Professor Hugh MacPherson (1948–2020): The Man Who Put Science Into Acupuncture

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DURING THE SUMMER, I was contacted by Karen Charlesworth, who informed me that Professor Hugh MacPherson, PhD, was very ill, and she asked me if I would be willing to contribute to Hugh's Celebration Book that would consist of tributes from all his friends and colleagues over his lifetime. Hugh was resigning from all activities because of his illness. This news was sudden, but I remembered quickly that Hugh and I met in 2019 at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and, again, that he had mentioned his illness to me. We both were fighting the same "enemy." During the past years, I had the privilege to interact with Hugh about our mutual love, acupuncture. I remember I was part of the *ST*andards for Reporting Interventions in Controlled Trials of Acupuncture—the STRICTA recommendations.¹ This was my first encounter with Hugh way back in 2002. It seemed like yesterday. Could time have passed so quickly? I felt stunned. I collected my thoughts and wrote an e-mail to Hugh for the Celebration Book. It was hard to keep back the tears and my emotions:

Dear Hugh,

I think of you frequently when we met at the NIH last year.

You are in my thoughts and prayers. You are a warrior and a magnificent person. Thank you for the contributions made to the profession. All of your work serves as a beacon. The light you have shed on acupuncture will remain illuminated for generations to come. Both of us are battling the same enemy and I certainly understand the circumstances. Making every minute count is so important now. If this message comes to you, I express my gratefulness to know you and say there is no one quite like you. You are a special person to all of us.

I am not saying goodbye but will use the French "au revoir." To see you again! Hang in there!

—Richard

Hugh put science into acupuncture. His accomplishments are amazing. I have placed several links below that you may explore and appreciate his life and contributions.^{2,3,4} His impact on acupuncture will never be forgotten. Perhaps even more important is the man himself. He was loved and respected by all. He fought a courageous battle against pancreatic cancer and died peacefully surrounded by family at his home in the United Kingdom on August 20, 2020.

REFERENCES

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