# THE FOUR HABITS MODEL

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<td><strong>INVEST IN THE BEGINNING</strong></td>
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| Create rapport quickly | - Introduce self to everyone in the room  
- Refer to the patient by last name and Mr. or Ms. until a relationship has been established  
- Acknowledge wait  
- Make a social comment or ask a non-medical question to put patient at ease  
- Convey knowledge of patient’s history by commenting on prior visit or problem  
- Consider patient’s cultural background and use appropriate gestures, eye contact, and body language | | |
| Elicit the patient’s concerns | - Start with open-ended questions:  
  - “What would you like help with today?”  
  - Or, “I understand that you’re here for … Could you tell me more about that?”  
  - Speak directly with patient when using an interpreter  
  - Make eye contact and smile at patient so you are perceived as attentive. | | |
| Plan the visit with the patient | - Repeat concerns back to check understanding  
- Let patient know what to expect: “How about if we start with talking more about …, then I’ll do an exam, and then we’ll go over possible tests/ways to treat this? Sound OK?”  
- Prioritize when necessary: “Let’s make sure we talk about X and Y. It sounds like you also want to make sure we cover Z. If we can’t get to the other concerns, let’s…” | | |
| **ELICIT THE PATIENT’S PERSPECTIVE** | | | |
| Ask for the patient’s ideas | - Assess patient’s point of view:  
  - “What do you think might be causing your problem?”  
  - “What worries or concerns you most about this problem?”  
  - “What have you done to treat your illness so far?” “Have you sought help in your community?”  
- Ask about ideas from loved ones | | |
| Elicit specific request | | | |
| Explore the impact on the patient’s life | | | |
| Be open to the patient’s emotions | | | |
| Make an empathic statement | - Respond in a culturally appropriate manner to changes in body language and voice tone  
- Look for opportunities to use brief empathic comments  
- Name a likely emotion: “You seem really worried.”  
- Compliment patient on efforts to address problem | | |
| Convey empathy nonverbally | - Use a pause, touch, or facial expression  
- Use your emotional response as a clue to what patient might be feeling | | |
| Be aware of your own reactions | | | |
| **DEMONSTRATE EMPATHY** | | | |
| Deliver diagnostic information | - Frame diagnosis in terms of patient’s original concerns  
- Explain rationale for tests and treatments  
- Review possible side effects and expected course of recovery  
- Discuss lifestyle changes that are consistent with patient’s lifestyle, cultural values and beliefs  
- Provide resources, for example, written materials, in patient’s preferred language when possible | | |
| Provide education | | | |
| Involve the patient in making decisions | - Discuss treatment goals: express respect towards alternative healing practices  
- Assess patient’s ability and motivation to carry out plan  
- Explore barriers: “What do you think we could do to help overcome any problems you might have with the treatment plan?”  
- Test patient’s comprehension by asking patient to repeat instructions. “Just so I am sure that I have explained things well, would you tell me your understanding of the next steps?”  
- Set limits respectfully: “I can understand how getting that test makes sense to you. From my point of view, since the results won’t help us diagnose or treat your symptoms, I suggest we consider this instead.” | | |
| Complete the visit | - Summarize visit and review next steps  
- Ask for additional questions: “What questions do you have?”  
- Ask family members if they have other questions  
- Assess satisfaction: “Did you get what you needed?”  
- Close visit in a positive way  
  - “It’s been nice meeting you.”  
  - “See you in ____ months.”  
  - “Thanks for coming in.” | | |
| **PAYOFF** | | | |
| | - Establishes a welcoming atmosphere  
- Allows faster access to real reason for visit  
- Increases diagnostic accuracy  
- Requires less work  
- Minimizes “Oh by the way…” at the end of visit  
- Facilitates negotiating an agenda  
- Decreases potential for conflict | | |

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