



Information Gathering Techniques

Asking Open-Ended Questions – Open-ended questions give the client a wide range of options as to how to respond.

- e.g. “How are you today?”
“How have you been?”
“What seems to be the problem?”
“Tell me about (your problem, your family, etc)”
“How can I help you?”

Focusing – A focused question limits the area to which the client can respond but still encourages more than a yes or no type of answer.

- e.g. “Tell me about the pain in your arm.”
“You complained of anxiety last week I saw you. How has it been since then?”
“You only mentioned your family briefly. Could you tell me more about them?”

Probing – A probe is any question or statement used to pursue further detail about an area. Probes can be open-ended, focused, or closed-ended. Probes have to be handled carefully and sensitively.

- e.g. “Tell me more.”
“Can you tell me more?”
“How do you feel about that?”
“And ...”
“Um-hmm (followed by silence).”

Clarifying

- e.g. “I’m not sure I understood that completely. Could you repeat it?”
“I missed the last few words you said.”
“I don’t follow you. Can you say it another way?”



Paraphrasing – Giving back the client’s meaning of a phrase or sentence in your own words without judging.
e.g.

<u>Client’s Statement</u>	<u>Nurse’s Paraphrase</u>
I haven’t been sleeping well. I get up every morning at 3 am and stay awake looking at the ceiling.	You’ve been having trouble sleeping, especially in the morning.
The doctor told me to take one pill three times a day until the pills ran out, but I felt better the next day and stopped.	Although the doctor told you to take all the medication, you stopped when you felt better.
I like to lose weight, but you know, the holidays are coming up.	You think this is a tough time of year for you to lose the weight you want to.

Testing Discrepancies
e.g.

<u>Client’s Discrepancy</u>	<u>Nurse’s Response</u>
An older person gives you two different numbers on the same street as his address.	You just gave me another number a few minutes ago. Do you know which one is correct?
A hospitalized client comments on the frequency of family visits. Later the client admits to feeling lonely “all of the time.”	You say you’re lonely all of the time. Before you told me that the family visits often. I don’t understand.

Summarizing

e.g. “Let me see if I have everything we talked about. We have reviewed....and you still have some concerns about”
 “As I understand it,”
 “From what you’ve said,”

