ARTHUR KLEINMAN'S EIGHT QUESTIONS



Understanding your client's explanatory model helps you provide patient-centered care. The explanatory model includes the client's beliefs about their illness, the personal and social meaning they attach to their disorder, expectations about what will happen to them and what the provider will do, and their own therapeutic goals.

The concept of the explanatory model was first proposed by Arthur Kleinman, who developed a set of eight questions a provider can ask a client to learn more about their explanatory model. These questions are below. *Note that they are meant to be asked in order.*

ARTHUR KLEINMAN'S EIGHT QUESTIONS



I know different people have different ways of understanding illness-please help me understand how you see things.

1. What do you call your problem? What name does it have?
2. What do you think caused your problem?
3. Why do you think it started when it did?
4. What does your sickness do to you? How does it work?
5. How severe is it? Will it have a short or long course?
6. What do you fear most about your disorder?
7. What are the chief problems that your sickness has caused for you?
8. What kind of treatment do you think you should receive? What are the most important results you hope to receive from treatment?

SOURCE:

Kleinman, A., Eisenberg, L., & Good, B. (1978). Culture, illness, and care: clinical lessons from anthropologic and cross-cultural research. Annals of internal medicine, 88(2), 251-258.