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. MEDEPNDORAL; 2011. AVAILABLE FROM: WWW.MEDEPNDORAL.ORG/PUBLICATION/8419