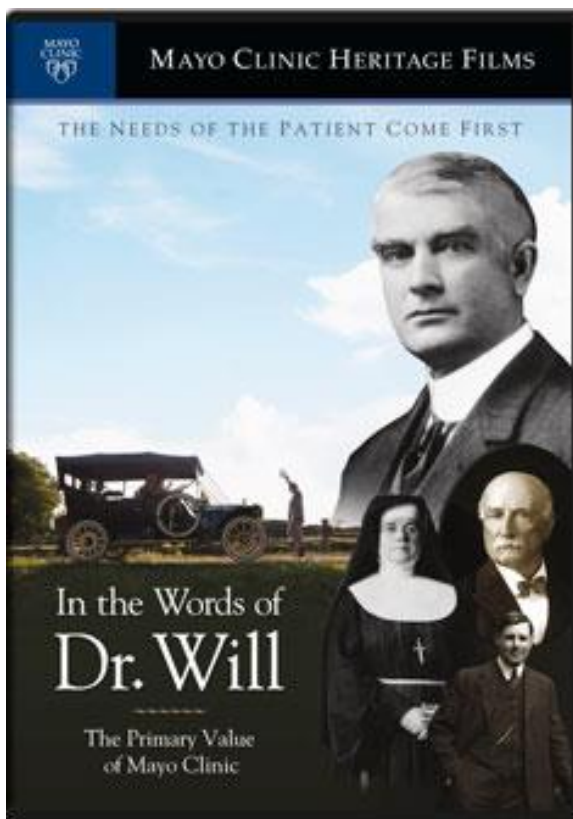




Mayo Clinic Heritage Films Discussion Guide

In the Words of Dr. Will: The Primary Value of Mayo Clinic



In 1910, Dr. William J. Mayo was invited to give the commencement speech at Rush Medical College in Chicago. He thought long and hard about how to inspire a new generation of physicians to the highest standards of professionalism and ethics. Given his belief in teamwork, it's likely he turned to his colleagues for advice: Sister Joseph Dempsey, the superintendent of Saint Marys Hospital; Harry Harwick, the clinic's new business manager; and especially his father, Dr. William Worrall Mayo. This film imagines how Dr. Will gave voice to the idea that became the primary value of Mayo Clinic: the needs of the patient come first.

Discussion Questions

1. How did Dr. Mayo draw out the thoughts and suggestions of his companions on this journey?
2. What changes in medicine and society were taking place at the time of this film? What changes are occurring today?
3. What qualities did Dr. Mayo call for in the practice of medicine? How are they relevant today?
4. Why did Dr. Mayo emphasize cooperation rather than competition among physicians?
5. Dr. Mayo did not want a patient to feel “like a wagon, to be divided into parts and put back together again.” What can a hospital or medical center do to make the patient feel that his or her needs come first?
6. Dr. Mayo urged physicians to be honest “above all considerations.” What does that statement mean to you?
7. With health care becoming more technical and complex, what do you think should never change in the practice of medicine?