



Massachusetts ME/CFS & FM ASSOCIATION

EDUCATION, SUPPORT & ADVOCACY SINCE 1985

Alba Azola, M.D.

Working with your Healthcare Provider



Sunday Conversations

with MassME

April 24, 2022

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- We respect your privacy
- Please stay muted
- Put questions/comments in the chat
- A recording of the main presentation and Q&A will be posted

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Featured Speaker



Alba Azola, MD

Assistant Professor

Co-director of the PMR Post-Acute COVID-19 Team (JH PACT)

Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Also participating:

Dave and Sue, parents of a teen with severe ME/CFS

Karin Dove, MPH, Moderator

- MassME member
- Engages in patient services for the Association





Working with your Healthcare Provider

Dr. Alba Azola

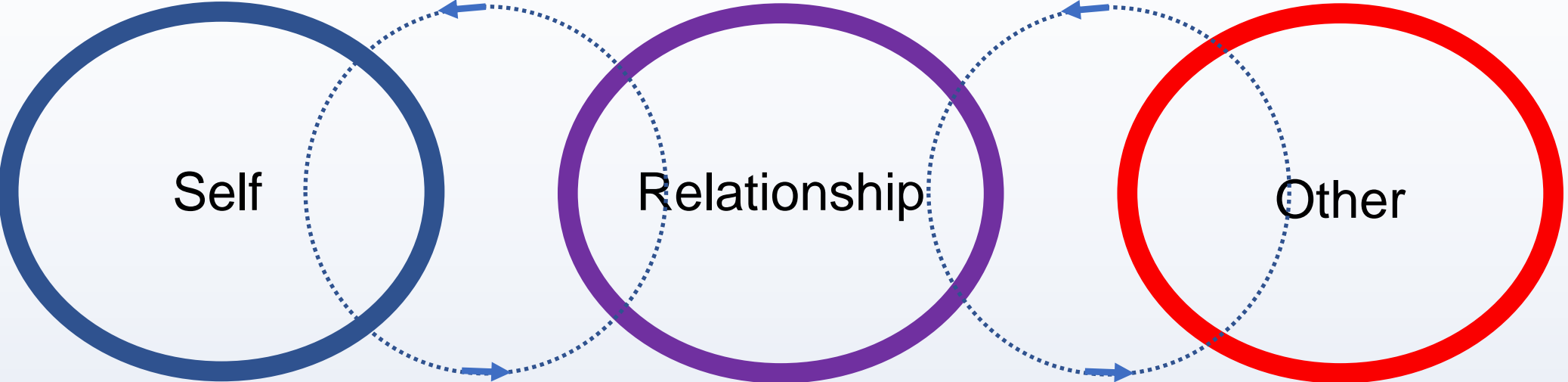


Disclosure

-Nothing to disclose



The Power of Three: Relationship



Agreement



Barriers to effective communication

- Deterioration of Doctors' Communication
 - Medical training suppresses empathy, and may result in derision of patients
- Doctors' Avoidance Behavior
- Discouragement of Collaboration
- Perception that patients are passive recipients of information

Ha, J. F., & Longnecker, N. (2010). Doctor-patient communication: a review. *Ochsner Journal*, 10(1), 38-43.





Strategies for improvement

- Communication Skill Training
- Collaborative Communication
- Conflict Management
- Understanding Health Beliefs and Values

Ha, J. F., & Longnecker, N. (2010). Doctor-patient communication: a review. *Ochsner Journal*, 10(1), 38-43.



Interpersonal Trust

- Patient trust correlated with patient assessment of the physician's
 - Communication ($r=0.75$)
 - Level of interpersonal treatment ($r=0.73$)
 - Knowledge of the patient ($r=0.68$)
- The way a doctor communicates with his or her patient is as important as the information he/she is conveying to the patient

Ward, P. (2018). Trust and communication in a doctor-patient relationship: a literature review. Arch Med, 3(3), 36.



Medical Visit Structure

- History of present illness
- Review of systems
- Medications (and medication history)
- Past Medical, Surgical, Social and Family History
- Physical Exam
- Assessment
- Plan



History of Present Illness

- Goal: get as much information as possible on current issue ... but trying to keep information organized
 - Keeping updated chronological outline of main events is helpful
 - Have medical records and test organized and available
 - Most times we don't have access to records
 - Always keep CD copy of actual images (the read is not enough)



History of Present Illness

- Describe symptoms on your own words
 - Avoid medical terms
- Current Functional status
 - Limitations to mobility
 - Limitations to activities of daily living
 - Caregivers
- Top 3 most impairing symptoms



Review of Systems

- Goal: to identify ongoing signs and symptoms from head to toe
 - It's a lot to get through... we are not trying to cut you off
 - Pertinent positive and pertinent negatives
- We want to know what the patient is experiencing
 - Not a diagnosis that you have been given by other providers
 - Not the medical term that explains what you are experiencing

Medication History

- Current Medication list
 - Dose
 - Duration of treatment
- Keep a list of medications that have been trialed in the past
 - Doses
 - Side effects
 - Reason for stopping
 - Duration of treatment



Past Medical and Surgical History

- Again, helpful to keep running list of diagnosis including pediatric medical issues
- Keep list of surgical procedures and other interventions
 - Complications associated to procedures



Past Family, Social and Functional History

- Recommend keeping a running list of family medical issues
- We want to get to know your environment
 - Where do you live, who lives with you
 - What your days look like
 - Work history
- Mobility restrictions, need for assistance with ADLS



Assessment and Plan

- The provider may not be able to create a comprehensive plan at the end of your first visit
- It's important that the plan takes into account your health priorities
 - Tell your provider what is most important to you
- What is important to the doctor may not be important to you
 - Ask your provider why they want to do things

Your doctor wants to know

- If you had to stop a med due to side effects
- If you saw another provider and they changed a medication
- If you have an exacerbation of symptoms that is setting you back



Ways the patient can help the physician

- Facilitate communication between providers
- Discuss best communication method and expectations in communication
- Keep it real! Let your doctor know how you really feel







Please join us next month!

Dr. Paul Monach

All About Fibromyalgia

Sunday, May 15, 2022, 4 p.m. EDT

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