Priority Topic: COUNSELLING

Key Features:
See also Priority Topic Lifestyle

1. In patients with mental health concerns, explore the role of counselling in treating their problems. (Intervention is not just about medication use.)

✓ Just do it! Remember: non-pharmacological therapy should always be part of the management plan!

2. When making the decision about whether to offer or refer a patient for counselling:
   a) Allow adequate time to assess the patient.
   b) Identify the patient’s context and understanding of her or his problem/situation.
   c) Evaluate your own skills. (Does the problem exceed the limits of your abilities?)
   d) Recognize when your beliefs may interfere with counselling.

What you should study:
✓ Approaches to Counselling AAFP 2009
✓ Counselling for Family Doctors CFP 2007

3. When counselling a patient, allow adequate time.

✓ Just do it!
4. When counselling a patient, recognize when you are approaching or exceeding boundaries (e.g., transference, counter-transference) or limits (the problem is more complex than you originally thought), as this should prompt you to re-evaluate your role.

What you should study:

✓ Transference and Countertransference 2011