

# I NEED YOUR HELP DOC!

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Dikran Abrahamian BA MD, November 18, 2007

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A symptom is what you hear, what the complaint is or what the situation might be in the eye of the person telling you a story. A sign is what you find to corroborate what you've heard, or something that you discover, but the person is not aware of it. Sometimes you may consider what you are told to be the figment of imagination; you can't find a corresponding physical sign. It's a delusion. It may be either a rosy one or the expression of a very painful experience.

In an average busy day I hear more than a hundred various complaints. Infrequently my senses get dulled, and it's not uncommon in such a situation the complainer asking in a humble but forceful way, "Are you listening Doc?"

Let's change the role and let me be the person complaining today, telling you what aches and what hurts me. You be the examiner. Be patient; don't jump into conclusions right away. They may mislead you and you may end up in a wrong diagnosis, and hence your prescription to heal me may result in aggravating the problem or outright damaging me even further. I don't want to end up in a coma or life support system.

My first complaint is about a friend. Rumor has it that he is sending his two lovely children to the Catholic school. Previously they were attending an Armenian school of the Apostolic faith. Did my friend have a change of heart? I don't think so; I just saw him at the Armenian Club the other day and at the Armenian Church a few weeks ago. Oh, by the way, for all I know he was a dedicated volunteer at one of the Armenian organisations and served the Armenian Church in several capacities for many years. Was the Armenian school charging too much and my friend could not afford footing the bill? That can't be the case! Sending his children to a Catholic school is costing him more considering after hour care and all the expenses that go with such services. So what happened? Did somebody step on his toes?

I hear, you hear, probably all of us hear that our young are either indifferent, or unhappy about their Armenian environment, or they don't care what goes on. Ok, let's not bring in hearsay. So that nobody gets offended I'll talk about my two adult children. They were both fortunate to travel abroad and get their secondary education in a renowned Armenian Institution, enjoy the beautiful sun and the blue sea. Of course, they had the additional advantage of visiting here and there on their trips across the Atlantic. They are very grateful, and I have no doubt about it, as they acknowledge it in their own way every now and then.

Here is my complaint: they will not on their own initiative make an effort to join an Armenian Club or an Association or what have you. To be fair to them let me tell that they do infrequently attend some events, or accompany me on rare occasions whenever a community gathering takes place. However, they will not make an active participation in

whatever goes on. Can you Doc, tell me why?

My third complaint is about an Armenian lady who got married to an Armenian gentleman. Both are professionals and they had their respective circles of friends prior to marriage. Reportedly the husband held some important position in one of the Armenian parties. On festive occasions and family gatherings there were ample opportunities for these “respective circles of friends” to get together, sing and dance, invite each other and forge new personal friendships. The lady got praises for the cookies, setting tables, and for the overall hospitality provided by her. The story unfortunately does not have a “happily ever after” ending. A few years following the wedding, and after having two children, discord set in and the couple got divorced. There was no infidelity involved.

You guessed it right! Mr. Husband’s friends stopped visiting, talking to the lady, let alone inviting her to family visitations, social meetings and community activities. The children lived with their mother. They were taken out of the Armenian school and were sent elsewhere. Can you Doc, tell me why?

More than two or three complaints trigger a general examination, and I am not ready for that. Let’s treat this visit as an intermediate assessment; anything further can be costly and right now I can’t afford it. May be some other time, will it be OK, Doc?

Now that I have laid some miniscule part of my ailments I’d like you, as the examiner to find out whether there are signs to confirm my symptoms. Are these delusional thoughts? Are they indicative of a pathology? Do you have a diagnosis? I know, that’s the hard part, and it takes years of study and experience. I presume you have it, or probably you need the experts' opinion to tell what’s wrong. Just wearing a gown does not make one a real doctor. I’ve heard there are many quacks out there.

