

Doug Sellman

Abstract

John Dobson was a pioneering psychiatrist in New Zealand who specialised in Addiction Medicine. He was an inspiring leader and mentor, as well as a friend and supportive colleague to many of us, particularly in Christchurch. He brought both a strong combination of both empathy and scientific rigor to his clinical work and showed real courage in public advocacy about contentious issues.

In this inaugural lecture dedicated to his memory I will outline five key things I learnt from John Dobson during the 16 years I knew him. I will give examples of his work, as well as imagine what he would say today about some contemporary addiction issues as we look back and move forward.

The five key things were:

1. to endeavour to see the world through patients' eyes
2. To passionately read and promote the scientific literature
3. To always listen to consumers about services
4. To be brave about speaking out on social issues
5. To enjoy life and be grateful for what we have.