

## MCS Selective

### The Doctor Patient Relationship: The Circle of Change – An Approach to facilitating change and resolving Impasse & Conflict in Primary Care

Primary care practitioners face a high prevalence of chronic illness and behavioral problems. These circumstances often require a broadening of context from a biomedical to that of a biopsychosocial approach towards medical problem-solving that heavily relies on a well-nurtured, healthy patient-doctor relationship.

Through the use of “story-telling” and interactive discussion, students will explore and derive for themselves the value of the patient-doctor relationship in diagnosing and managing illness. Simultaneously, students will be introduced to a problem-solving approach for when that essential relationship gets “stuck” in impasse that impedes the processes of facilitating change and alleviating suffering. This approach, being based on Systems Theory applied to the patient-doctor relationship, is widely applicable and can be utilized, not only for resolution of the doctor-patient impasse, but as an aid for improving compliance, effecting lifestyle change, explaining otherwise inexplicable patient behavior, and has a broader implication for conflict resolution as well.

This problem-solving model is a guideline for the practitioner to ferret out the patient’s individual story... their illness narrative... in order to appreciate the *context* of a problem... the situation within which the problem lies that lends rationality to the problem’s formulation; thus, opening the door to its resolution. It is a model that explores not only the patient’s perceptions, but also acknowledges the physician’s perceptual frame and analyzes its possible contribution to problem formulation as well.

#### Introduction

This selective is open to students in the discipline of Medicine. The course is designed and predicated on the belief that to “Know Thyself” is a fundamental part of doctoring, and that the key that accesses the door to understanding the suffering and difficulties of others is the ability to understand the suffering and difficulties of ourselves.

#### Instructor:



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### **Educational Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this selective you will have the ability to:

- 1 Understand and discuss the need for problem-solving approaches in primary care that may differ from those accustomed to within the tertiary care setting (but are not mutually exclusive!)
- 2 Express your self-reflective perceptions regarding the role of the physician, the purpose of medicine, and the significance of the patient-doctor relationship
- 3 Understand and discuss the significance of the patient's story in patient care
- 4 Become familiar with a problem-solving technique that provides a structured format for problem-delineation and problem-solving impasse in primary care
- 5 Appreciate that self-understanding is essential to doctoring and to the understanding of others

### **Requirements and Outline:**

To complete the selective, a student must:

1. Attend and participate in four, two-hour, interactive seminar sessions:
  - Session I: Placing the patient-doctor relationship into context
  - Session II: The significance of the patient's story
  - Session III: Problem-delineation through understanding problem-formulation
  - Session IV: Problem-resolution
2. Suggested readings will be distributed prior to each session
3. There will be one writing assignment based on the educational objectives. It will be due after Session III, but before the last Session IV.

### **Class Size**

**Minimum 6 Maximum 10**