

Communication: The heART of Connection

2023 Adult Hospital Medicine Boot Camp Handout

Lindsey Kriz, DNP, FNP, AG-ACNP



Disclosures

- ▶ I have no relevant relationships with ineligible companies to disclose within the past 24 months.

Learning Objectives

Articulate

Articulate the importance of effective communication in patient-centered healthcare.

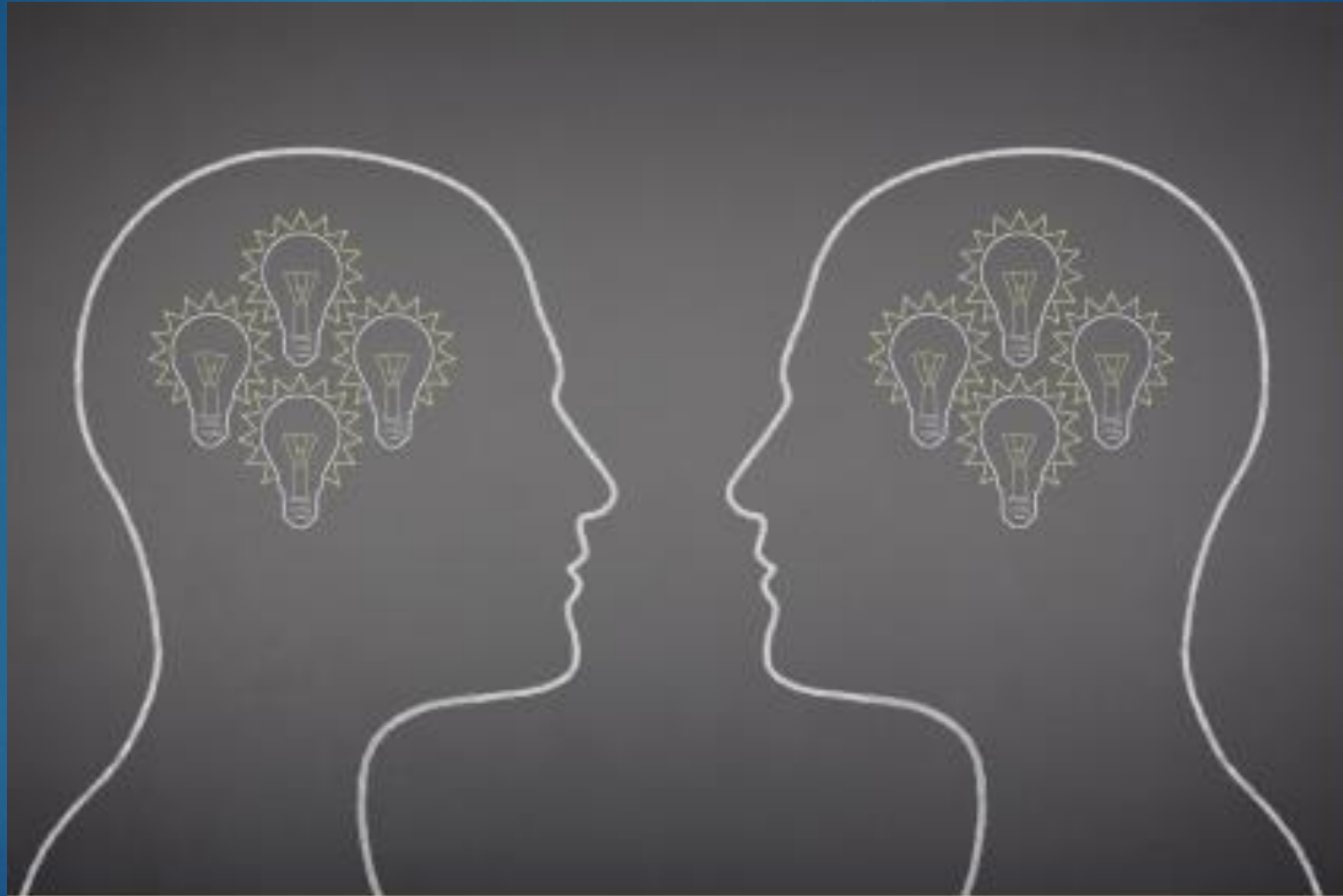
Utilize

Utilize PEARLS & ARTS loops to navigate difficult conversations with patients and colleagues.

Incorporate

Incorporate tips to improve patient care, handoffs, and teamwork.

Previous Training & Experience





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Communication Study

The importance of physician listening from the patients' perspective: Enhancing diagnosis, healing, and the doctor–patient relationship

Justin Jagosh^{a,*}, Joseph Donald Boudreau^b, Yvonne Steinert^a, Mary Ellen MacDonald^c, Lois Ingram^d

^a Department of Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, McGill University, Montreal, Canada

^b Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, McGill University, Montreal, Canada

^c Faculty of Dentistry, McGill University, Montreal, Canada

^d Ingram & Co., New York City, USA

Fig. 1. Patient perspectives on physician listening serving three main functions



What % of patient complaints are attributed to poor communication?

Patients and Providers disagree on the main problem what % of the time?

Providers

Patients





*Priority needs not met
Patient dissatisfaction
Missed the big picture
Door knob questions*

Relationship Success



Three Pillars of Support

- Active Listening
- Building a Partnership
 - PEARLS & ARTS Loop
- Negotiating Agenda

It is so easy to take our communication skills for granted.
We communicate every day of our lives.



Health related communication is different because it must support **quality**, **safety** and **value** for our patients.



Effective **listening** is essential for improving patient outcomes.

On average, how much time is a patient given to describe their presenting problem before a provider interrupts?

How long do you think patients would talk if allowed to speak without interruption?

Most less than 60seconds, Some up to 150 seconds

- ▶ We often worry that if uninterrupted, patients would never stop
- ▶ Those exceeding 150 seconds typically have one of the four D's in play:
Drugs, Depression, Dementia, Delirium

Skills for Active Listening

- Be present in the moment
- Be open minded and nonjudgmental
- Follow what the other person is saying
- Avoid redirection and interruption
- Come with curiosity and appreciation
- Use **reflective statements**



Reflective Statement Types & Purpose

Encourage

Acknowledge attention

Echo

Ensure accuracy

Rephrase

Check for understanding

Paraphrase

Summarize





Active Listening Activity

- 2min as the Speaker
- 1min Summary from the **Reflective Listener**
- Switch roles



PEARLS for Building Relationships

- ▶ Dynamic Tool for improving/building relationships
- ▶ Navigate difficult conversations (Grieving, mad, or sad)
- ▶ Incorporate skills during colleague conflict



Relationship Building PEARLS

Partnership

Empathy

Apology

Respect

Legitimization

Support

- ▶ **Partnership:** Emphasize that you and the patient are working together.
- ▶ **Empathy:** Work to understand the patient's why and reassure them that you understand their concerns and will work to address them.
- ▶ **Apology:** Say you are sorry for mistakes, delays, frustrations, etc.
- ▶ **Respect:** Acknowledge their effort, concerns, and fears.
- ▶ **Legitimization:** Normalize their concerns, experiences, & questions.
- ▶ **Support:** Offer support (follow up, resources etc) & question about barriers to care and compliance.

Enhancing Team Based Care

Improving Handoffs

- ▶ Hospital care has become more fragmented for various reasons (duty hour limits, blended teams of residents & APPS, shift work designs, moonlighters, visiting learners, etc)

All of this is increasing care transitions, during which critical information can be missed. [10]

- ▶ Many studies show handoffs are variable and represent a major gap in safe care [6, 8 & 9].
- ▶ Handoffs between providers, as well as, levels of care, also represent potential for information loss and communication [6, 8 & 9].
- ▶ Standardization is the key to success!



Enhancing Team Based Care

Improving Handoffs

Typical Steps — In order to improve performance, consider these four phases:

1. Pre-handoff – Sender organizes & updates information in preparation.

2. Arrival – Work stopped in order to conduct the handoff.
Ideally, time is protected for the handoff to occur.

3. Dialogue – An exchange takes place between the sender and the receiver.
Ideally, this is verbal but it may be written/electronic and includes the opportunity to ask clarifying questions.

4. Post-handoff – The receiver of patient information integrates the new information and assumes care of the patients. They begin Pre-handoff work.

[6, 8, 9 & 21]

Enhancing Team Based Care

- ▶ Standardization is the key to success!
- ▶ Your standardized process defines and structures the verbal and written handoff.
- ▶ One such process is the **IPASS** structure, which was associated with a 30% decrease in preventable adverse events.

Illness severity

Patient summary

Action list (To do/Follow up items vs NTD)

Situational awareness (FYIs and anticipatory guidance)

Synthesis by receiver (Opportunity for questions)

Conflict with Colleagues

#1 Focus on the Goal:

Finding an agreeable solution while preserving the working relationship

#2 How do we do that?

Setting/Environment for the discussion

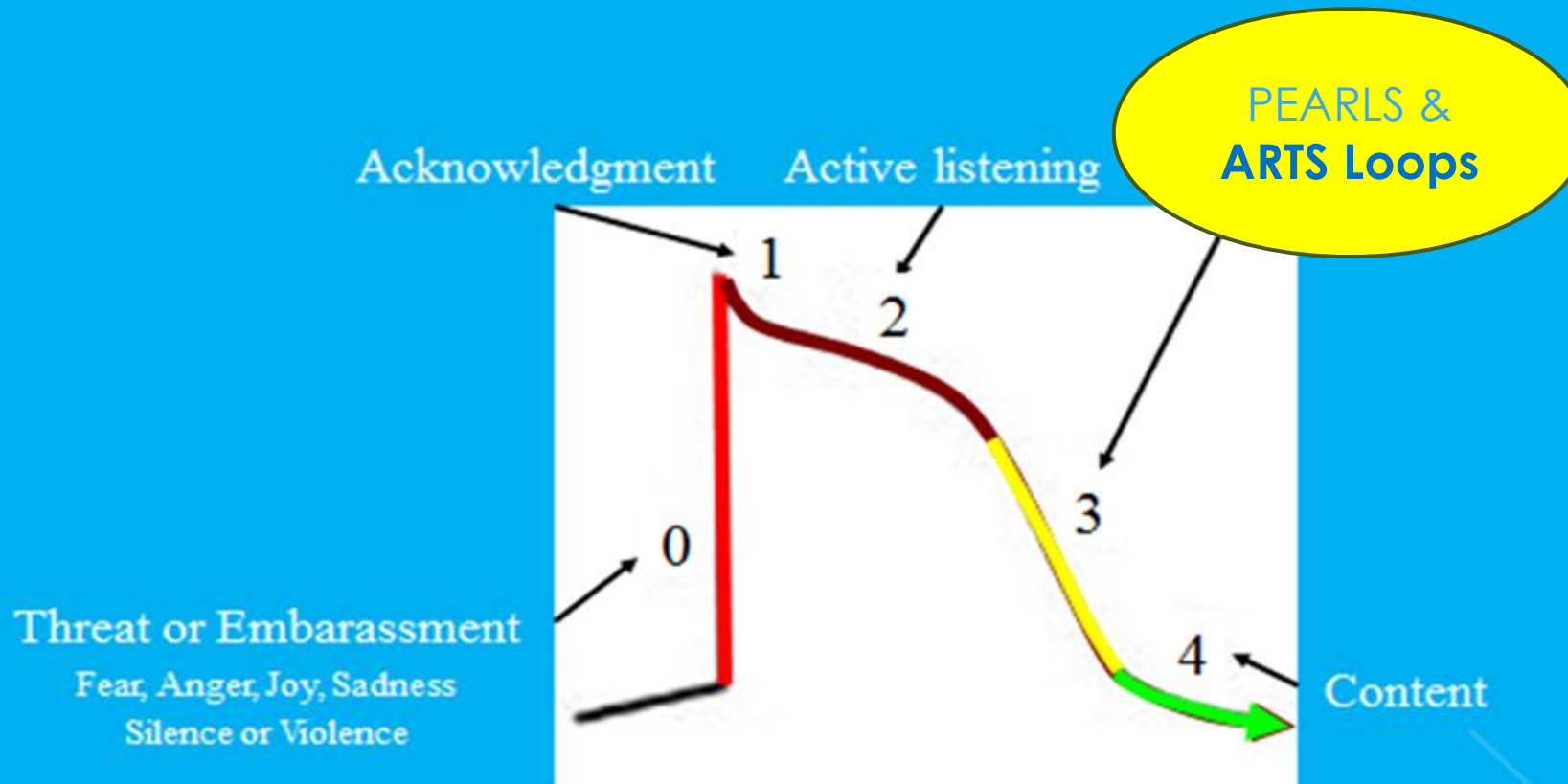
Use a tool to create dialogue to move to a solution

Acknowledge Emotion

Consider Perspective Taking; **Intent vs Impact**



Action Potential of Emotion



ARTS Loop

Ask what they understand and feelings

Respond with PEARLS

Tell/Teach information/perspectives

Seek Solutions together

Respond with PEARLS



Respond with PEARLS

Difficult Patient Encounters: Negotiating the Agenda

GOAL → Improve Appointment Effectiveness, Efficiency and Satisfaction for Patients & Providers, Managing Expectations

ACTION → Elicit the full list of concerns UP FRONT to:

- ▶ Get the big picture
- ▶ Prioritize with the patient
- ▶ Negotiate an agenda for the visit
- ▶ Budget time effectively

Negotiating the Agenda

- ▶ Elicit the Full List of Concerns
- ▶ Initiate & Continue with empathy

“What concerns do you have?”

Ask: “**What else?**”

“Something else?”

“What other concerns?”

- ▶ Exhaustively ask “**what else**” until the patient says
“nothing” or “that’s everything”



Negotiating the Agenda

- ▶ Summarize concerns expressed by the patient
- ▶ Ask patient's priorities
- ▶ Tell your priorities
- ▶ Negotiate to the time available
 - ▶ **“Could we agree to focus on your concerns A and B, and my concern C, then address your other concerns.....?”**



Immediate Practice Application

Use the 3 Pillars of Relationship Support skills with:
“Difficult” patients, Angry patients, Sad patients,
ALL patients and our colleagues!

- ▶ Active Listening
- ▶ Building a Partnership
PEARLS & ARTS Loop
- ▶ Negotiating Agenda



Triad Case Discussions

Think about a situation where you had a challenging dialogue with a patient, learner, or colleague that you wish had gone differently.

- ▶ *What happened?*
- ▶ *Who was involved?*
- ▶ *What were you saying to yourself?*
- ▶ *What feelings were you having?*

Triad Case Discussions

Discussion Roles & Guidelines

Case Presenter, Recipient, Observer

Speak for yourself & be mindful of other perspectives

Confidentiality: What's shared here, stays here

Engaged attention & Active Participation

Receptive to learning from each other

Feedback: Focus on strengths; non-judgmental (avoiding "You should...")

Trust is earned and takes time

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Thank you

▶ Questions?

kriz.lindsey@mayo.edu

