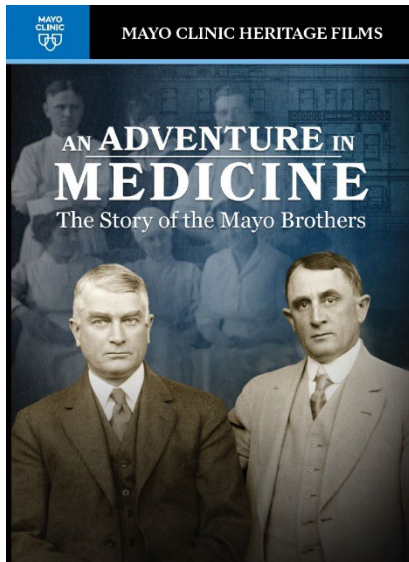




Mayo Clinic Heritage Films Discussion Guide

An Adventure in Medicine The Story of the Mayo Brothers



In 1889, at a pivotal moment in medicine, two sons of a country doctor went to work in a small-town hospital. Fresh out of medical school, they embraced the latest surgical techniques, including a newly discovered method for preventing infection, and achieved astonishing results. They soon became world-renowned as Dr. Will and Dr. Charlie — the Mayo brothers.

Their pioneering surgery was only one of their many achievements. They built a group of remarkable associates and developed an innovative team-based approach to practicing healthcare. They facilitated research to discover new treatments and helped establish a new method of educating medical professionals.

Throughout their lives, the Mayo brothers were guided by a timeless value: The needs of the patient come first.

Discussion Questions

1. The Mayo brothers began their careers as the discovery of anesthesia and antiseptic techniques opened new frontiers in surgery. How has your career been affected by the time at which you entered your field?
2. Drs. Will and Charlie had very different personalities. How have you forged a productive working relationship with someone whose working style was different from yours?
3. Dr. Will spoke of the importance of a “union of forces.” What do you think is important for establishing a true atmosphere of teamwork?
4. What value is most important to you in the conduct of your work?
5. The brothers decided to invest a good part of their life savings in a new form of medical education. If you had a similar opportunity to “do something for the sick,” as Dr. Will put it, what would your priority be?
6. What do you think is responsible for Mayo Clinic’s continuing reputation for medical excellence?