all, is how knowledge, truth and nature are conveyed, and grasping the world’s entirety.

My father wrote in his book:

Inazo Nitobe once made the analogy that when an insect who lives in its original habitat – the mud – discusses its ecology, it is called scholarly. However, when a curious insect who sees things from the clouds discusses an insect’s ecology, it is not regarded as scholarly. This is the same now and then. In any generation, there are very few courageous people who have the guts to speak out like the curious insect – a phenomenon that shows the ‘scary cat’ epidemic. It is often said that when you see things in the macro point of view, a lot of details are most likely to be missed. On the other hand, when you see things specifically with a micro point of view, it is difficult to see the overall picture. Therefore, it is important to have both perspectives. However, very rare is the discerning man who sees both the entire forest as well as the bark on the trees. Intrinsically, pathologist are professionally in a position where seeing things both macro and micro is required. By touching cancer cells and investigating them, keeping in mind the DNA composition of these cells, the pathologist is able to envision a distant image of human society. The one who can achieve this is the true cancer philosopher.

A true philosopher adheres to knowledge, truth, the nature and meaning of life by encompassing both a macro and micro perspective. Their attention to the most intricate details alongside their understanding of the overarching picture allows them to perceive reality as a true philosopher, much like my father.