

Communicating with Patients/Clients Who Know More Than They Can Say

Based on Supported Conversation for Adults
with Aphasia (SCA)TM

MODULE I

Developed by: The Aphasia Institute

*We would like to thank the Ontario Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care (Ontario Stroke Strategy) for
financial support.*

Communication Problems Occur Frequently

For example:

- 20 – 30% of stroke patients have aphasia
- *APHASIA is a language problem, caused most often by stroke. People with aphasia have difficulty in expressing themselves, understanding what others say, as well as difficulties with reading and writing*
- Many patients/clients do not speak English

Imagine if this were **YOU**:

- You are intelligent but can't understand what people are saying
- You know what you think but can't express these thoughts
- You feel that everyone thinks you are stupid
- No-one discusses complex issues with you (about health, your situation, or how you feel)



Life's a Conversation.

Director General of the WHO

April 2002

Health is the ability to live life to its full potential. For many people with disabilities, the realization of that ability is dependent on factors in society. When a person in a wheelchair finds it difficult to enter into her office building because it does not provide ramps or elevators, the ICF identifies the focus of the intervention: it is the building that should be modified and not the person who should be forced to find a different place of work.

Communication Problems Interfere with Service Delivery

For example, you need information from the patient/client, or you need to know how he/she is feeling, but ...

- No one else is present
- Those present don't necessarily have the answers (e.g. subjective states)
- As with any of us, people with aphasia often prefer to give their own information



Life's a Conversation.

Good Communication Practices Improve Health Outcomes

- Talk is 'the main ingredient' in health care
- Even the technical side of medicine depends on being able to talk to the affected person

Roter and Hall, 1993

Role Play

Patient/Client:

- You cannot speak
- You cannot use your right hand
- You cannot write

Health Care

Professional:

- Your patient/client has severe aphasia
- He/she appears to be very upset
- Find out what is wrong



Life's a Conversation.

Supported Conversation for Adults with Aphasia (SCA™)

For patients/clients who
“Know More Than They Can Say”

Acknowledge Competence

- Techniques to help patients/clients feel as though they are being treated respectfully

Reveal Competence

- Techniques to **get** and to **give accurate information**



Life's a Conversation.

Two goals of SCA™ for all healthcare professionals

- Increase communicative access to your services
- Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of your service

Video Observation Exercise

Questions

- Treating the patient/client respectfully:
 - ✓ Does the doctor treat the patient/client as an intelligent adult?
- Helping the patient/client to reveal what is on his/her mind:
 - ✓ Does the doctor make the message clear?
 - ✓ Does the doctor give the patient a way to answer or ask questions?
 - ✓ Does the doctor check to make sure that he has understood correctly?



Life's a Conversation.

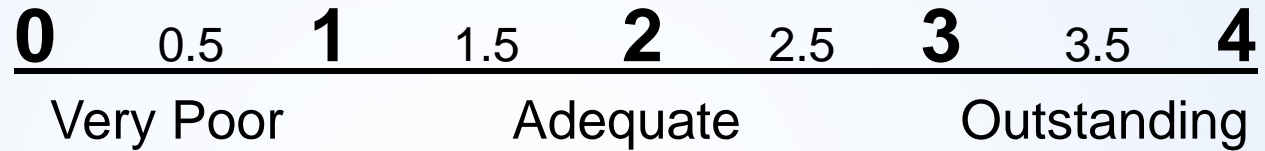
Video Observation Exercise

(Module I) #1 Jerry

Pre-training Interview
Example

The Aphasia Institute

Rating Scale



- **Acknowledging Competence** _____
- **Revealing Competence** _____
 - In _____
 - Out _____
 - Verify _____

Acknowledging Competence

Are You Treating the Patient/Client Respectfully?

(Module I)

- Speak naturally (with normal loudness), using an adult tone of voice
- Acknowledge the patient/client's frustrations and fears of being thought of as stupid e.g. *"I know you know"*
- Deal openly with situations in which you have to communicate with a partner to obtain or give information

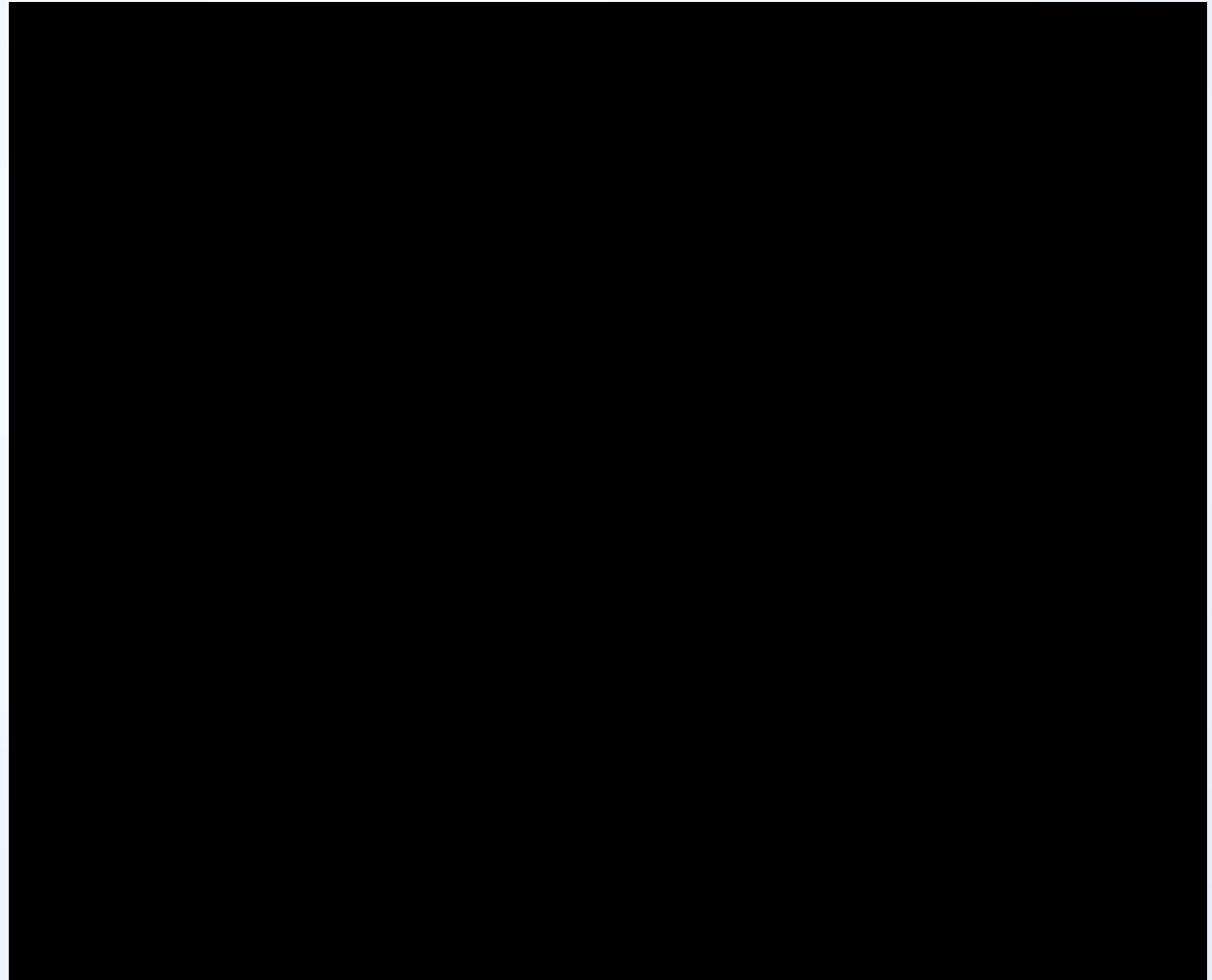


Life's a Conversation.

Acknowledging Competence

Are You Treating the Patient/Client Respectfully?

(Module I) #1 Trips



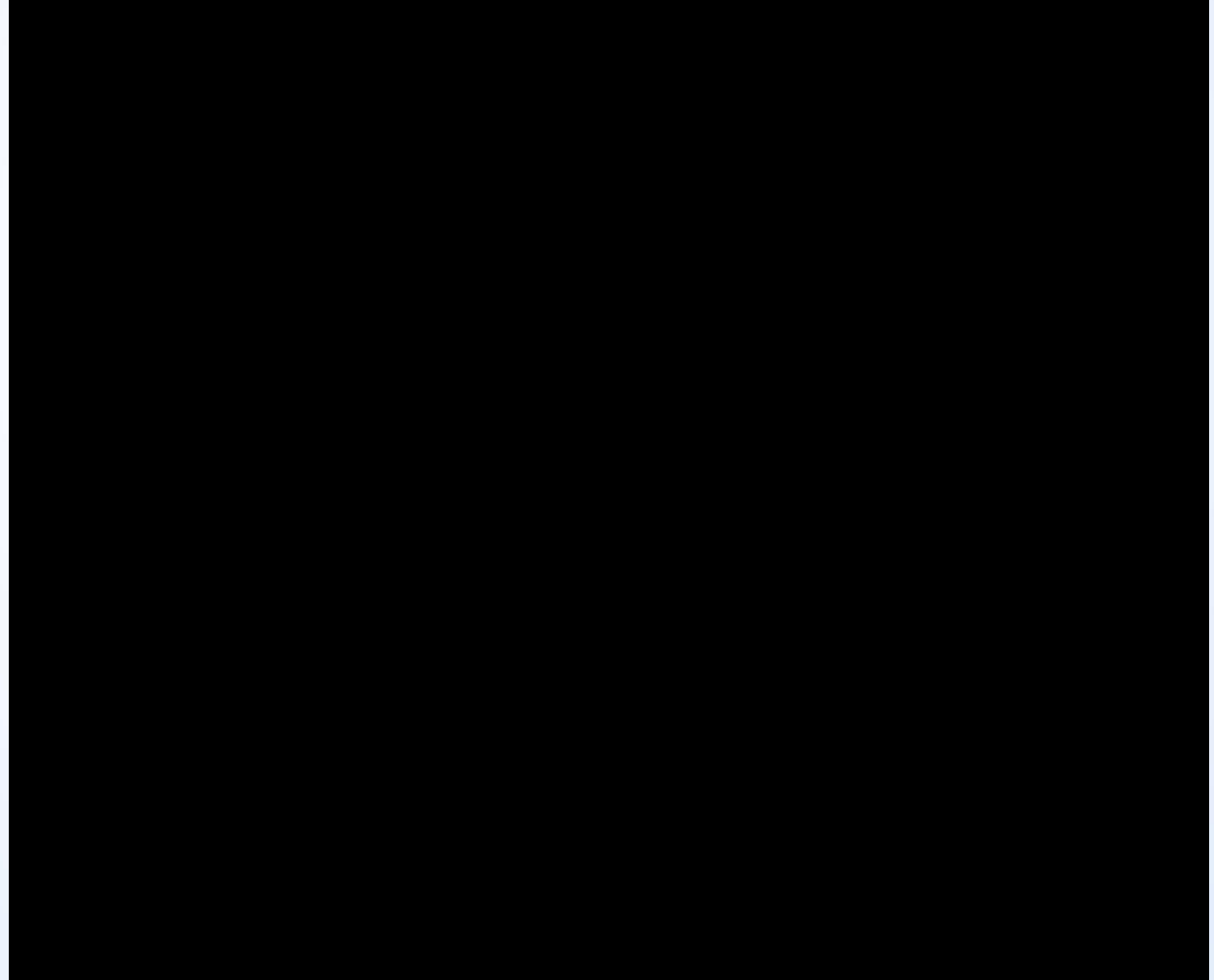


Life's a Conversation.

Acknowledging Competence

Are You Treating the Patient/Client Respectfully?

(Module I) #2 Dollar



For Busy Doctors

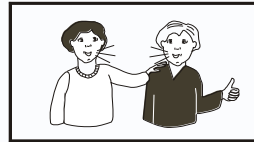
USE THESE
GESTURES
as you talk

Point to your
mouth.

"I know that **communication** is a problem."



"I can see that it's frustrating because,

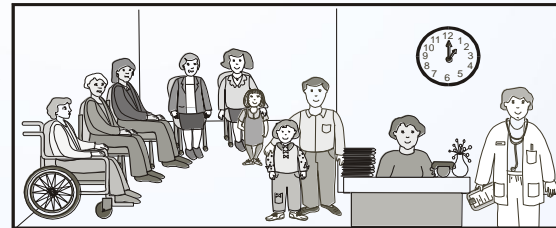


Point to your
head.

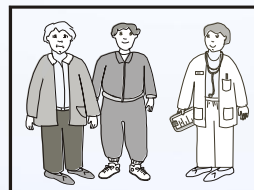
I know you know what you want to say."

Point to the
waiting room.

"But, it's very
busy



Indicate the
person (with an
open hand).



so, I have to talk to _____
(the person with you)."

"I'm sorry, I hope that's ok."



Life's a Conversation.

Revealing Competence

Techniques to **get** and to **give accurate information**

- In
- Out
- Verify

In: Is Your Message Clear?

(Module I)

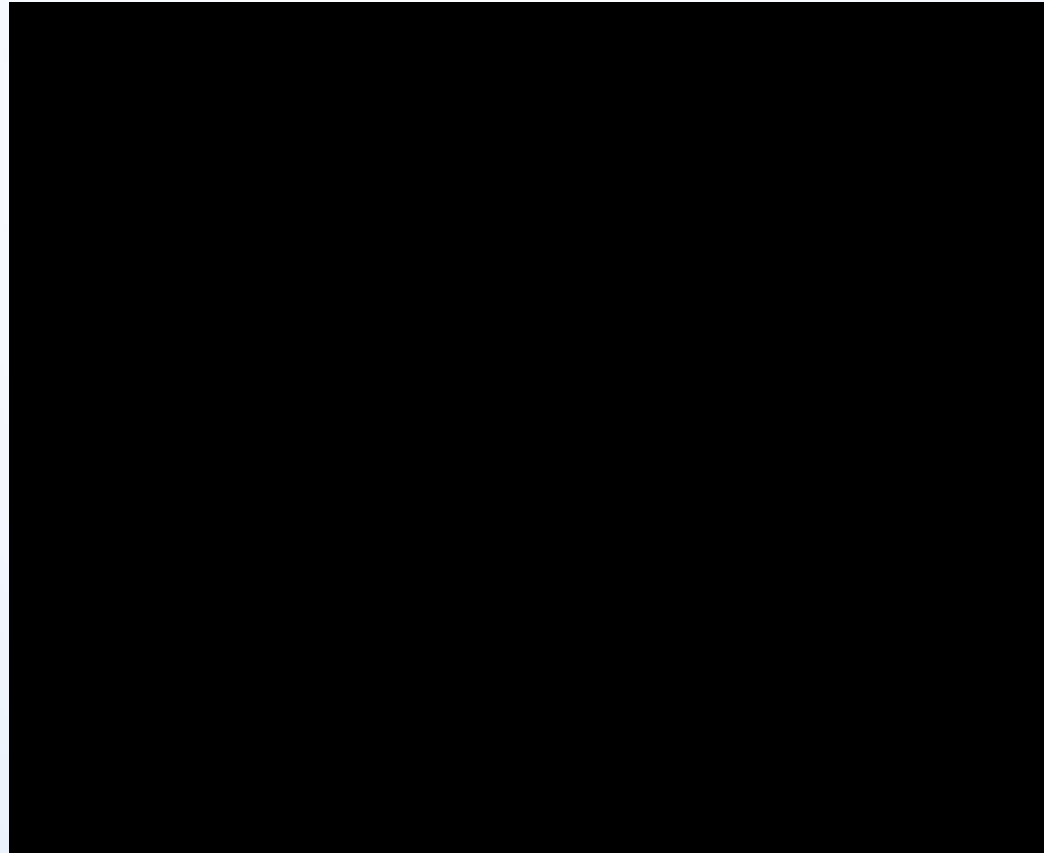
- Use short, simple sentences and expressive voice
- As you are talking:
 - ✓ Use gestures that the patient/client can easily understand
 - ✓ Write key words/main idea *e.g. 'pain'* in large bold print
 - ✓ Use pictures—focus on one at a time

In: Is Your Message Clear?

(Module I) #1 Fishing

As you are talking:

- ✓ Use gestures that the patient/client can easily understand

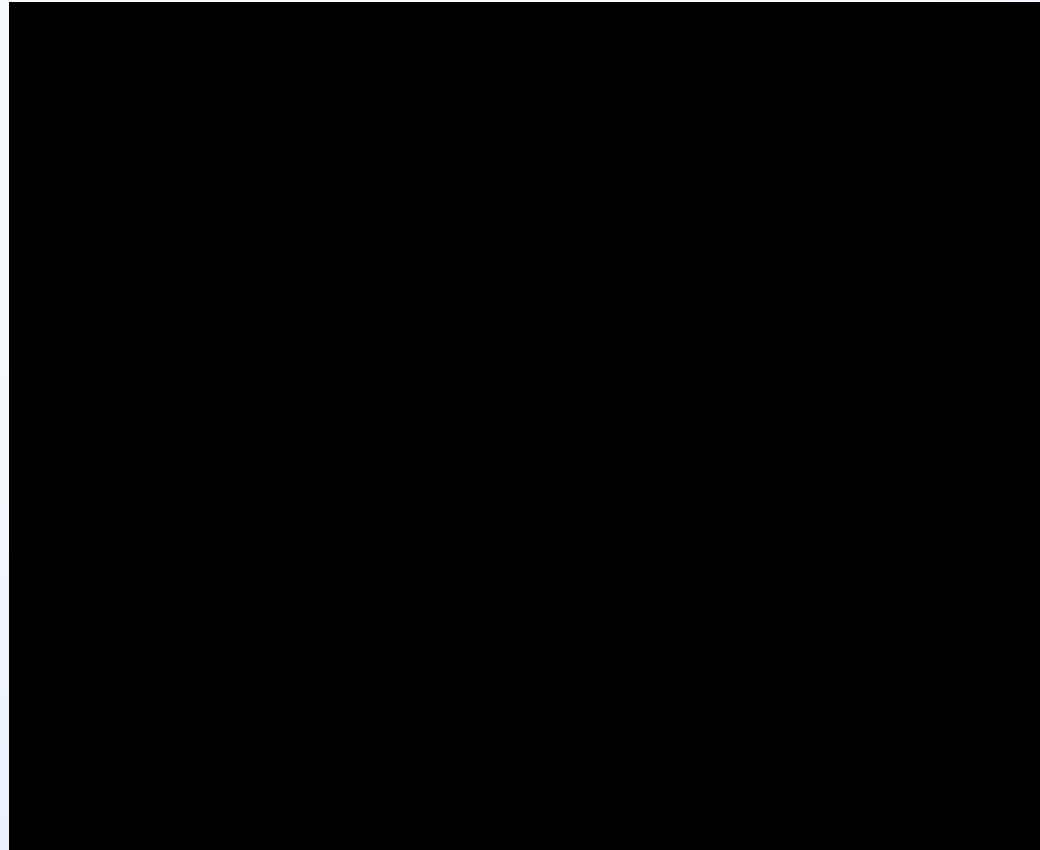


In: Is Your Message Clear?

(Module I) #2 Grandson

As you are talking:

- ✓ Use gestures that the patient/client can easily understand

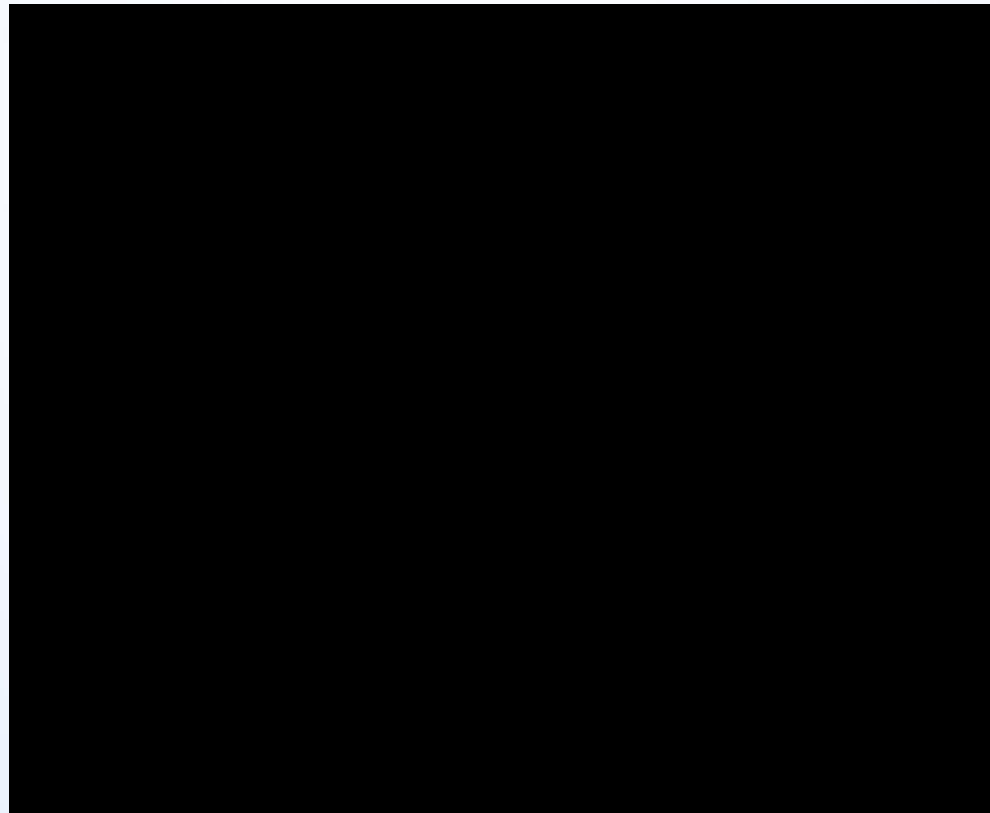


In: Is Your Message Clear?

(Module I) #3 In-Gestures

As you are talking:

- ✓ Use gestures that the patient/client can easily understand

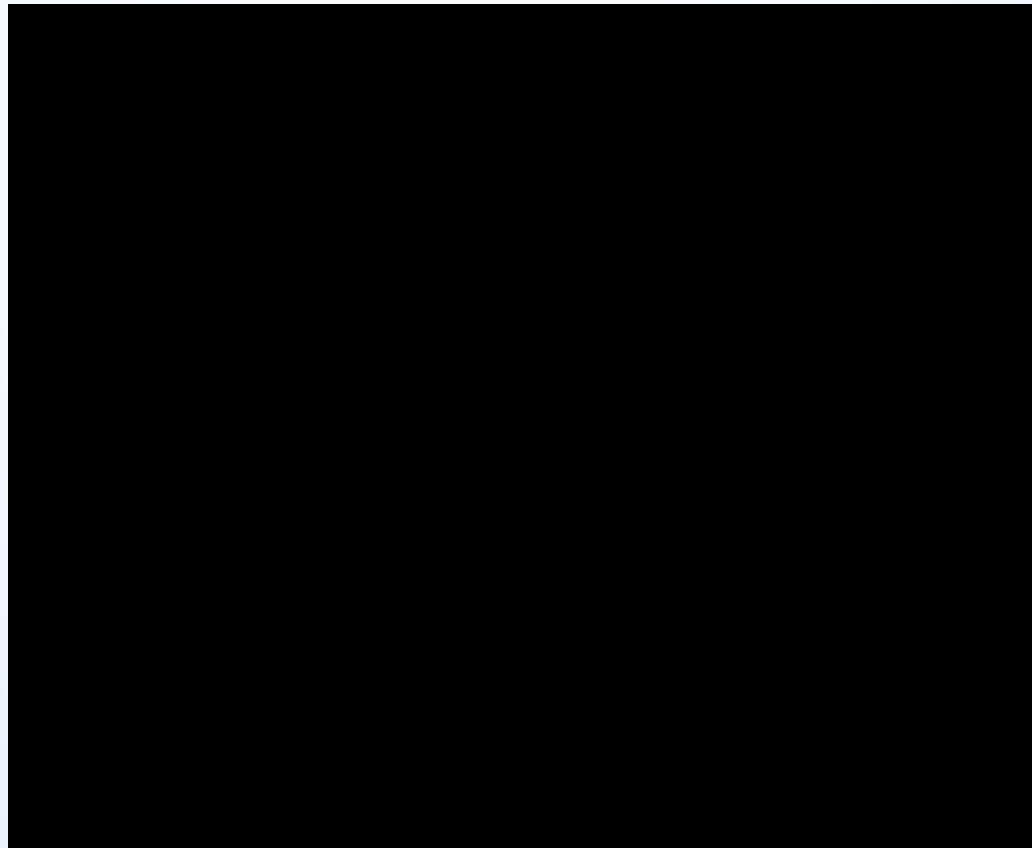


In: Is Your Message Clear?

(Module I) #1 Travel

As you are talking:

- ✓ Write key words/main idea e.g. *'pain'* in large bold print

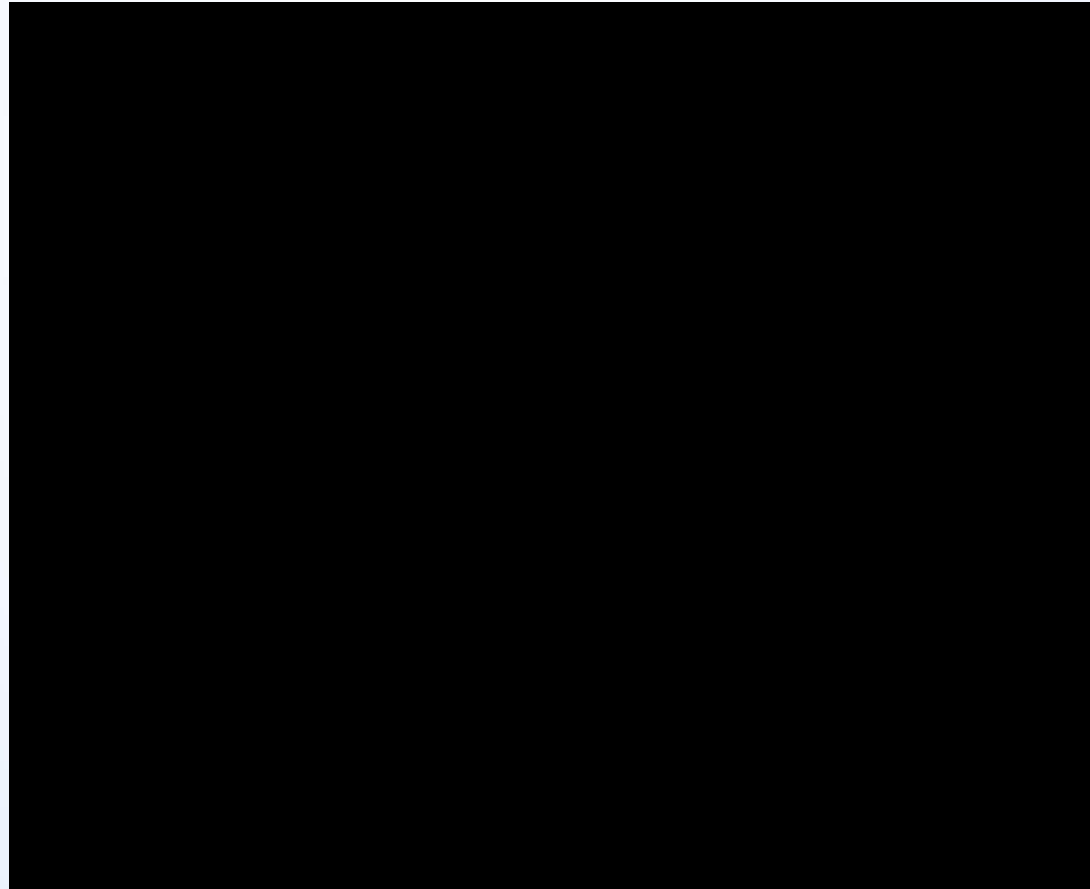


In: Is Your Message Clear?

(Module I) #1 Family

As you are talking:

- ✓ Use pictures—focus on one at a time

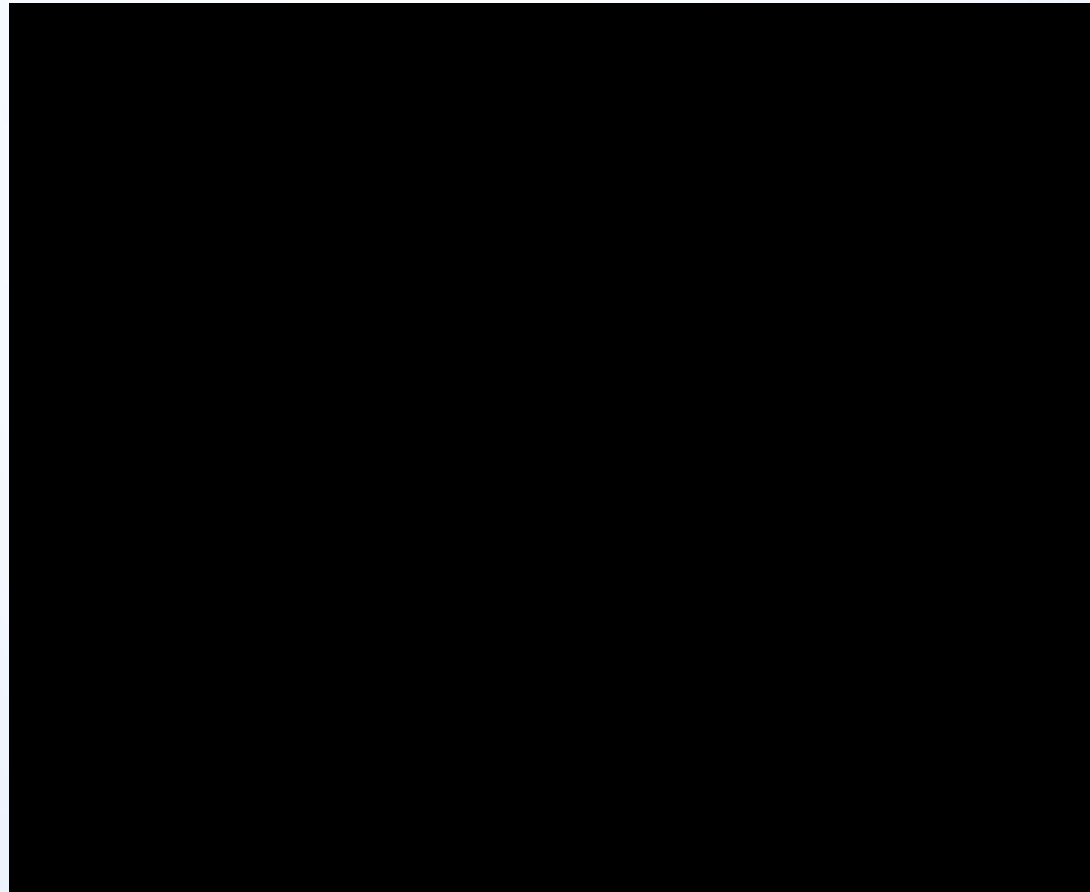


In: Is Your Message Clear?

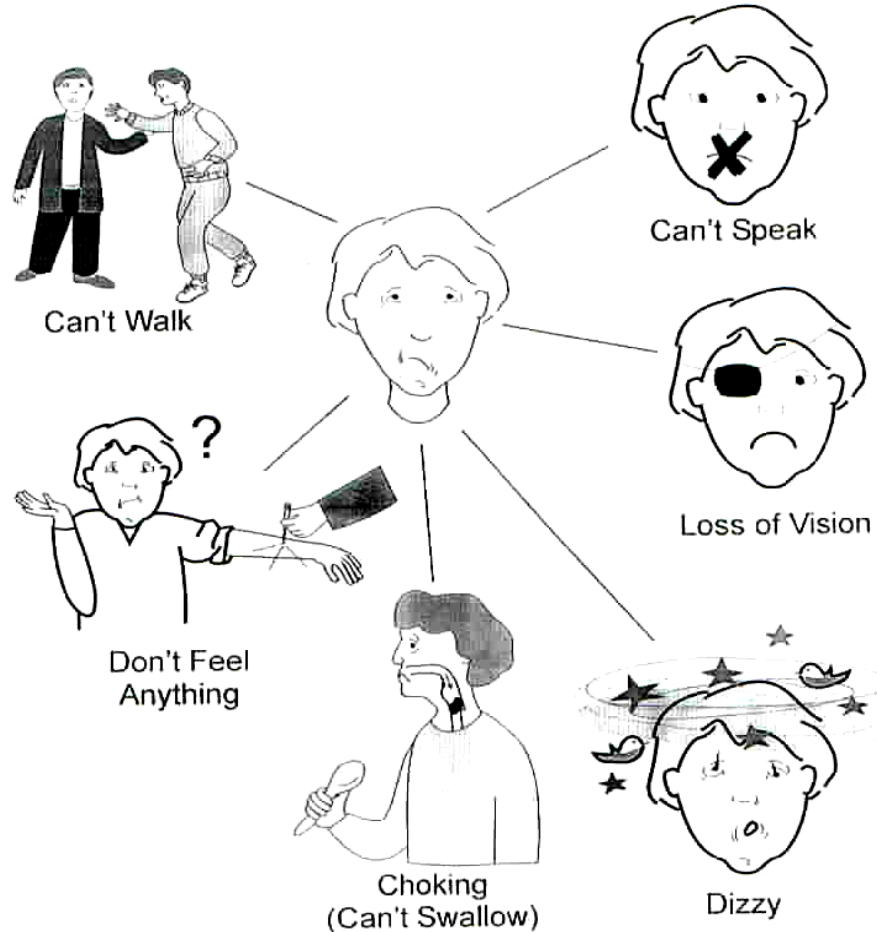
(Module I) #2 Headache

As you are talking:

- ✓ Use pictures—focus on one at a time



Has This Happened to You?



Out: Does the Patient/Client Have a Way to Answer or Ask Questions?

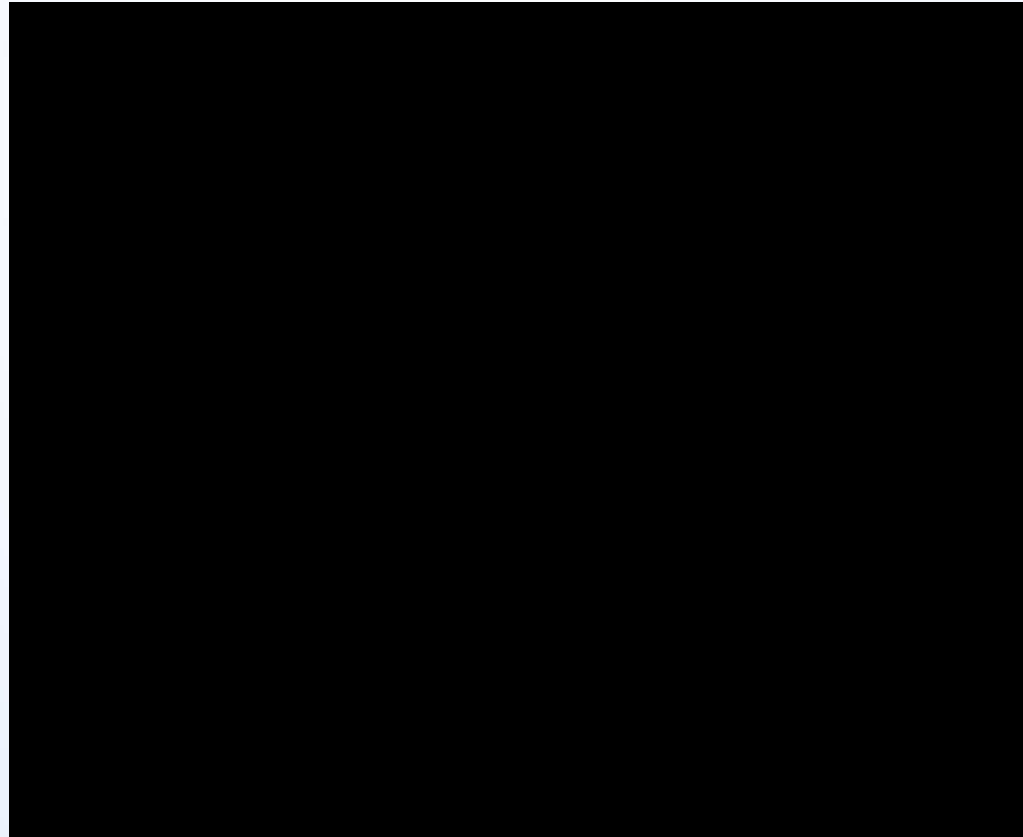
(Module I)

- Ask “yes/no” questions and make sure that the patient/client has a way to respond
- Ask one thing at a time
- Ask the patient/client to give clues by gesturing, or pointing to objects, pictures and written key words (e.g. “*can you show me...?*”)
- Give the patient/client time to respond

Out: Does the Patient/Client Have a Way to Answer or Ask Questions?

(Module I) #1 Golf

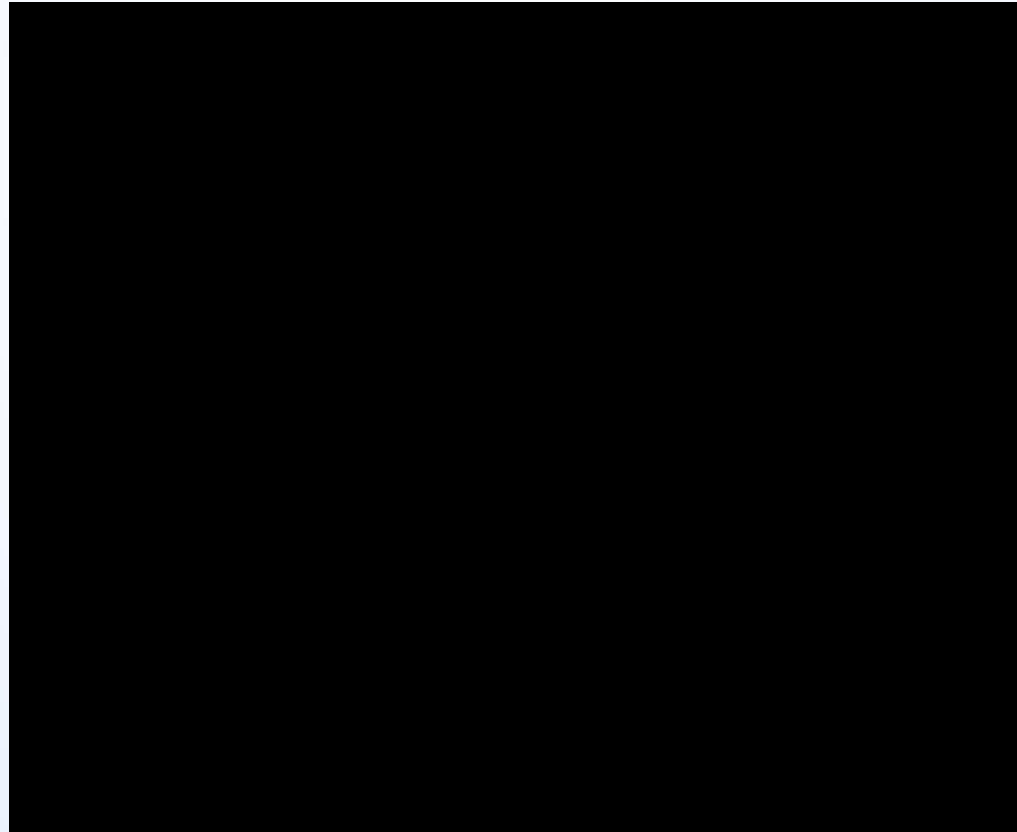
Ask “yes/no” questions and make sure that the patient/client has a way to respond



Out: Does the Patient/Client Have a Way to Answer or Ask Questions?

(Module I) #2 Wife

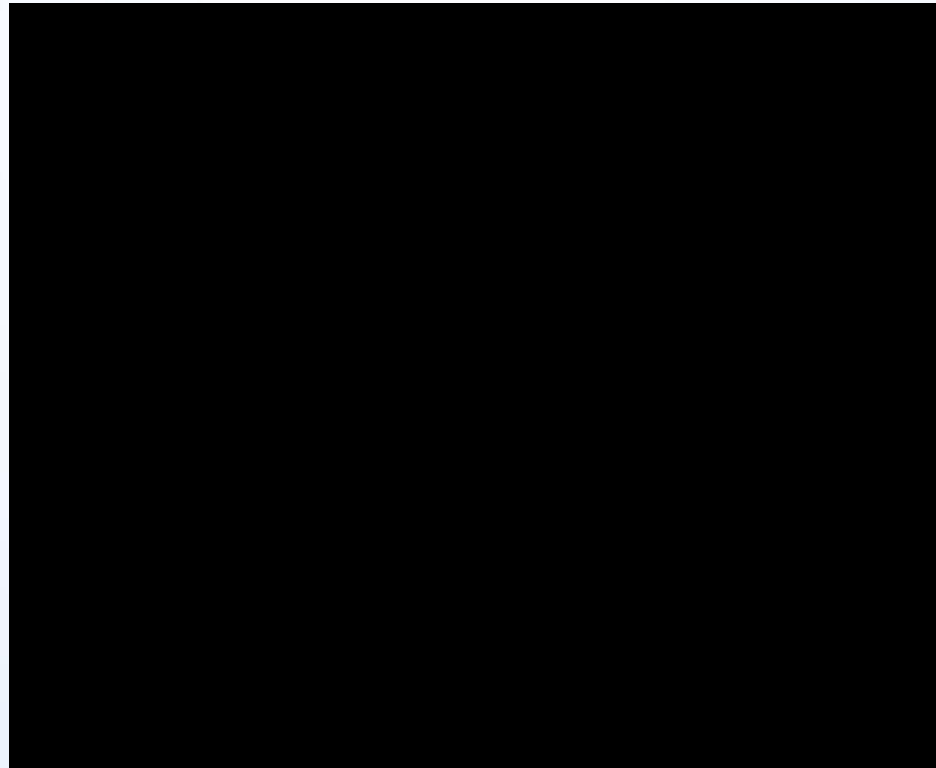
Ask “yes/no” questions and make sure that the patient/client has a way to respond



Out: Does the Patient/Client Have a Way to Answer or Ask Questions?

(Module I) #1 Children

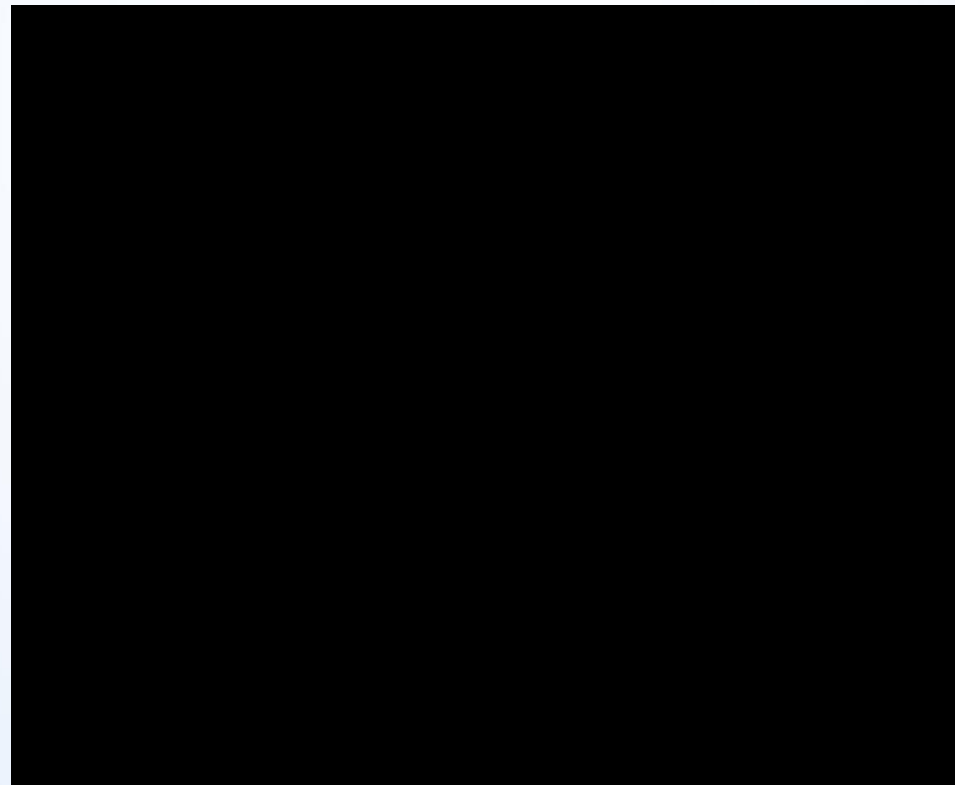
Ask the patient/client to give clues by gesturing, or pointing to objects, pictures and written key words (e.g. *"can you show me...?"*)



Out: Does the Patient/Client Have a Way to Answer or Ask Questions?

(Module I) #2 Optimist

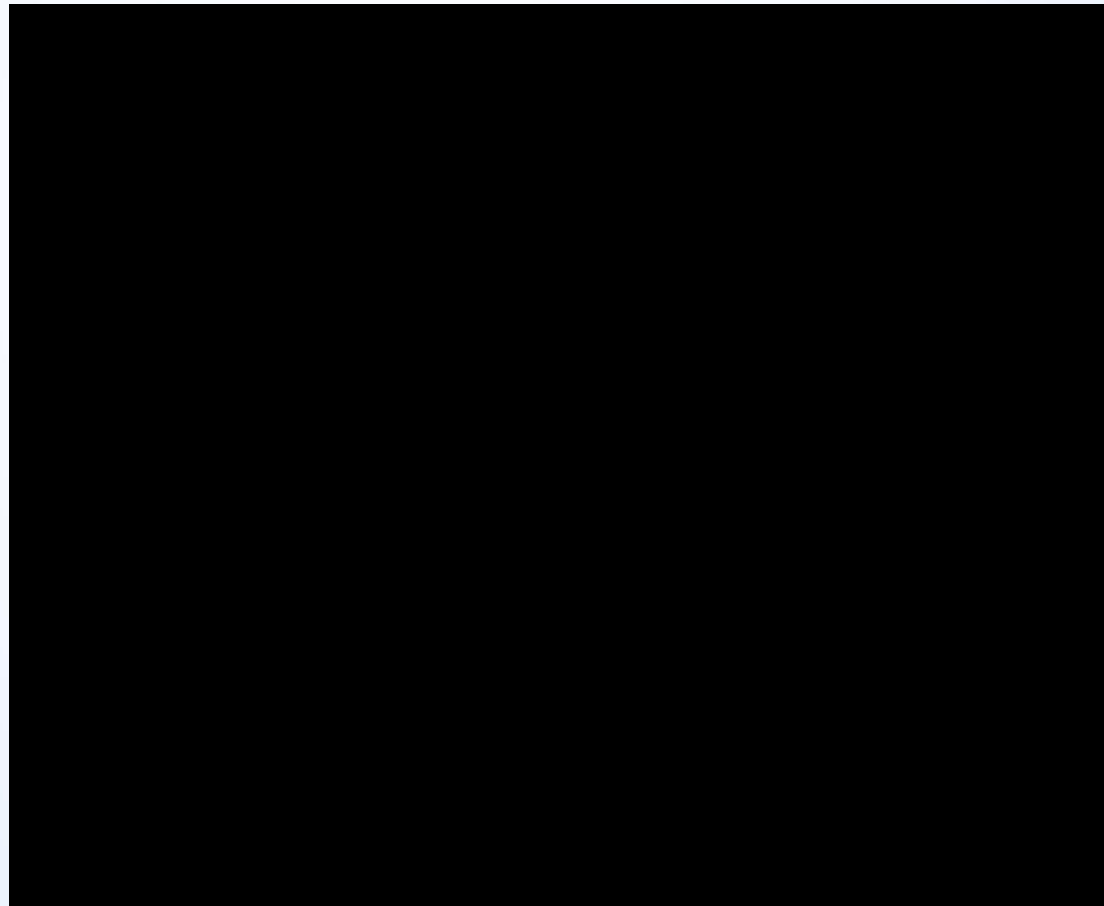
Ask the patient/client to give clues by gesturing, or pointing to objects, pictures and written key words (e.g. “*can you show me...?*”)



Out: Does the Patient/Client Have a Way to Answer or Ask Questions?

(Module I) #1 No Time

Give the patient/client time to respond



Verify: Have You Checked to Make Sure You Have Understood?

(Module I)

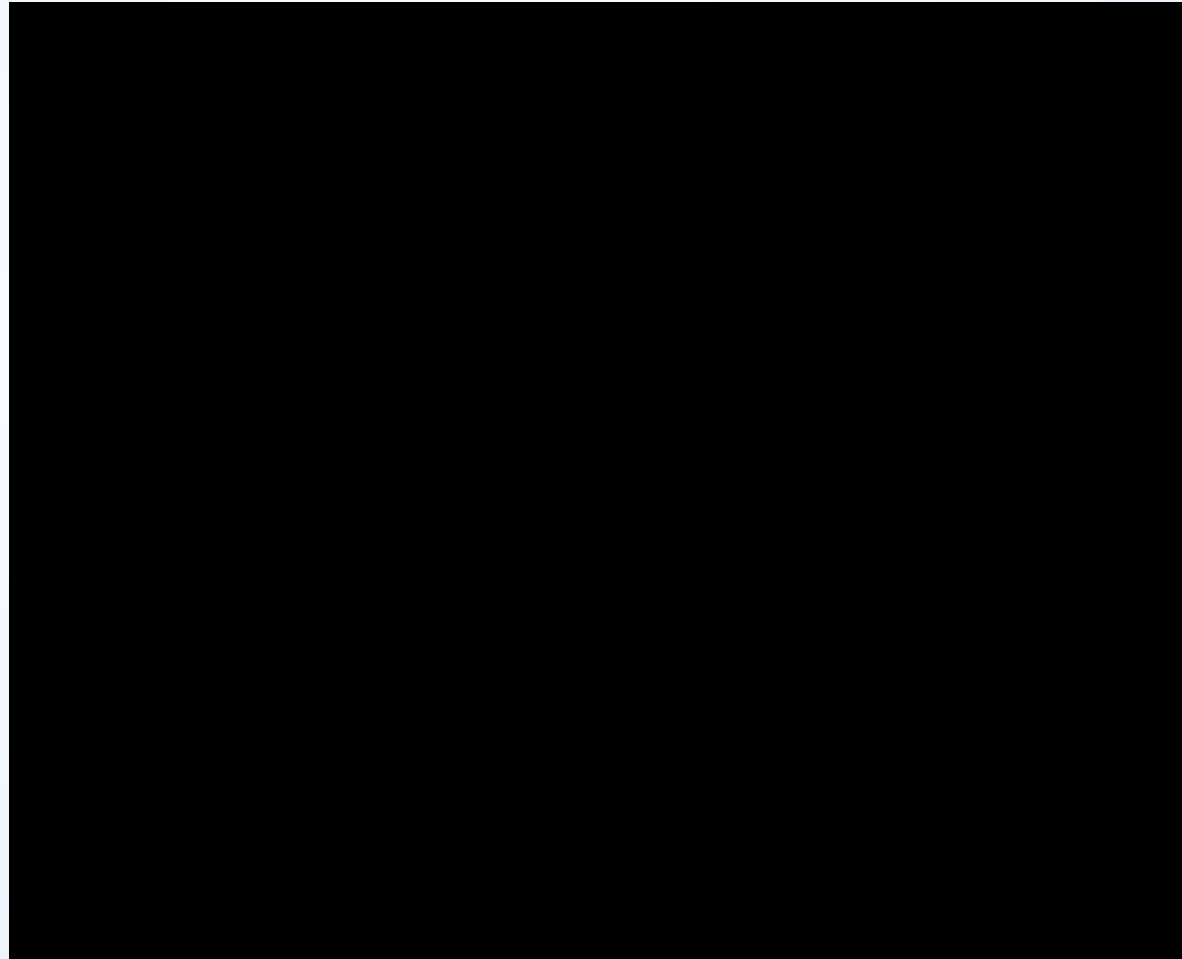
- Summarize slowly and clearly what you think the patient/client is trying to say, e.g. ... “*so let me make sure I understand. ...*”
- Add gesture or written key words, if necessary



Life's a Conversation.

Verify: Have You Checked to Make Sure You Have Understood?

(Module I) #1 Hockey



Video Observation Exercise

Questions

- Treating the patient/client respectfully:
 - ✓ Does the doctor treat the patient as an intelligent adult?
- Helping the patient to reveal what is on his/her mind:
 - ✓ Does the doctor make the message clear?
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Life's a Conversation.

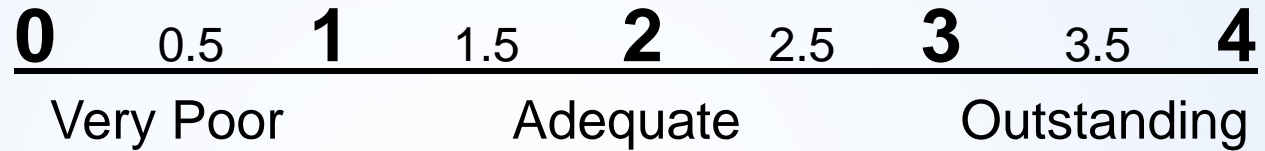
Video Observation Exercise

(Module I) #2 Jerry

Post-training Interview
Example

The Aphasia Institute

Rating Scale



- **Acknowledging Competence** _____
- **Revealing Competence** _____
 - In _____
 - Out _____
 - Verify _____



Life's a Conversation.

For more information on SCA™ and pictographic resources,
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