Empathetic Communication Training

1. Promoting a culture of empathetic communication (exercises)

Understanding empathy:
Reminding employees of the emotional nature of the healthcare experience; helping employees recognize personal biases and avoid judgement.

→ **Exercise:** What personal biases do we bring to interactions, based on experiences?

Practicing mindfulness:
Being present, giving undivided attention, and avoiding distractions.

→ **Exercise:** What other ways can we show mindfulness to our patients and families? What can we commit to as a unit/clinic going forward?

Listening empathetically:
Listening for facts and emotions.

→ **Exercise:** Reviewing patient comments, discuss how experiences could have gone differently, and role-play what the dialogue should look like if this were happening.

Expressing empathy:
Acknowledging a person's unique circumstances and/or emotions with a statement.

→ **Exercise:** What phrases work, and what phrases don't work?

Monitoring body language:
Understanding the importance of posture, eye contact, facial expressions, and tone of voice; being attuned to the body language of others in order to facilitate deeper understanding.

→ **Exercise:** What body-language can identify disconnects between words and actions?

2. Sustaining a Culture of Empathetic Communication

→ Ensure that leaders are role models with the skills to coach/mentor employees
→ Promote a culture of peer-to-peer accountability
→ Teach communication skills at new-employee orientations

3. Additional Resources

→ It's Not About the Nail: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4EDhdAHrOg

→ Johnny the Bagger: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQlxLBqgFKc

→ Sesame Street Empathy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_1Rt1R4xbM

→ The Power of Words: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hzgzim5m7oU

→ Brene Brown on Empathy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw