

Effective Communication Strategies



Existing weight bias and stigma can make discussions about weight management a sensitive topic for patients.¹⁻⁴ Consider approaching these conversations using the following techniques to connect and communicate with patients:



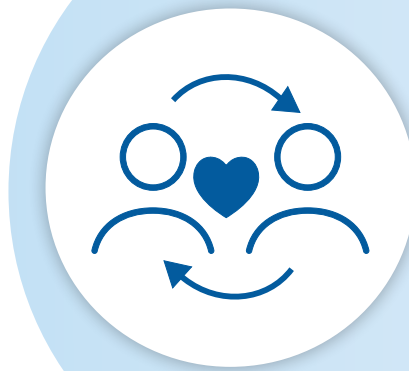
Three Helpful Techniques to Connect and Communicate With Patients

Identify Source of Motivation⁴⁻⁹

Guide patients to discover and reinforce their personal source of motivation to optimize treatment



Build Trust Through Empathy^{4,9-11}



Use the 3 steps:

- Listen
- Validate
- Engage

Set Personalized Goals^{4-6,8,11,12}

- Define individual measures of success
- SEEK ➡ PROBE ➡ REPEAT ➡ RECORD



Identify Source of Motivation: “ASK” Framework

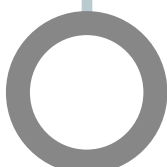
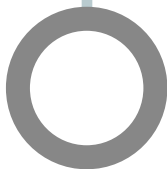
Effective lifestyle counseling begins with helping the patient identify their own unique source of motivation. A simple framework named “ASK” can help the clinician identify and confirm the patient’s source of motivation.^{6,7}



Acknowledge that only the patient can identify their most meaningful sources of motivation^{4,8}

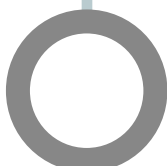
Acknowledgement

Use “ASK”



Storytelling

Knowledge



Use the **Knowledge** gained about the patient’s source of motivation to guide future counseling⁸



The patient’s **Storytelling** of their personal experiences holds the key to their motivation⁹

Build Trust Through Empathy

Communicating with empathy is critical for patients with obesity as it helps build trust, reduces feelings of stigma, and encourages open and honest communication.^{4,10}



Listen

I hear you

Clinician is **attentive** to the words and gestures of the patient

Validate

I recognize and accept your feelings

Clinician **recognizes the opinion** of the patient

Engage

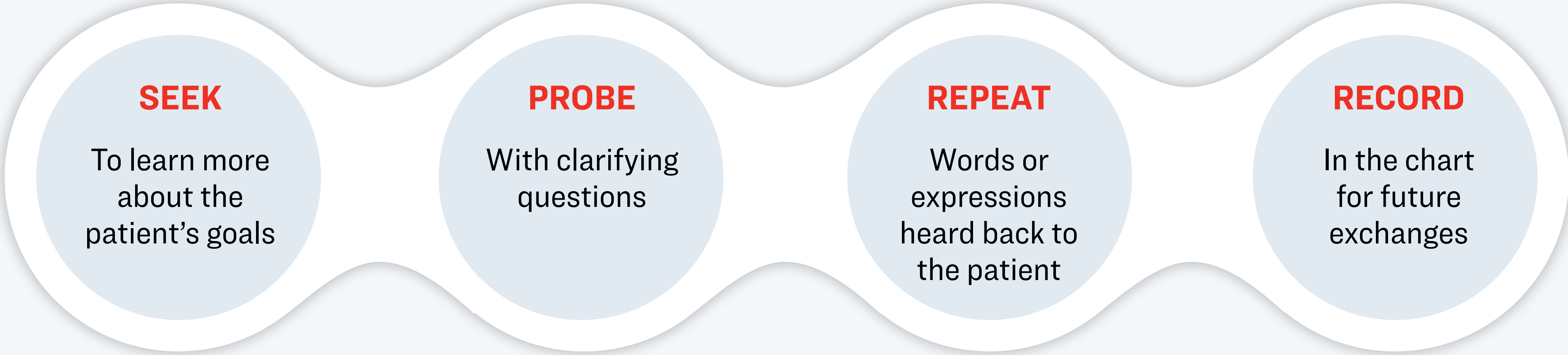
I want to help

Clinician **engages** with the patient and communicates their desire to support them



Set Personalized Goals^{4-6,8,11,12}

Define individual measures of success | Use the following process to help create meaningful goals with patients

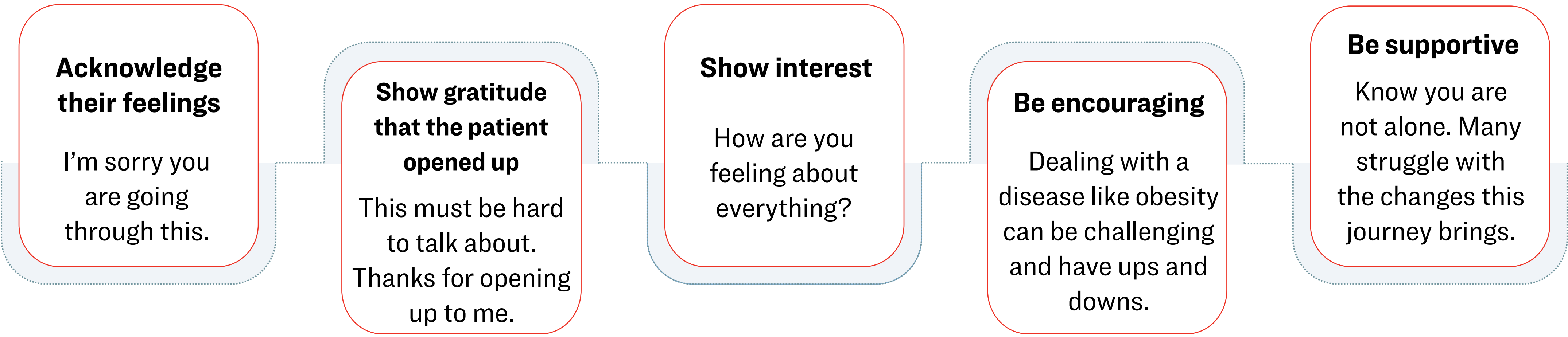


Applying Strategic Communication Techniques in Clinical Practice

Consider the following questions to gain a deeper understanding of the patients’ source of motivation.^{6,7,11}



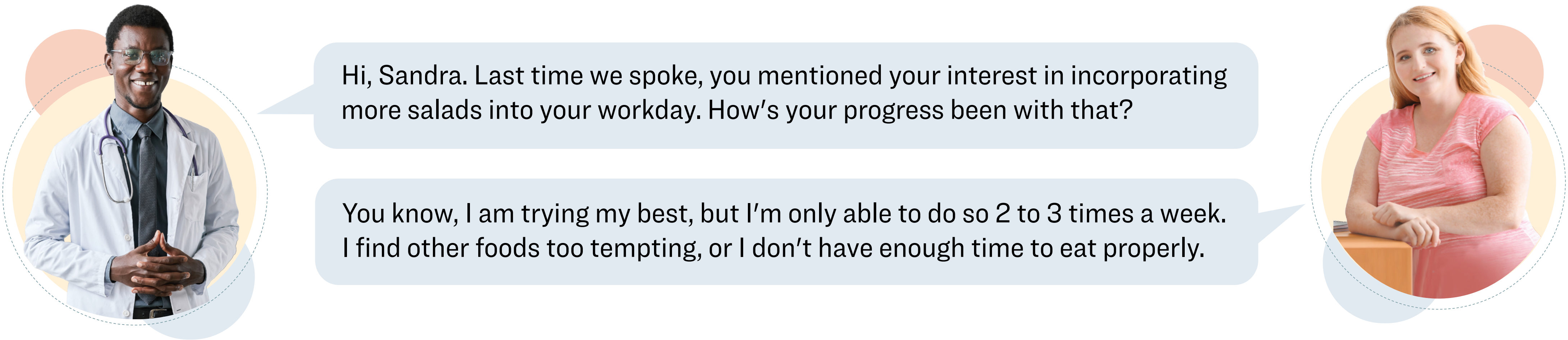
Here are some examples of how to show empathy and provide reassurance to the patient.^{4,8,10,11,13}



Let’s meet Sandra, who follows up with Dr. Johnson to discuss the progress and updates on her lifestyle plan (hypothetical case study).



Dr. Johnson uses the SEEK and PROBE steps⁴⁻⁶ in his conversation with Sandra.



In addition to SEEK and PROBE, the steps REPEAT and RECORD are also essential in setting personalized goals. These steps ensure that the patient’s goals are clearly documented and revisited in future consultations.

References:

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Scan to explore additional resources, including communication tools, tips, and best practices, for conversations in obesity care.

