

Lesson 5: Communicating with Difficult Patients

The principle: Honorable mention is still honorable.

The communication behaviors: Difficult people mindset; difficult people strategies

Why the behaviors matter: Difficult patients, who make for unusually challenging and mentally taxing conversations, require pragmatic communication strategies to prevent conversations from taking on damage.

The behaviors:

- **Difficult People Mindset**

No drama

Drama & intensity escalate difficult conversations; keep things low instead

No dumb mistakes

Beware the ninja called frustration

No lofty ambitions

Stick w/your Waldo; with difficult people, good enough is really good

- **Difficult People Strategies**

Work Waldo (WW)

Your Waldo is your anchor w/difficult people

Repair Regularly (RR)

Apologize, acknowledge, admit, praise, empathize, repeat

Exit Expeditiously (EE)

Waldo communicated? Have a nice day

- What might your **self-monitoring** and **argumentativeness** scores suggest about your tendencies toward the difficult people mindset and strategies?

- Which portions may come naturally to you?
- Which will you need to work harder to implement?

Implementing the behaviors:

- Use the ideas from this lesson in a conversation with a difficult patient. Record what happens on this week's reflection sheet.
- Stretch goal: Teach this lesson's ideas to someone having trouble communicating with a difficult patient.

For more information: Read Chapters 11 & 12 of *Stop Talking, Start Communicating*

- Review the lesson here: <http://mouthpeaceconsulting.com/rmchcs/> password: RMCH