



Academy of Communication in Healthcare: Relationship-Centered Communication Workshop

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Agenda:

- Introductions/Pair Share
- Agenda/Ground Rules
- Relationship Centered Communication: Overview
- Skill Sets 1-3: Didactic/Demo (large group) and Practice (small group)
- Close

2 Breaks

Session Ground Rules

Relational Ground Rules

1. **Curiosity and openness**
2. **Practice confidentiality**
3. **There will be breaks! Please engage actively**
4. **Focus on communication skills, not clinical midwifery**
5. **Share kind, specific, nonjudgmental feedback**

Technology Ground Rules

1. **Mute unless speaking** (or intending to speak)
2. **Stop video** (if stepping away or moving about)
3. **Use “Gallery View”** to see entire group
4. **Use chat box** (or unmute) for interaction
5. **“Rename”** yourself per your preferences
6. **Raise your hand** to participate (as if in-person)

Activity: Appreciative Inquiry

Total time in breakout pairs: 5 minutes

Reflect on a time (one you would be comfortable talking about with your partner) when you were a patient or close to a patient and experienced skillful communication on the part of the health care provider.

What did the person do (name specific behaviors)?

How did you feel as a result?

QUESTION:

(chat box)

What do you know about the connection between effective communication and beneficial outcomes for:

- Patients?
- Teams?
- Organizations?

Better Outcomes for Patients ^{2 - 13}

- Diabetes²
- Blood Pressure³
- Pain management⁴
- Adherence to medications⁵
- Heart disease⁶
- Satisfaction with care⁷⁻¹²
- Relief of suffering¹³



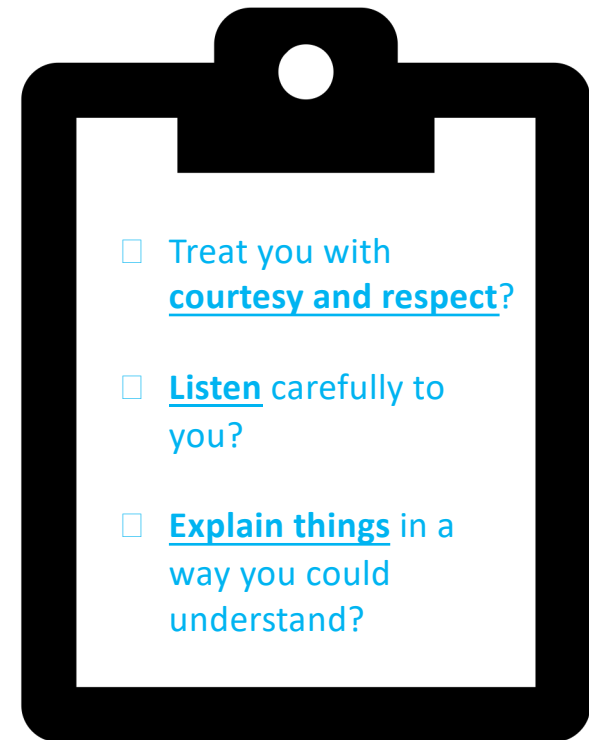
Better Outcomes for Clinicians & Teams^{14 – 17}

- Engagement
- Satisfaction
- Workload stress
- Medical malpractice
- Team collaboration



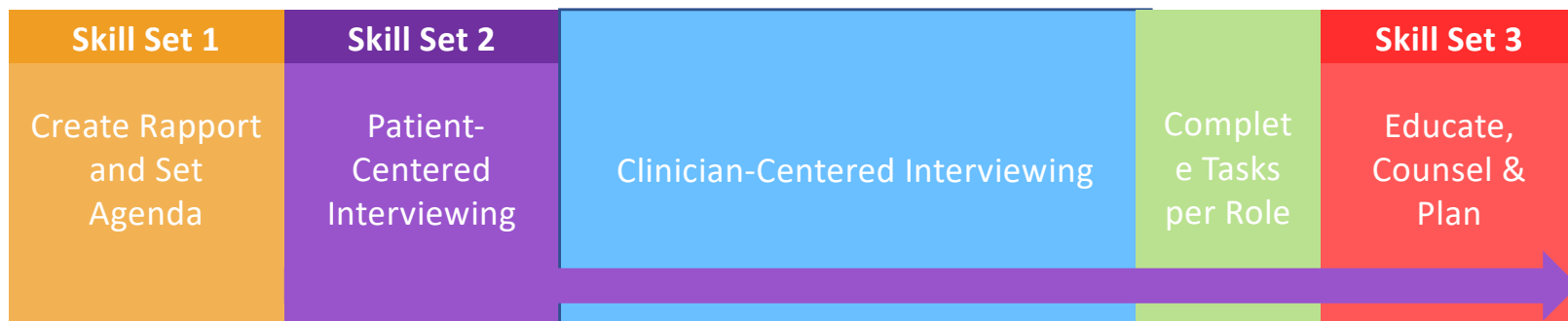
Better Outcomes for Institutions^{18 – 20}

- Patient experience scores (H/CG-CAHPS)
- Work environment
- Job satisfaction
- Patient loyalty
- Likelihood to recommend
- Enhanced safety & quality



See Ch 1: www.ACHonline.org/resources/Communication-RX

Relationship-Centered Communication Skills



Modified from Fortin AH 6th, et al. *Smith's Patient Centered Interviewing*. 4th ed. New York, McGraw Hill, 2019²³

QUESTION:

How do you recommend
starting a visit?

Raise hand &
(unmute to speak)

Skill Set 1: Beginning the Interview

Create Rapport Quickly to Build Respect & Trust

- Greet the patient
- Attend to comfort
- Small talk before big talk
- Set expectations for time and interruptions
- Minimize communication barriers (varies depending on context)



QUESTION:

How do you know that you've elicited all of the patient's concerns?

(chat box)

Skill Set 1: Beginning the Interview

Elicit List of All Concerns

- Acknowledge each item
- Exhaustive “What else?”



Elicit the List of All Items

- Obtain a list of all issues (symptoms, concerns, expectations, requests) the patient wants to discuss.

“... Let's start by getting a list of the topics that you would like to talk about today.”

- Acknowledge each item and ask, “What else?” until no further concerns BEFORE delving further into HPI



Skill Set 1: Beginning the Interview

Negotiate the Agenda

- Establish the patient's priorities
- State your clinical goals
- Negotiate a plan



Example

- Establish patient's priorities:
 - “Of the three items you named, which is most important to you today?”
- Add your list:
 - “I will definitely address your rash, and I’m glad you told me about the baby moving less. I also would like to tell you about your blood test results.”
- Negotiate the agenda:
 - “Would it be all right with you if we defer the question about your diet to the nutritionist?”

Skill Set 1: Beginning the Interview

Create Rapport Quickly

- Greet the patient
- Attend to comfort; small talk before big talk
- Set expectations for time and interruptions
- Minimize communication barriers

Elicit List of All Concerns

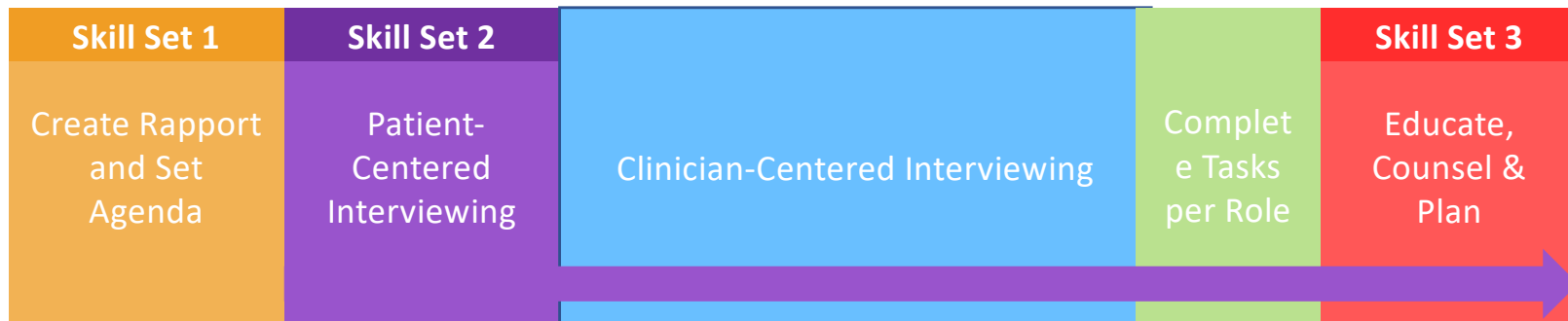
- Acknowledge each item
- Exhaustive “What else?”

Negotiate the Agenda

- Establish the patient’s priorities
- State your clinical goals
- Negotiate a plan

Skill Set 1: Demo

Relationship-Centered Communication Skills



Modified from Fortin AH 6th, et al. *Smith's Patient Centered Interviewing*. 4th ed. New York, McGraw Hill, 2019²³

Overview of Skill Set 2: Relationship-Centered History-Building

- Open the conversation (symptom story)
- Listen and Reflect
- Elicit the patient's perspective
- Respond with empathy

QUESTION:

(Respond via chat
box)

1. How quickly do you think we interrupt our patients?^{28, 30}

2. How long do you think they will speak if given the opportunity?^{29 – 30}

Open the Conversation

Begin with an open-ended request/question:

- “Tell me all about . . .”
- “Give me a summary of the problem from the time it started until now. . .”

Listen attentively and (mostly) silently

Resist the urge to interrupt or ask questions

When responding: “Let me make sure I understood you correctly.”



Explore the Personal Story

Impact

- “How has this affected your day-to-day life?”



Ideas

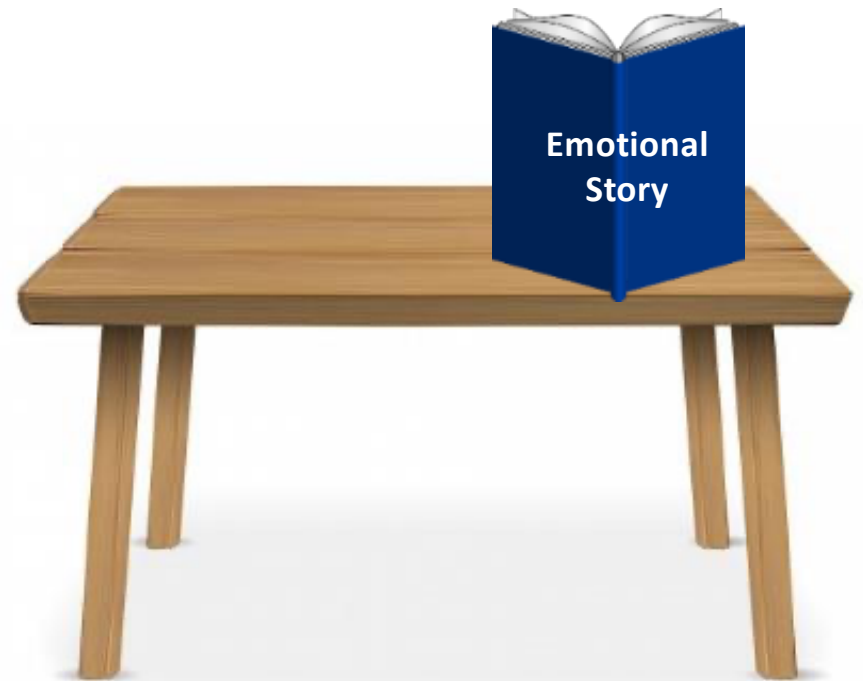
- “People often have ideas of what might be causing their symptoms. What do you think might be causing your chest pain?”

Expectations

- “What are you hoping to get out of today’s encounter?”

Name Emotions

- “How is this for you?”
- “How are you doing with all this, emotionally?”
- “You seem sad as you tell me this.”
- “I think if that happened to me, I might feel upset.”



Respond with **Empathy** (Nonverbal)

- Pause
- Touch/posture
- Facial expression
- Eye contact
- Tone of voice
- Space



Respond with Empathy^{33 – 35} :

Use at Least One PEARLS[©] Statement in Every Encounter

Partnership:

“Let’s work on this together.”

Emotion:

“You say you’re frustrated.”

Apology:

“I’m sorry that you waited longer than expected.”

Appreciation:

“I give you a lot of credit for getting through this as you have.”

Respect:

“You’re managing a lot during difficult times.”

Legitimization:

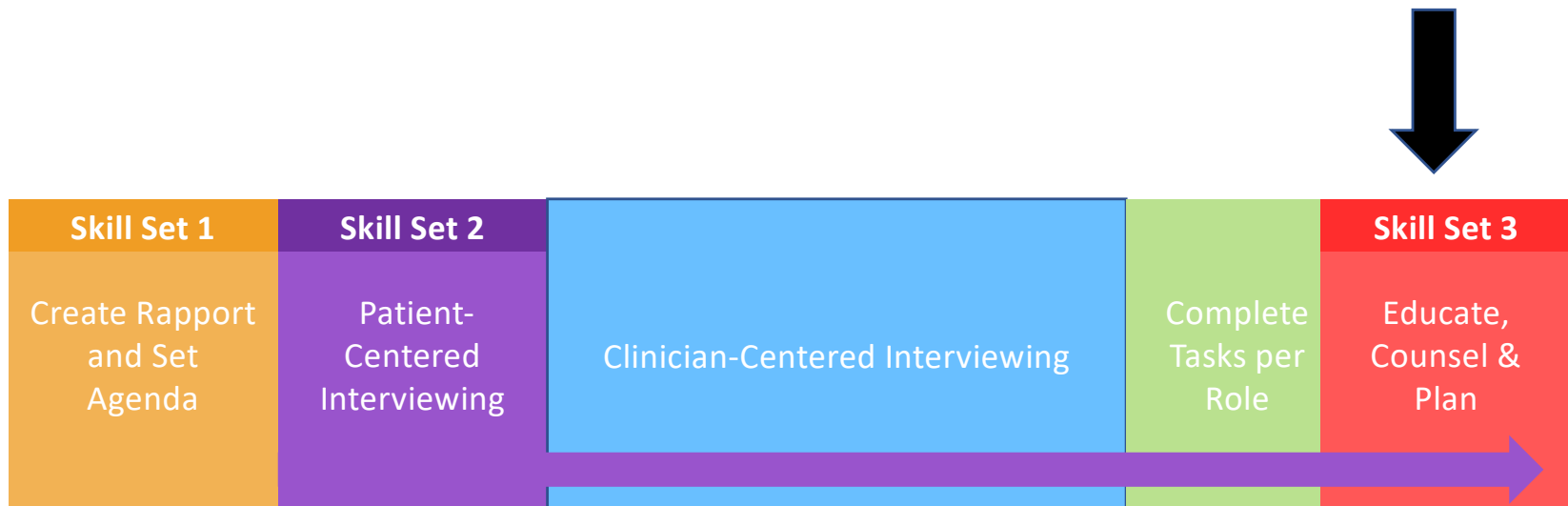
“Most people in your position would feel this same way.”

Support:

“I’m going to stick with you through this.”

Skill Set 2: Demo

Relationship-Centered Communication Skills



Modified from Fortin AH 6th, et al. *Smith's Patient Centered Interviewing*. 4th ed. New York, McGraw Hill, 2019²³

Overview of Skill Set 3: Ending the Encounter

- **Share information**
- Assess understanding
- Close the visit



A Typical Encounter:

“A urinary tract infection is an infection of the bladder and requires treatment with antibiotics. Be sure that you take all of the antibiotics as they are prescribed, three times a day for three days. It will be important to drink fluids. Call us if you develop a fever or aren’t able to take the antibiotics. On your way out, stop by the front desk to make your next appointment and then the pharmacy to pick up the prescription. Do you have any questions?”



QUESTION:

What do you
remember
from what I
just said?



“Chunk and Check”



Share Information ^{37 – 39} ART[©]

- Ask for patient's perspective
- Respond with empathy/affirmation (PEARLS)
- Tell your perspective
 - Use plain language



ART: Example

ASK: What have you heard about asthma?

Patient: *Oh no. My sister had asthma as a kid. It was awful – she had to go to the ER all the time with my parents to get treatment.*

RESPOND: That sounds stressful.

Patient: *It was!*

TELL: I don't think your condition is as serious as hers. Some people get asthma reactions when they have a virus or allergy, and quickly improve with an inhaler.

ASK: What is your experience with inhalers? ...

A Typical Encounter:

“[A urinary tract infection](#) is an infection of the bladder and requires treatment with antibiotics. Be sure that you take all of the [antibiotics](#) as they are prescribed, three times a day for three days. It will be important to drink fluids. Call us if you develop a [fever](#) or aren’t able to take the antibiotics. On your way out, stop by the front desk to make your next appointment and then the pharmacy to pick up the prescription. [Do you have any questions?](#)”



ART Loops

Turns monologue into dialogue

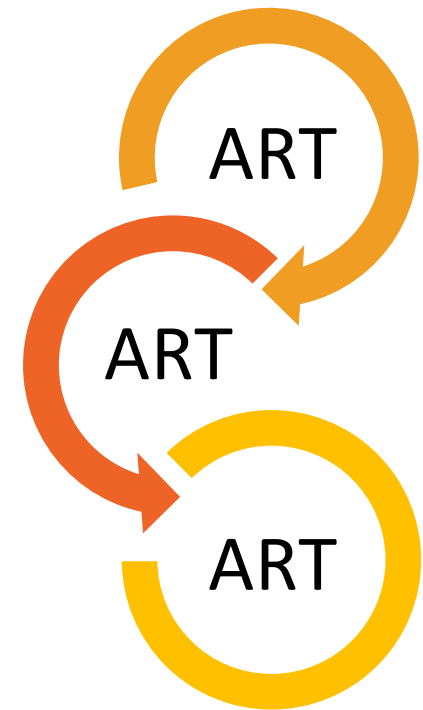
Can be used to elicit:

- Patient preferences
- Goals

You know your body. What do you think would be a healthy choice for you?

- Barriers

*What are things you know that you don't want right now
or would prevent you from being successful?"*



Ensures clarity and promotes self-efficacy

Skill Set 3: Ending the Interview

- Share Information
- **Assess Understanding**
- Close Visit



QUESTION:

unmute to speak)

Who here has heard of or
already uses Teach-back?

What can you tell us?

Teach-back Using ART

Ask the patient to summarize (Teach-back)

“Tell me in your own words what we’ve decided on?”

or

“When you speak with your family member/friend, what will you tell them we discussed?”

Respond

“Sounds like a good summary.”

Tell additional points as needed

Skill Set 3: Ending the Interview

- Share Information
- Assess Understanding
- **Close Visit**



Recap of Skill Set 3: Ending the Encounter

Share Information

- Use plain language
- ART Loops
 - **Ask > Respond > Tell**

Assess Understanding

- Teach-back using ART

Close the Visit

Skill Set 3: Demo