

Mind Body Buffet

Improving doctor patient communication

A cookbook for medical students and doctors

BACKGROUND

There are many ways we human beings communicate and influence each other through communication, and as we know this influence is crucial in the medical setting. We believe that awareness to self and the other are key components for health care providers in improving their communication with patients.

This booklet is organized like a buffet: it presents a variety of ways to improve communication, and the readers are free to choose what is relevant for them or what touches and inspires them for being more open, aware and present with their colleagues or patient.

The content of this buffet includes:

- Improving communication by reading and reflecting upon poems
- Improving communication and self-awareness by writing a diary of daily life experiences (reflective diary)
- Practicing Autogenic training
- Improving communication via art
- Improving communication using "Pacing and leading" approach.

The Mind Body Buffet

Improving
doctor patient
communication

A cookbook for medical students and doctors by...

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INTRODUCTION

We - a group of six Israeli and German medical students and three mentors - present in this little booklet some ideas and instructions for you to improve your way of doctor patient communication. As part of a cooperation between Bnei Zion Medical Center, Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin, financed by the Deutsch-Isarealisches Zukunftsforum and under the direction of Dr. Elad Schiff, we have been lucky to deepen our knowledge about Integrative Medicine and use it to find ways for a better doctor patient communication. Our small working group focussed especially on Mind-Body Medicine (MBM).

We think there are many ways of communication and one can only improve it by deeper engagement and discussion. During our work we realized that there is not one right way or one technique to learn because everyone - every patient, every doctor - has a different background and different needs. What helped us the most, was for every one of us to find an activity that leads to more self-awareness and conscious communication. We used the possibilities of Integrative Medicine and in this little booklet, we want to show you diverse mixture of ideas and instructions. Our aim is to give you a little inspiration and maybe you find your own personal way to a more conscious communication according to the needs of your patients.

We hope you will enjoy and find our poems, diaries, personal experiences and instructions useful.

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION BY READING AND REFLECTING UPON POEMS

Sometimes I have a certain feelings and it is hard to express it. It is even harder to explain it to others or sometimes to write it down. By reading and writing poems, I can go into these feelings and find them in the beauty of words and rhymes. With only a few words, a poem leaves a lot of space to dream and drift into a world of feelings and colours. I believe that meditating -upon a poem and carefully reading it might help to reflect on your own feelings. Here is one of my favorite poems that expresses to me silence and acceptance of the things that are prevailing in my life.

Wild Geese

You do not have to be good.

You do not have to walk on your knees

For a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.

You only have to let the soft animal of your body

love what it loves.

Tell me about your despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.

Meanwhile the world goes on.

Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain

are moving across the landscapes,

over the prairies and the deep trees,

the mountains and the rivers.

Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,

are heading home again.

Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,

the world offers itself to your imagination,

calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting -

-
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.

Mary Olive

**What are Your favorite poems? ... You can
write them down here**

Maybe you are inspired by poems sometimes or you want to write down your own poem here.

DIARY/ DAILY LIFE EXPERIENCES

When we had a class on the ward I was supposed to examine a young patient with Crohn's disease. He was very unfriendly, answered my questions just briefly and avoided looking at me. I could have continued my standard examination and be satisfied with the little information he was willing to give me. But instead I said "I feel that you are currently not in the mood for this conversation and that there is something bothering you. I understand that it is exhausting when students come all the time and want to do an examination. What is your problem right now and how can I maybe help you with it? Or should we rather do this at a different time?" And all of a sudden, he became a different man, looked at me and was really nice. He said that it was not about me but that he came to the hospital yesterday for a routine examination and thought he would be able to go home afterwards. But then the doctors found that his blood tests were abnormal and wanted him to stay in the hospital. He had not planned that and it did not suit his plans because he had left his dog alone at home and furthermore it was his girlfriend's birthday. This really bothered him but nobody regarded him as a person with a private life, just as a patient with abnormal blood parameters that had to be treated. When he felt that he was treated (seen) by me as a person for his problems, that already helped him a lot. People are rarely in a bad mood just because they have fun being grumpy but mostly there is a reason. And if you just take the time to listen and give them the opportunity to tell you their concerns, that can help tremendously!

(Medical student)

Where do you see the change in this story ?

Do you know what communication technique is used in this example in order to be more understanding and empathic in the doctor-patient interaction?

Last weekend, I went to a course in anthroposophic medicine. The subject was "mistletoe therapy and cancer" .We were looking at numerous pictures of mistletoes and Christmas roses, trying to understand why these are used in cancer therapy. We also saw a patient and talked about her constitution and the impressive way she was dealing with her recurring illness.

What I really like about anthroposophic medicine is the multidimensional nature of suggestions they provide for the patients, by trying to feel and find out what would help them best by dealing with their individual illness. Doctors can for example advise a patient to paint, in order to practice feeling in different shapes. Other art therapies are music therapy, therapeutic modeling and eurythmy.

In the beginning I was very enriched by all the different aspects the doctors pointed out but the later it got the more tired I felt. And I found out that the most sustainable things I learned have been the practical things. We had a chance to try music therapy and eurythmy and in the end there where a lot of doctors locked in a darkened room, looking at pictures of plants, trying to see connections between humans and plants, animals, stars and the world.

When I was too tired to continue listening I left and drove to a horse stable. I used to help a woman with her old horse and go for ride once in a week. This time, Aldis, the horse, was in a bad and fatigued mood and I let her go in her own speed. We went through forests and fields and I had one hour time to just look around and feel the stunning nature. I enjoyed the beauty of nature, especially since this is my favorite season, when everything is colorful and rich. I saw birds, high in the air and suddenly red fungi appeared on the ground. Then there was a coniferous forest and later we crossed a little stream. Every problem I had in my mind seemed to decline during this ride and I thought about all the things I can learn from this old horse I was riding on. She knows how far she can go and always finds the way back home. When there is a difficulty like a fallen over tree, I have to carefully lead her through the labyrinth, she is listening to all my advices, because she has a certain feeling for the importance of the situation.

I could say she makes me mindful by pulling all my attention to the present moment. Nothing else is more important than our cooperation and our interplay with the surrounding. Suddenly I felt this connection to the whole world the doctors in the dark room where talking about, but maybe in a much more intense and deeper way.

YOGA DIARY -1-

Friday night. People call, ask what you are doing, ask if you want to go out, everybody has plans. I felt urged to do something, and was about to go somewhere, but then I stopped for a minute and listened to myself. I had had a really stressful week, lots of work and little time for myself and for my good friends. Little time to listen. I didn't really feel like going out. Following that feeling I packed my yoga mat and went, instead of a bar, to my yoga studio.

The teacher that led the yoga class that evening was new. She led a meditation in the beginning where she explained about the frequencies of life. There are the long-wave frequencies like a moon cycle, like the seasons of the year, like different episodes in our life. And there are the short-wave frequencies like the frequency of light pulsating through space, or the frequency of our heartbeat. Both long-wave and short-wave frequencies we usually are not aware of, we're seldom able to see the big picture with the low frequencies, and the high frequencies are often too fast to be noticed by our senses. But there are also the medium-long waves that guide our lives, like the breath. The breath is the frequency of life, it is always there and if we manage to become aware of it, to notice its slightly changing speed and nature in different situations, we start to connect more to the present. Then we can start to pay attention to the lower and the higher frequencies, starting by trying to notice them and finally integrate them all into our attention. This will make us more mindful, more connected, more present in the moment.

She really touched me with this allegory. When I came home from that class, I felt that I listened to myself again and that I would now be able to also listen to my friends.

Marlen

Write here your reflections about your experiences?...

When did (or do) you discover a truth?...

YOGA DIARY -2-

As we talked about Integrative medicine and how it may help us to improve communication - I subsequently thought of how Yoga improved my way to see things in life and also communicate.

What I wrote down as „Yoga Diary“ is the most important contents that were transported in my yoga classes. These words helped me and made me to reflect my attitude - maybe it will also helps you!

Change of attitude

« **Thank you for taking the time to be here. Thank yourself for being here.** »

A beautiful beginning of the yoga class. When do we thank ourselves for anything? Very often, we depend on others to say thank you to us. But as I feel grateful for the decision to be here in this body and be able to practice yoga, I feel very comfortable.

« **Listen!** », « Don't look at anybody else », they say. « This is all about you ».

« Concentrate. » I am trying to follow without watching those in front and next to me. I am trying to listen instead of focusing on others. I can focus much better on myself that way. In the beginning it is very hard to listen carefully. But you learn to do it better every lesson.

« **You are here and it is all about you and your intention** » I can take the time for myself. I have the right to take the time for myself. There is no « you have to ».

« **You are a loving person** » Yes, I want to be and I can say I am. Saying that I am, is the first part of doing it.

« **Only continue as long as you can breathe. Otherwise go one step back** » In any situation of my life, if I cannot breath anymore, I learn that I can take the time to go one step back and think again about it before I do something.

« **Don't forget to breathe** ». Of course, we cannot forget breathing but we can forget or never have learnt to do it in a conscious way.

« **Don't judge yourself. Don't always judge situations and people** »

A hard exercise and an aim that one may never achieve - but worth it. And it changed my life and relations. (Maybe we can start by paying attention to our judgements and being aware of them. What happens then?)

« **And now offer a big smile to your self** ». A very warm feeling that you can influence your own mood like that and directly feel better. Everything is easier with a big smile.

« **I want you to contribute this yoga class to a person in your life that you consider very hard to love** » ... « **Try to think about that person and free yourself from all the bad feelings. Maybe someone harmed you, but the bad feelings you keep harm yourself. Try to do what you are doing for this person** ». While forgetting the bad things you may forgive and feel a lot lighter.

Yoga Sutra

Pratyahara. What does that mean to me? One exotic word of the Sanskrit (combination of two words: prati - the prefix प्रति-, "against" or "contra") and āhāra (आहार, "bring near, fetch".) With his soft voice, the yoga teacher says a few words about the yoga sutra by Patanjali. Pratyahara - « Withdrawal of senses ». He gives us an idea. As we are lying in the child pose, we imagine that we are turtles. And we can escape in our turtle shell. We can recover. And we get new strength.

Communication through physical activity

One thing that I learned through my Yoga class, was that through the physical and mental activity you communicate with yourself. You show yourself that this body is worth taking time. And you can learn that by doing something for your own well-being you can start being better for others.

**Kindly say these words quietly to yourself
and feel what happens to you? ...**

INSTRUCTIONS

Autogenic Training

Autogenic Training is a self-hypnotic technique that is used for the treatment of depression, anxiety, psychosomatic disorders and asthma. It was invented by the German psychiatrist Johannes Heinrich Schulz in 1932. By asking his patients, he found that within a hypnotic state the feelings of a person are changing as well. The majority of hypnotized people experienced the feeling of heaviness and warmth in their body and the idea of Dr. Schulz was to repeat the visualizations of relaxation in a auto suggestive way, by leading oneself into a hypnotized state through quietly repeating the feelings one should develop by relaxing.

This technique is independent from a therapist as soon as the patient has learned it; and is also free from any religious or spiritual background.

Autogenic training consists of six basic exercises that should be repeated often by removing any environmental distraction. The autosuggestions are easy to remember and will help the one to concentrate on inner sensations. Whenever a new step is learned one should repeat first the already learned exercises and expand the practice like this.

After learning the six basic exercises, it is possible to add a personal modification in form of a phrase someone wants to internalize.

Find a comfortable position. Rest your hands in your lap. Take a few slow even breaths into your stomach.

Quietly say to yourself,
"I am completely calm."

Focus attention on your arms. Quietly and slowly repeat to yourself six times,
"My arms are very heavy."

Then quietly say to yourself,
"I am completely calm."

Refocus attention on your arms. Quietly and slowly repeat to yourself six times,
"My arms are very warm."

Then quietly say to yourself,
"I am completely calm."

Focus attention on your legs. Quietly and slowly repeat to yourself six times,

"My legs are very heavy."

Then quietly say to yourself,
"I am completely calm."

Refocus attention on your legs. Quietly and slowly repeat to yourself six times,
"My legs are very warm."

Then quietly say to yourself,
"I am completely calm."

Quietly and slowly repeat to yourself six times,
"My heartbeat is calm and regular."

Then quietly say to yourself,
"I am completely calm."

Quietly and slowly repeat to yourself six times,
"My breathing is calm and regular."

Then quietly say to yourself,
"I am completely calm."

Quietly and slowly repeat to yourself six times,
"My abdomen is warm."

Then quietly say to yourself,
"I am completely calm."

Quietly and slowly repeat to yourself six times,
"My forehead is pleasantly cool."

Then quietly say to yourself,
"I am completely calm."

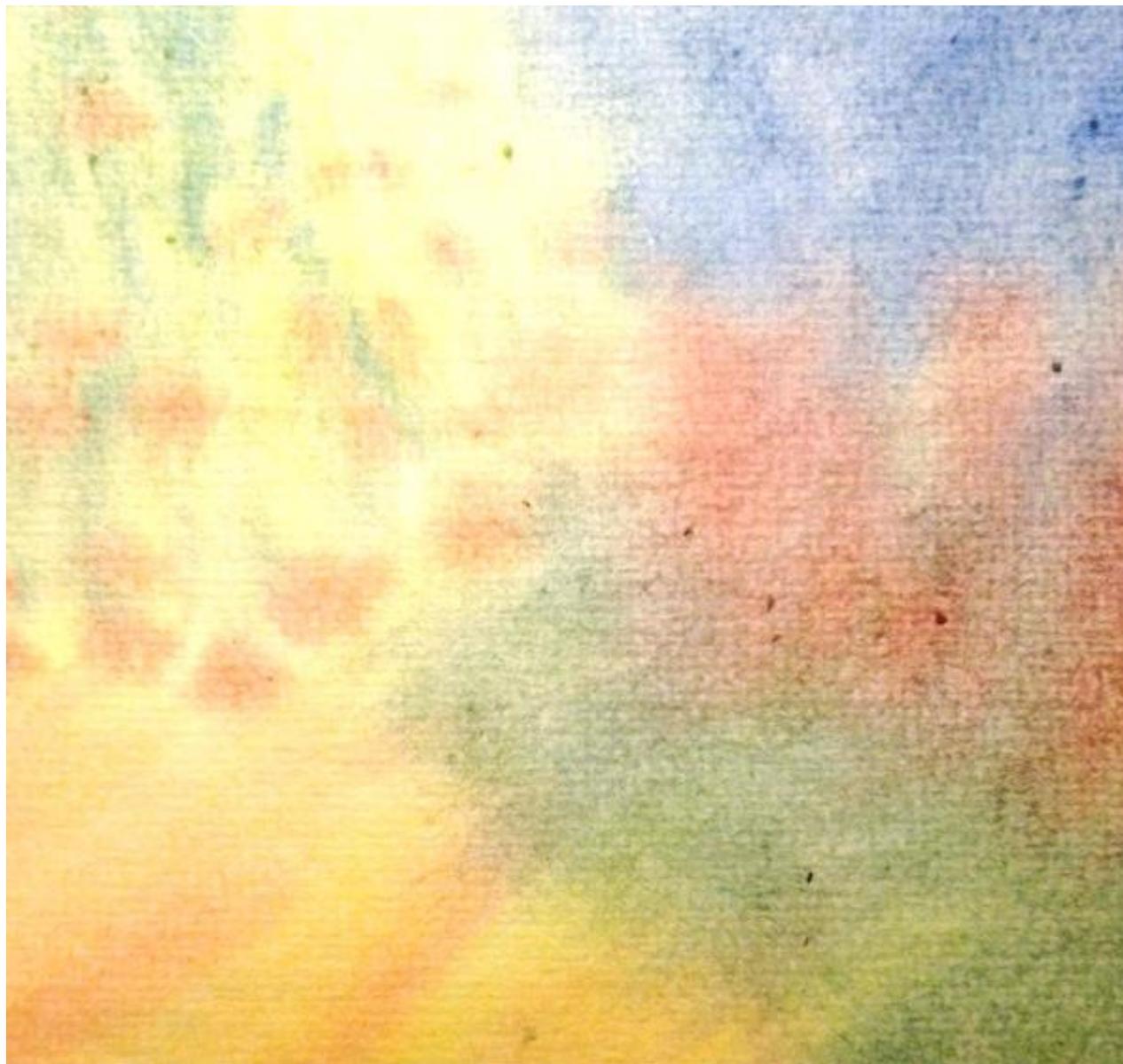
Enjoy the feeling of relaxation, warmth and heaviness. When you are ready, open your eyes.

COMMUNICATION THROUGH ART

We painted pictures and reflected about what we could see in them. We think that by doing a painting you can reflect on your feelings and by talking about what you painted some inner processes and conflicts can come to the surface and after talking about what becomes visible with art you have an opportunity to practice some things that are difficult for you. If you feel depressed and like painting only black pictures, you could gain access to more happiness and your feelings by painting more colorful pictures.

Using a way to communicate, other than talking, some things that we try to hide in our verbal expression can be seen. We are used to express ourselves by talking about problems...but this makes us hide some aspects we do not want to show, and makes it difficult to find access to it.

What do you feel when you look at these pictures?









Please express your own feelings in a painting....

PACING AND LEADING

The preparation of the patient-doctor interaction includes self-reflection and mindfulness. The goal of the first part of this module was to provide a tool in order to achieve that.

At this part we would like to introduce a useful tool that can improve your ability to communicate with your patients. This communication tool will provide you two advantages:

1. A broader history taking can be obtained by listening to the patient in a conscious way.
2. It has a positive effect on the patient, both on his cooperation and for recruiting his mental and physical powers for recovery.

For that, we need an emotional and empathic connection that must be established with the patient - rapport.

Rapport is a close and harmonious relationship in which the people concerned are "in sync" with each other, understand each other's feelings or ideas, and communicate smoothly.

One method for this is shown by us in the short video attached:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POVDYxAFIZo&t=1s>

Search in youtube.com: "Pacing and Leading Israel-German Cooperation"

Or use QR code reader:



Now, let's practice:

Imagine a situation in which a patient comes to your clinic. He is anxious because he has a big exam coming up. Your goal is to minimize his stress and help him cope with the situation. What would you tell him, using the pacing and leading technique?

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. .
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Here is an example of how you may do it:

You're in the exams period, and you are under a lot of pressure (pace)

You are concerned about the exam and hope you will pass it successfully (pace)

Your back and neck are aching (pace)

You're interested in learning ways of relaxation to release these tensions (lead)

The stress affects your sleep and appetite (pace)

You're looking for ways to get better (pace)

Together we will perform several relaxation exercises that will improve your feeling (lead)

At the end you will feel relaxed and relieved (lead)

When you will do the exercises at home every day, you will feel the difference (lead)

CONCLUSION

Thank you for reading this booklet. We hope it helps you to learn something about yourself. This might give you inspiration to integrate techniques from mind-body-medicine into your clinical and personal life. If you want you can practice the techniques we gave as example, or you can find other techniques that work better for you. Pay attention and notice the degree this will change your life!

We suggest some further readings:

„What is Mind-Body Medicine? By Daniel Goleman, PhD& Joel Gurin (Consumer Reports Books, 1993)

„The impact of Body-Mind Medicine Facilitation on Affirming and Enhancing Professional Identity in Health Care Professions Faculty“ Nicholas Talisman, Nancy Harazduk, MEd, MSW, Christina Rush, MA, Kristi Graves, PhD, and Aviad Haramati, PhD

„Mind-body medicine as a part of German integrative medicine“

„Mind-Body Medicine: State of the Science, Implications for Practice“

John A. Astin, PhD, Shauna L. Shapiro, PhD, David M. Eisenberg, MD, and Kelly L. Fors, MA

The Principles of Positive Suggestive Communication in the Field of Medicine: How to Manage Communication that Influences Patients, Zahi Arnon (Adjunct Senior Lecturer (Specialist) The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College (YVC), Israel / Clinical Psychologist / Hypnotist, Complementary Medicine at the Bnai-Zion Medical Center, Haifa, Israel), nova science publishers.

https://www.novapublishers.com/catalog/product_info.php?products_id=57194

