



Sex Positivity

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Learning Objectives

By participating in this educational session, attendees will:

1. Describe how the spirit of motivational interviewing and cultural humility help healthcare professionals talk with patients about sexual health.
2. Identify strategies that create a safe and culturally relevant space for talking about sex during a health care visit.
3. Examine conscious and unconscious biases that may limit sexual history taking with patients.
4. Practice a variety of ways to routinely bring up sexual health and safe sex issues with our patients.



Learning is Fun!

- Please respect everyone's opinions and preferences.
- If you become uncomfortable please be open to learning and allow the space to teach you.
- Parking lot



Sexual Health Ice Breaker for Healthcare Professionals

1) On the piece of paper you have been given write down a word to fill in the blank in the following sentence:

The hardest thing about going to a fast food restaurant is _____.



Mentimeter Question

My primary healthcare provider asks me about my sexual health concerns

- a. At every visit
- b. Once a year
- c. Only when I am pregnant
- d. Only when I ask
- e. They never ask



Mentimeter Question

On a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being never and 10 being always, how often do you ask your patients questions about their sexual health?



Who, What, Where, When, Why?

- Nearly 20 million new STDs occur every year in the United States, half among young people ages 15 to 24.
- National and regional data show that nearly half of sexually active high school and college students are not using condoms.



Who, What, Where, When, Why?

- There was a 20% rise in STD diagnoses among people age 45 and older in 2016
- Of the 39,782 new HIV diagnoses in the United States in 2016, 17% (6,812) were in people aged 50 and older.
- In 2016, 35% of people aged 50 and older already had late stage infection (AIDS) when they received an HIV diagnosis.



Sexual Health: So is Sex Healthy? Healthy Eight (8)

1. Boosts the immune system
2. Good exercise: moderate exercise, burning about 150 calories per hour
3. Lowers blood pressure
4. Appears to lessen the risk of heart attacks



Sexual Healing?



Sexual Healing
Marvin Gaye
Midnight Love



U-tube audio file accessed on 3/18/2019 at <https://youtu.be/9LxPoJ4QoSik>

Sexual Healing: Yes, Sex is Healthy!

5. May help to prevent prostate cancer
6. Promotes relaxation by reducing stress
7. Helps to reduce pain: distraction, releases endorphins
8. It may prolong life (a marker for better overall health)



Sexual Health: Having Sensitive Conversations About Sex

AETC All Georgia & Alabama
Southeast Learning Center Program

Taking a Sexual History

- Make it a routine part of each visit
- Create a safe environment
- Establish rapport
- Discuss confidentiality
- The Five “P”s
 - Partners
 - Practices
 - Protection from STDs
 - Past history of STDs
 - Prevention of pregnancy

AETC All Georgia & Alabama
Southeast Learning Center Program
CDC.gov. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment/sexualhistory.pdf>

Mentimeter Question

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not difficult and 10 being extremely difficult, how difficult is it for you to talk about sex with your patients?

AETC All Georgia & Alabama
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Interesting Facts About Adolescents and Sexual Health History Taking

In a recent study that recorded conversations between physicians and adolescents during annual health maintenance visits, the authors found that:

- Providers spent 36 seconds talking about sex, during a visit that averaged 22 minutes
- Approximately 1/3 of adolescent patient/doctor interactions included no mention of sex or sexual health

 Montaldo NJ. Implementing the guidelines for adolescent preventive services. *Am Physician*. 1998;57-2:181-2:190.

Sexual Health is a Health Issue

- Sexual health is complex and diverse and applies to patients of all ages, whether they're sexually active or not.
- Although people may be sexually active, they may not be talking to their sexual partners about the sex they are having.



The hardest thing about going to a fast food restaurant is _____.

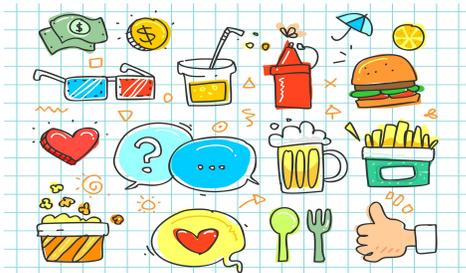


 Image accessed at Pixabay on 3/19/2019
<https://pixabay.com/illustrations/colorful-doodle-soda-cartoon-set-3042581/>

Rid Ourselves of Old Assumptions

- Patients on **each end of the age spectrum** may be **getting the least amount of attention when it comes to talking about sex with their doctor**. Mainstream American culture ignores or negatively interprets the sexuality of the very young and the very and people with health problems or disabilities
- In many circumstances, the **greatest discomfort** for medical professionals in taking a sexual history is with patients of the **opposite gender**, young people **under the age of 18** and **adults older than 65 years**.



Sex Talk

How to break the ice

- Ask about other aspects of quality of life, such as stress, fatigue, ability to accomplish tasks of daily living, relationships, and social support.
- Preface a first question by saying, "One aspect of your quality of life is your sex life."
- Normalize sex and sexual behaviors



Getting Comfortable: Talking About Sex and Using "Sex" Words

- How does romance and/or sexual relationships fit into your life?
- Since sexual health is very important to overall health, I ask all patients about their sexual health. Before I begin, do you have any questions or sexual concerns you would like to discuss?
- Many older adults remain sexually active. In what ways, if any, has sex changed for you?



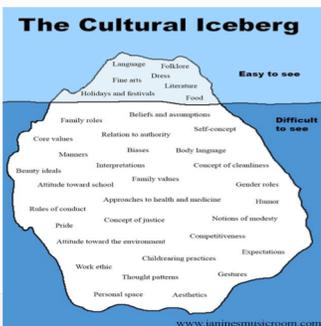
“...the ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the [person].”

Cultural Humility

Hook, J. N. et al (2013). Cultural humility: Measuring openness to culturally diverse clients. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 60, 353-366.



Culture: There is a lot going on!



Cultural Care Requires Knowledge About the Terms Sex & Gender

Sex vs Gender What's the difference?

- Classification: male or female
- Feminine vs masculine continua
- Gender (social) is not interchangeable with sex (biological)



Exercising Our Cultural Humility Muscles

Practice: Gender Neut (Ze and They) 

What are your preferred gender pronouns?

- **Ze (they)** talked with me for an hour.
- I called **hir (them)** yesterday to confirm the appointment.



Biases Affects Decision-Making

- **Perception** how we see people and perceive reality
- **Attitude** how we react towards people
- **Behaviors** how receptive/friendly we are
- **Attention** those aspects of a person we pay most attention to
- **Listening Skills** how much we actively listen to what different people say
- **Micro-affirmations** how much or how little we comfort certain people in certain situations.



The Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

- **Compassion** 
- **Acceptance** 
- **Partnership** 
- **Evocation** 



"CAPE" is the Spirit of MI

New Paradigm: Partnering with Patients

Using MI in Talking About Sex

GOAL: ENGAGE Patient in talking about sexual health and concerns they may have

- **R**- Resist the righting reflex
- **U**- Understand your client's motivation
- **L**- Listen to your client
- **E**- Empower your client

AETC Southeast logo and citation: Martino, S., Ball, S. A., Nich, C., Canning-Ball, M., Rounsaville, B. J., & Carroll, K. M. (2011). Teaching Community Program Clinicians Motivational Interviewing Using Expert and Train-the-Trainer Strategies. *Addiction (Abingdon, England)*, 106(2), 428-441. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2010.03135.x>

Proactive Sexual Health History

#1 Create a safe and sensitive environment

- What concerns or questions do you have about your sexual health? **Open**
- What concerns or questions do you have about the sexual health of your partner(s)? **Open**



Proactive Sexual Health History

- Have you been sexually active with anyone in the past six months? **Closed: Yes or No**

If YES: (1) With men, women, or both?
 (2) What sexual concerns do you or your partner(s) have?

If NO: (1) Have you ever been sexually involved with anyone? **No**
 (2) If you were to be sexually active, do you imagine it would be with men, women, or both?



Proactive Sexual Health History

- How do you protect yourself from HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases? **Open**
- Have you been tested for HIV? **Open**
 Would you like to be? **Closed Yes or No**
- When was the last time you were tested for HIV? **Open**
 We can include an HIV test with your other routine blood work today. How does that sound to you? **Open**



Proactive Sexual Health History

- What do you or your partner(s) do to prevent pregnancy? Getting STIs, including HIV? **Open**
Are you satisfied with with the method(s)? **Closed Yes or No**
- Have you ever been immunized against hepatitis? **Closed Yes or No**
Would you like to be? **Closed Yes or No**
- Have you ever been tested or Hepatitis C? **Closed Yes or No**



Trauma to Recovery

- Trauma is one of the most avoided, ignored, belittled, denied, misunderstood and untreated cause of suffering
- Efforts to address trauma should be a priority in HIV prevention and care
- Screening and referrals for recent and past trauma should be a core component of HIV treatment

The focus of recovery is not "What's wrong with you?" but rather, "What happened to you?"



Machtinger EL et al. (2012) Psychological trauma and PTSD in HIV-positive women: A Meta-analysis, *AIDS Behav.* Online edition, DOI 10.1007/s10461-011-0127-2

Interpersonal Violence and Trauma

Trauma has a pervasive impact on an individual's mental health, particularly if an individual lives in a community impacted by trauma.

- Black and Latino MSM are exposed to disproportionate rates of trauma ranging from verbal harassment to physical violence, including sexual assault
- In some cultures, interpersonal violence is accepted
- **Interpersonal violence happens to people of all ages and cultural socioeconomic backgrounds**



Neigh, GN et al (2016) PTSD co-morbid with HIV: Separate but equal, or two parts of a whole? *Neurobiology of Disease*, August 2016, Vol 92:116-123

IPV and Trauma-Informed Care Interventions

Positive Messages from Healthcare Professionals

- Validate the patient’s feelings and express support for their situation
- Discuss safety options and planning
- Reassure patients that they have done nothing wrong
- If the patient is in immediate danger, suggest they call the local domestic violence center or offer to call for them



http://www.ncdsv.org/images/ODVN_Trauma-and-You_May-2013.pdf

Practical Interventions in Providing Trauma Informed-Care

Safety First

- Ask if the client wishes to have the clinic room door “open” or “closed” while waiting for the provider
- Ask permission before touching a patient whether the touch is an empathic hug or pat on the shoulder or a physical examination procedure



Healing Centered Engagement (HCE)

- **Supports a cultural, spiritual and civic response to trauma that is about shared experience and sense of belonging which promotes collective healing and social support**
- Addresses the individual AND the **way trauma and healing are experienced collectively** by a family, school, neighborhood or community



Dr. Shawn Ginwright, Associate Professor of Education and African American Studies at San Francisco State University

Mentimeter Question

On a scale of 1-10 with 1 being comfortable and 10 being highly uncomfortable, how comfortable are you in talking about anal sex with your patients?



Mentimeter Question

What would help you become more comfortable in taking about sexual health with your patients?



Talking About Sexual Activities

- **Offer acceptance**
- Insure **safety and confidentiality**
- **Learn** how individuals view sex, intimate relationships and prevention
- **Encourage Conversation:** Sometimes we are so anxious to share our wisdom or our opinion that we don't take the time to listen
- **Ask Open Ended Questions:** about feelings, friends, and activities and listen to what they have to say.



Getting More Comfortable Talking About Sex and Sexual Activities

- “If you don’t have a condom, is a bread bag OK?” (No.)
- “Can you get pregnant from anal sex?” (No, but you can get an STI.)
- “Which STDs are incurable?” (Some STDs beginning with letter H: HIV, herpes, and hepatitis B.)



Getting Comfortable Talking About Sex

What do you know about the following topics/issues?*

- mutual masturbation,
- correct condom use
- fact that you can get syphilis from oral sex if the infected partner has a lesion on his or her genitals

* Can you comfortably talk about these topics with your mother, father, 13-year-old sister or brother, 85-year old grandfather, or person who is LGBTQ and homeless?



Talking About STIs and Prevention

- **Listen actively:** Knowing that we are really listening is the most important thing we can do to help
- **Be Honest and Open:** Care about what the individual is going through as they face and make decisions about sex and intimate relationships
- **Be Positive and Nonjudgmental:** talking sex, relationships and drugs builds bridges rather than walls
- **Look for teachable moments,** but ask permission first



Open-Ended Questions

- Who do you party with that might benefit from an STD test?
- Where do you hang out?
- How does safe sex fit into your life?
- What influences your decision to have oral sex, anal sex and/or vaginal sex with someone?
- When was the last time you were incarcerated? (Incarcerated people are 10 times more likely to come out of prison with an HIV-positive status)
- When was the last time you used a condom?



Tag Lines

Examples

- Red means STOP
- Wrap it up.
- Just say no.



<https://www.cdc.gov/std/training/clinicalslides/slides-d1.htm>

Talking about STDs and Sexual Health



Mentimeter Question

On a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being unlikely and 10 being very likely, how likely are you to routinely ask your patients questions about their sexual health?



Mentimeter Question

The next time you meet with a patient, what will you do differently when you talk with them about their sexual health?



Resources

Advocacy and Resources for LGBT Elders
<https://www.sageusa.org/>

Center for Disease Control (CDC)
<https://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/about.htm>

Gender Spectrum
<https://www.genderspectrum.org/resources/>

Ginwright, Shawn (2016). *Hope and Healing in Urban Education: How Activists are Reclaiming Matters of the Heart*, New York: Taylor and Francis

Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality (GLMA)
<http://www.glma.org/>

National Institute on Aging
<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/sexuality-later-life>

Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)
<http://www.siecus.org/>



Question, Comments and
"Aha Moments"



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