Communication Skills & Delivering Bad News

Breaking bad news is stressful and often avoided or performed inadequately because of the cognitive, behavioral, or emotional deficits created for the person receiving the news. Good communication can become even more challenging when bad news is involved. While there may be many things that help us to recognize what effective communication looks like, training is well recognized. But how do we know what good communication looks like?

Good communication should recognize the individuality of each person and explore different strategies and statements that can be applied in situations where delivering bad news is necessary. Communication can become even more challenging when bad news is involved. While it is often not formally trained to provide or teach the essential communication of delivering bad news, one of the best ways to learn what good communication looks like is to watch the people around us. All of us have seen examples of good and bad communication in our daily lives. Communication skills play a critical role in the development of patient understanding, trust, and follow-up.

The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it is straightforward.