What is ‘normal’ anyway?
Addressing the psychosocial needs of disability in the patient population

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Objectives

- Understand psychosocial barriers of people with disabilities, specifically aspects of the *medical* culture that enhance or impair the experience of patients with physical disabilities.

- Recognize *identity* needs of patients with a variety of disabilities - visible and invisible, progressive and chronic, congenital and sudden onset.

- Use specific communication approaches to interweave the patient experience of disability into H&P.
DISABILITY
Medical Model of disability

"Confined" to a wheelchair
Can't climb stairs
Is sick
Needs help
Has a bitter attitude
Needs a cure

Is housebound
Can't use hands
Can't walk
Can't talk
Can't see or hear
Needs a Doctor
Needs Institutional care
Making disability distant
Social model of disability

Badly Designed Buildings
Hypocrisy
No Parking Spaces
Segregated Education
Poverty and low Income
Lack of Enablers

Inaccessible Transport
Isolated Families
No Lifts
Prejudiced Attitudes
Poor Job Prospects
Disability Culture
Illness Narratives

- Restitution
  - Disability is a disruption. Here today, gone tomorrow. Goal is recovery.

- Chaos
  - Disability is overwhelming. Patient is unable to separate from symptoms or reflect on experience. Goal is endure one challenge after another.

- Quest
  - Chaos kept at bay. Comfortable with disability as part of selfhood. Goal is find the silver lining, personal growth, increased empathy, discovery of sense of purpose.
Kleinman's 8 Questions

1. What do you think caused the problem?
2. Why do you think it happened when it did?
3. What do you think your sickness does to you? How does it work?
4. How severe is your sickness? Will it have a short course?
5. What kind of treatment do you think you should receive?
6. What are the most important results you hope to receive from this treatment?
7. What are the chief problems your sickness has caused for you?
8. What do you fear most about your sickness?

“How is your health?” followed by, “How do you know?”
MY GRANDFATHER USED TO BRING FLOWERS TO MY MOTHER.
References


• CDC (2009). How many people have disabilities? www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/documents


