

# Supportive Questioning

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# Intended Learning Outcomes

- Understand the purpose of open-ended questions
- Identify questions that support learners' understanding and growth



# Socratic Method

- Socrates, classical Greek philosopher
- Series of questions to create dialogue
  - Challenge assumptions
  - Clarify the question
  - Probe reasons and evidence
  - Define viewpoints and perspectives

# May be toxic to learning...

- Signature pedagogy in many law schools
  - Watch the Paper Chase video
- “Pimping” in many medical schools
  - Watch the Text to Movie pimping video
- Power dynamics, shame, defensive memorization of factoids, fear....but not learning



# Quality Questions

- Open-ended > closed-ended
  - “Any objective findings of infection?”  
rather than “is there a fever?”
- Encourage learner’s autonomy by partnering and coaching
- Think of Bloom’s Taxonomy as you formulate your questions

# Many types of questions

- Factual
  - What organisms are we treating?
- Conceptual
  - What are the risk factors for this type of infection?
- Provocative
  - How could this infection have been prevented?

But not confrontational.....



# How a question is heard...

- Easy to respond if confident or knowledgeable
- Unsure or insecure learner can lead to:
  - Defensiveness
  - “Freezing up”
  - Emotional response
  - Avoidance

# Setting the tone

- *Goal is scaffolding thru the zone of proximal development to foster the establishment of cognitive links for future access and expertise*
- Clarify your questioning technique for the learner
- Pick appropriate time and place
- Allow for dialogue and follow up questions for both the instructor and the learners



## **Free educational resource from MedEd Portal:**

TATTELMAN E, KARNIK A, FORNARI A. QUESTIONING AS A TOOL IN TEACHING. MEDEDPORTAL; 2011. AVAILABLE FROM:

[WWW.MEDEDPORTAL.ORG/PUBLICATION/8419](http://WWW.MEDEDPORTAL.ORG/PUBLICATION/8419)