

Lorenzo's oil

Experience, Human Nature



In the Movie Lorenzo's oil the disease Adrenoleukodystrophy (ALD) or also known as Schilder's Disease, a rare inherited disorder that leads to progressive brain damage, failure of the adrenal gland and eventually death, is institutionalized by Augusto and Michaela Odone's struggle to find a cure for their son who has ALD. Their independent efforts to find a cure for this dreaded disease leads them to clashes with the established medical institutions.

Scientists, doctors and other support groups do not believe they can succeed. However, their efforts soon gain media attention and people from the mainstream are drawn into assisting them in their 'mad' crusade. Their labors are epitomized in the international symposium that definitely catches people's attention. Eventually, enough mainstream interest is gained in ALD research and actual scientists back them up in finding a cure.

It is an example of institutionalization because by their labors ALD is brought into the mainstream as a disease that should be studied and fought and not just an isolated illness that the occasional luckless person suffers. Advocacy refers to efforts on the part of an individual to gain attention for something in the hopes of positive reaction from the public. In this movie the couple advocated the search for a cure to their son's affliction and in the end has some success.

Interference, is quite the opposite, is when people try to get media mileage from an event in an effort to gain popularity. Politicians who get involved in social issues are often disparaged as simply trying to gain media mileage. I learned from the movie that we must never give up hope. Science, with

enough persistence, can help us conquer many problems that appear unconquerable. Also, we must discern between those who truly want to help us and those who are merely trying to use us for their own personal gains.