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## **Juni, Huni and Buni**

"I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies, for the hardest victory is over self."

— A ristotle

Juni, Huni and Buni who had been the closest friend's ever worked in a renowned hospital in Faisalabad. One day on a beautiful morning Juni, Huni and Buni reached the hospital and met each other at the hospital reception. They got busy in their daily chit chat when Juni saw the Pharmaceutical sales representative. As usual, he was well dressed in a three piece suit with a wicked smile on his face and a bag full of gifts for the doctors. It was always easy for me to spot a drug rep as drug reps today are often young, well groomed, and strikingly good-looking. Many give off a kind of glow, as if they had just emerged from a spa or salon. They are always, hands down, the best-dressed people in the hospital. As soon as I saw him thoughts started coming in my mind what he would have bring today for me a slice of pizza, a pen, a medical dictionary or free drug samples. Then another thought came in my mind whether this kind of drug marketing is effective, the answer is always the same for me: "It doesn't influence me at all. They're not going to buy my soul with a laser pointer or free drug sample." I blame the pin-striped MBAs, who

mistakenly believe that physicians are going to prescribe certain medicines because the company plies them with pens."

The pharmaceutical sales representative directly comes to the reception area and gives his introductory card to Juni. In the mind of Pharmaceutical sales representative it is very clear that physicians are usually not interested in talking to them unless they have something to catch their attention.

Juni welcomed him and offered him a seat. All the paramedical staff along with Buni and Huni gathered around the sales representative in excitement. The sales representative opened his bag and take out many free drug samples. Huni took the free samples and says I'll give them to poor patient in the hospital where as Buni refuses to take it as He is of the view that its unethical to take these samples because then the Doctor has to prescribe a medicine under pressure. He logically explained that the data increasingly show that even small gifts influence the drugs physicians prescribe.

Juni gathered all the samples. His pockets were filled with drugs. He was feeling happy and making plans what to do with these samples in his evening clinic. In evening clinic while waiting for the patient he was thinking that he knew that, on some level, it is wrong, even when we told ourselves that the freebies would in no way influence our judgment as doctors or dictate what we prescribed. We all took an oath to protect our patients and put their needs first. But then the line between what's best for the patient, and what's new, shiny and expensively promoted, has blurred. Juni was deep in his thoughts when a patient entered into his room while coughing. Juni examined the patient, but in the back of his mind, he was smiling that he can easily prescribe the free drug sample to this patient and earns money from it. He wrote the prescription mentioning same drug whose free drugs sample

he took today and ask the patient if he needs medicine he can provide him from his clinic and he sold the medicines with 200 % profit.

Accepting gifts from the pharmaceutical industry has implication for the doctor-patient relationship; Doing so can undermine trust and affect the patient's intent to adhere to medical recommendations. Abdullah ibn Mas'ud reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Verily, truthfulness leads to righteousness and righteousness leads to Paradise. A man may speak the truth until he is recorded with Allah as truthful. Verily, falsehood leads to wickedness and wickedness leads to the Hellfire. A man may tell lies until he is recorded with Allah as a liar." Being doctors and above all being Muslims, we should not fall into the trap of these worldly things and should maintain the nobility of our profession.

*"A n official job description for a pharmaceutical sales rep would read: Provide health-care professionals with product information, answer their questions on the use of products, and deliver product samples. A n unofficial, and more accurate, description would have been: Change the prescribing habits of physicians."*

—James Reidy