Connections: Strategies for Patient Encounters

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Objectives

- Preparing Self for Patient Encounters
- Planning for Interactions and Interventions
- Strategies for “Staying in the Moment”
- Practice, Practice, Practice
Wow!  You really should tell someone.......oh wait.......
MINDFULNESS

• The practice of moment-to-moment awareness
• To simply BE where we are.
• To anchor awareness in present moment experience
• To promote clarity of perception and calmness of body and mind.
Settling/Centering Breath

- Inhale through nose (parasympathetic nervous system)
- Be sure to exhale
- Engage diaphragm muscle
- Soften shoulders, hands, face
- Observe the breath moving throughout your body
Core Components of Mindfulness

- Intention
  - On Purpose
- Attention
  - Presence in the Present Moment, Awareness
- Attitude
  - Friendly Curiosity, Non-judgemental Compassion
Mindful Attitudes

- Non-judging
- Patience
- Acceptance
- Letting go
- Non-striving
- Trust
- Beginners Mind
Noticing and Choosing

- Cultivating acceptance of mind’s contents w/o responding to them
- Witnessing mind states vs fixing and changing them
- The rise and fall of thoughts/emotions
- Changing the relationship to thoughts vs altering the thoughts
Planning Interactions
Motivational Interviewing

A refined form of guiding
3 Communication Styles

- **Directing**
  - “I know how you can solve this problem. I know what you should do.”
  - Patients often appear to expect and want this kind of take-charge approach

**Following**
- listening predominates
- “I won’t change or push you. I trust your wisdom about yourself, and I’ll let you work this out in your own time and at your own pace.”

- **Guiding**
  - “I can help you to solve this for yourself.”
3 Core Communication Skills

- Asking
- Informing
- Listening
Asking

- The practitioner’s intent in asking questions is usually to develop an understanding of the patient’s problem(s).
Listening

- Good listening is an active process.
- A check on whether you understand the person’s meaning correctly
- Encourages the patient to explore and reveal more
Informing

- A vehicle for conveying knowledge to the patient about a condition and its treatment
Styles and Skills (Asking)

- Asking
  - How many times has that happened? [directing]
  - What kind of change makes sense to you? [guiding]
  - How have you been since your son died? [following]
Styles and Skills (Informing)

- Informing
  - Your best option is to use a Home Health Agency.  
    
    \textit{[directing]}
  
  - Changing your diet would make sense, but how does that feel for you? \textit{[guiding]}
  
  - Yes, it’s a common experience; many people also feel quite shocked and unsettled about simple things like using the toilet. \textit{[following]}
Styles and Skills (Listening)

- Listening
  - So you understand what’s going to happen today, but you want me to tell you more about what will happen later on. [directing]

  - You’re feeling concerned about your weight and you are not sure where to go from here. [guiding]

  - This has been a huge shock. [following]
6 Kinds of “Change Talk”

- **Desire**: Statements about preference for change.
  - “I want to . . .”
  - “I would like to . . .”
  - “I wish . . .”

- **Ability**: Statements about capability.
  - “I could . . .”
  - “I can . . .”
  - “I might be able to . . .”

- **Reasons**: Specific arguments for change.
  - “I would probably feel better if I . . .”
  - “I need to have more energy to play with my kids.”
6 Kinds of “Change” Talk

- **Reasons**: Specific arguments for change.
  - “I would probably feel better if I . . .”
  - “I need to have more energy to play with my kids.”

- **Need**: Statements about feeling obliged to change.
  - “I ought to . . .”
  - “I have to . . .”
  - “I really should . . .”

- **Taking steps**: Statements about action taken.
  - “I actually went out and . . .”
  - “This week I started . . .”
6 Kinds of “Change Talk”

- **Commitment**: Statements about the likelihood of change.
  - “I am going to . . .”
  - “I will . . .”
  - “I intend to . . .”

- **Taking steps**: Statements about action taken.
  - “I actually went out and . . .”
  - “This week I started . . .”
One Key MI Point

- A guiding style usually indicated and most effective.

- There are times when it is not essential or even possible for you to be the expert director;

- Particularly in discussions of patients’ lifestyle and behavior change, in which it is crucial to engage the patient’s own motivation, energy, and commitment.
Here & Now
Strategies for Staying In It

- Self Awareness/Mindfulness
  - Shift in breathing rate/depth
  - Shifting in chair
  - Tone of voice
  - Constriction in muscles (hands, jaw, neck, chest)
  - A Sense of “pushing”
  - Self-talk volume or rate
  - Computer surfing or multi-tasking

- Awareness of Others
  - Noting any of the above in other participants/recruits
Staying in It With Observations

- State the obvious
  - To Self
  - To Others
- Allows the Choice to Come back
Staying in It Through Self Talk

- Acknowledging Inner Critic
- “Name” in order to “Reclaim Control”
- Soothing – as kindly as you would to your child/friend
- Mind Lacks Filters for Negative
  - Don’t
  - Quit
  - Stop
Self-Talk

- “Take a few full, easy breaths.”
- “Let it go. Soften. Easy.”
- “This is just ______. Now, where are we and what’s next?”
- “I can control how I respond to this or any other moment.”
Long-Term Self-Care Strategies

- Movement
  - Even more effective when outdoors
- Breath
- Tactile/Touch
- Creative Expression
- Imagery/Meditation
Movement

- Tendency may be to restrict movement
- Walk
- Change rooms/change chairs
- Yoga/ Tai Chi/ Qigong
- Change your perspective, change your experience
“Thanks to yoga, I now gently stretch to conclusions instead of jumping to them”
The Wave of Breath
Relaxing Triangle Breath
Invigorating Triangle Breath
Square Breathing
Sense of Touch

- Physiological response to tactile stimulation
- Stone/Bead
- “Blankie”
- “Touchstone” (infused object)
- Word or Message in Pocket
- Massage
Creative Expressions

- Music – Making or Listening
- Art – Creating or Viewing/Experiencing
  - Coloring Books
  - Zentangles/Mandalas
- Write: Blog/Journal/Letters
- Cook/Bake
Imagery/Meditation

- Taking a mental or spiritual break
- Recordings
  - www.Healthjourneys.com
  - www.Calm.com
  - www.Headspace.com
  - www.cancer.med.umich.edu/support/guided_imagery_podcasts.shtml

Walks with Intention