

Take Home Points

1. Communication Insights

Communication Insight #1: Honor the protagonist. Understand that each person has their own complex story, with twists and turns, goals, and obstacles. Sometimes the best thing we can do is simply to honor the protagonist by listening closely to their story.

Communication Insight #2: In each interaction, consider the PACE: Purpose, Audience, Context, Emotions.

Communication Insight #3: The caretaker's job is to learn about the ill person's story, to treat them as the main character, and to communicate in a way that helps them on their journey, rather than creating new obstacles or acting as another antagonist.

Communication Insight #4: Every patient encounter is a new opportunity to rewrite the story. Today is a draft for tomorrow.

2. Communication Pearls and Best Practices

Goal	Method	Start with..
Avoid misunderstanding	Stop the Scene	I think I may have made a mistake when I said X. What I meant was Y.
Effective and compassionate communication	PACE	My purpose for discussing this news with you know is to ensure that you have the information you need to decide what's best for your health. No matter what you choose, we are here to support you. Is this a good time? Is there anyone I can call to make sure you have someone here to support you?
Check for understanding	Ask Tell Ask	What have your other doctors been telling you about your loved one's condition since the last time we spoke? Respond with no more than 3 pieces of information, then...

		Does that make sense? How was my explanation?
Learn about the patient's background (not just medical history) and learn more about the context of who they are, where they're from, etc.	Honor the Protagonist	I'd like to learn more about you. What does a good day look like for you?
Provide emotional support	Name the emotion Understand the emotion Respect (praise) the patient Support the patient Explore the emotion (Back, et al. 2009)	It's okay to be sad. I'd also be frustrated in this situation...
Demonstrate openness through body language	Commit to Sit (Lidgett, 2016)	Make eye contact Match level of concern Same physical level
Demonstrate concern and attention	Active Listening	Summarize and paraphrase Reflect back what you heard
Clarify next steps	Closing the Loop	Summarize conversation, ask for reflection, describe next steps and give timeline for completion

3. References and Resources

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