

1st
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CONGRESS
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Ageing surgeon and surgical practice

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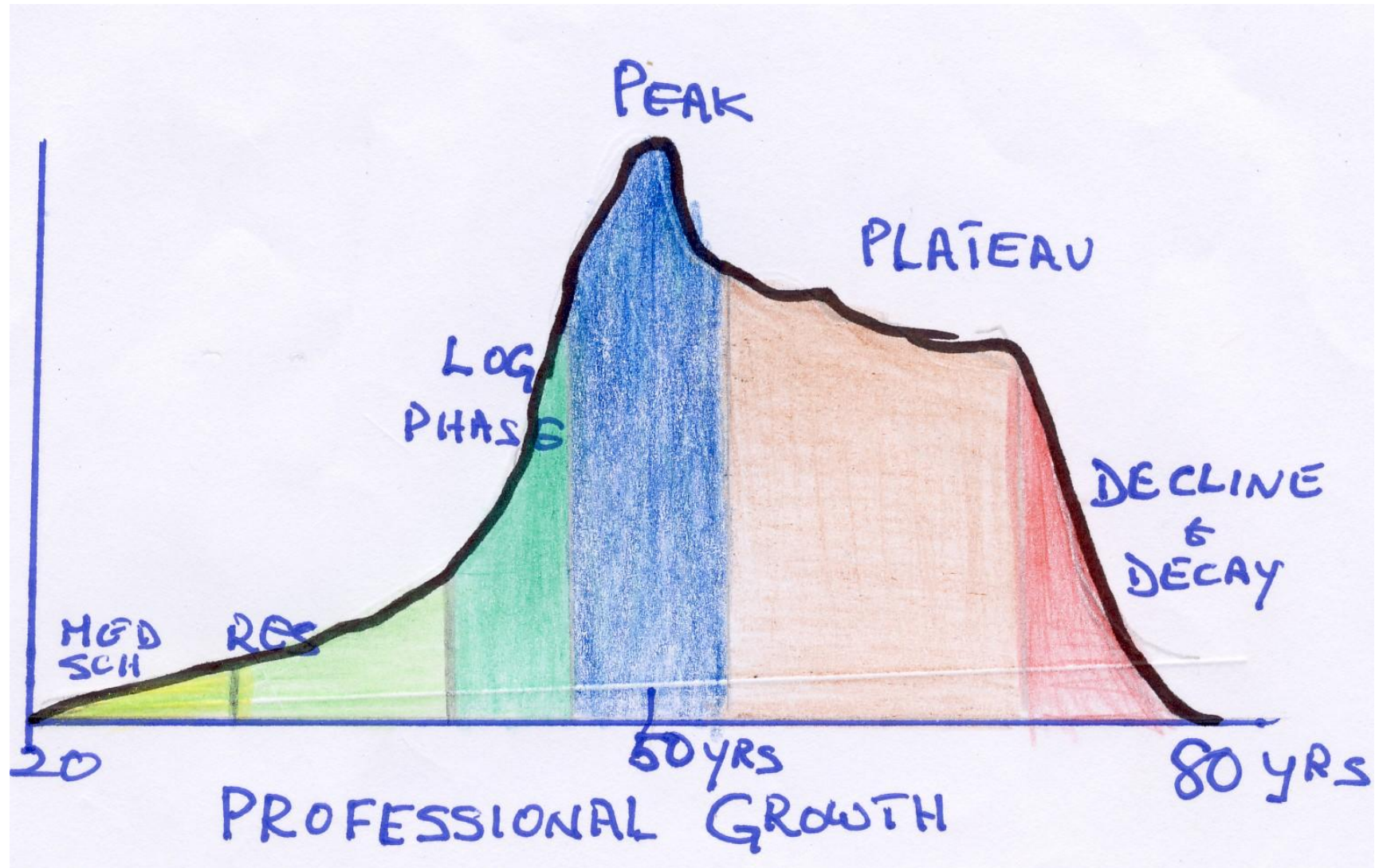
Gist of my talk

- 1. Problems of an ageing surgeon**
- 2. Managing them**
- 3. When to give up surgery?**

A surgeon's life

1. **Period of growth**
2. **Peaking**
3. **Plateau & and become a mountain range with **experience & wisdom****
4. **Period of **Decline and decay****

A surgeon's life



Problems of an ageing surgeon

Slow imperceptible loss of power from

- **Vision loss.** cataract
- **Surgeon's hands:** deft, steady, speed?
- **Reaction time in an emergency.** Slow
- **Memory loss.**
- **Be a safe surgeon**

Drop in surgical skills

1. **Diagnostic skills**
2. **Judgement skills**

The above 2 remain unchanged and are an asset

3. **Surgical technique skills**, though slow need not drop

How do we overcome the problems?

- 1. Move on to the comfort zone with less difficult cases** or
- 2. Keep going with major cases,** through positive effort with - awareness, vigilance & focus.
- 3. Imaging every step of the surgery** the previous night.
Things go well, even with new techniques

Coping with ageing ctd

4. **Do less volume, but more major cases and continue to remain a safe surgeon.**
5. **Unlearn and learn new things to remain relevant.**

Coping with ageing ctd

A dog in a pack attacks. A single dog only barks.

6. Therefore have 2 good assistants

Team work. Mentor them

Teach them everything.

Not like the kang fu master

- But remember the 2nd edition is always better than the 1st.**

Time to quit

- You free-wheel on experience & wisdom
- But time comes, when age catches on
- **Decide when to put the scalpel on the shelf -**
 - a. On a time frame
 - b. When you realise that you can't carry on
 - c. or be forced out of practice

Summary

- 1. Surgeon's life has to be enjoyed.**
There will be moments of being on top of the world or down in the pit.
- 2. Keep on learning new things to remain relevant.**
- 3. Have your strategy to manage surgery and ageing**
- 4. Step down gracefully**