



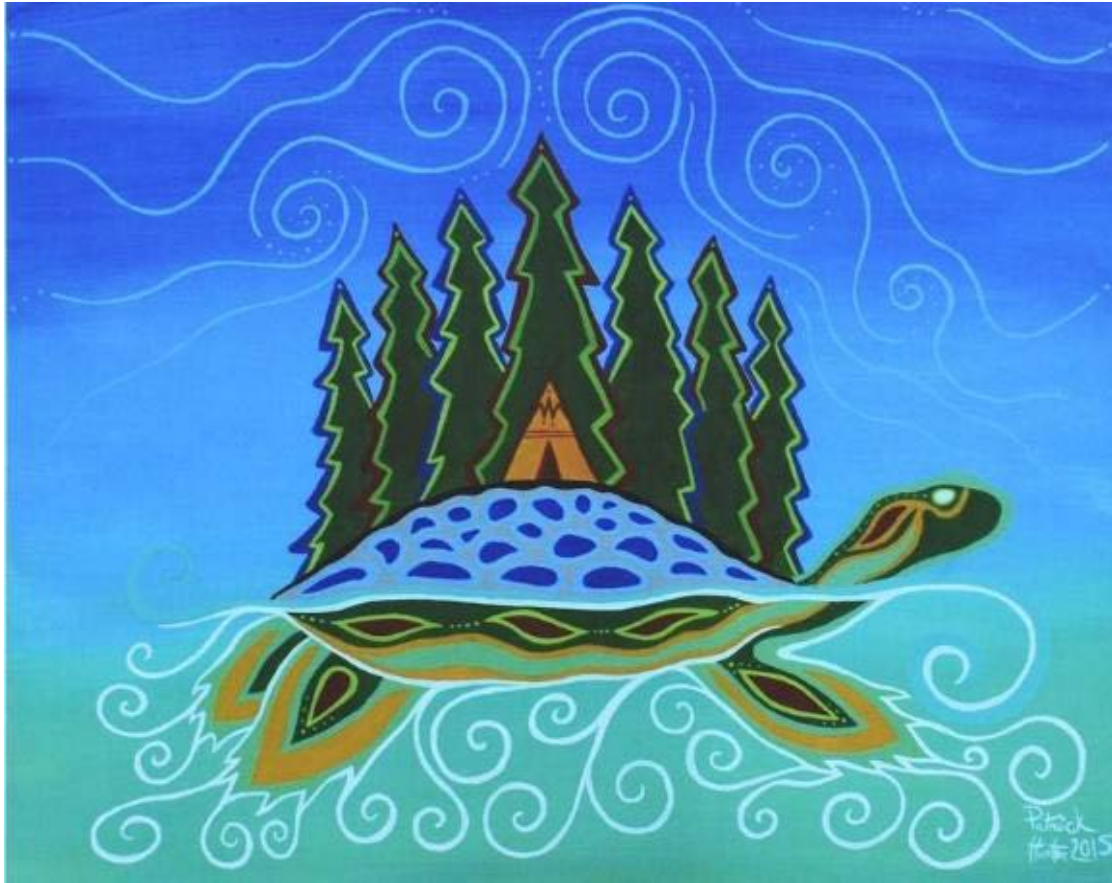
Developing emotionally intuitive
competency-based
palliative care skills

Adapting Your Communication Style Talking to Kids About Serious Illness and Loss



Canadian Home Care
Association

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Turtle Island By Patrick Hunter (www.patrickhunter.ca)

Land Acknowledgement

We recognize with humility and gratitude that Canada is located in the traditional, historical and ceded and unceded Lands of First Nation, Inuit and Métis Peoples.

On behalf of us all, we acknowledge and pay respect to the Indigenous peoples past, present and future who continue to work, educate and contribute to the strength of this country.

Guest Presenter



Shaindy Alexander,
BA, CCLS, M.Sc

**Clinical Manager for Child Life
Services at SickKids Hospital**

About the eiCOMPASS Knowledge Webinars

The eiCOMPASS is bringing together organizations providing home-based palliative care across Canada to improve nurses' and personal care workers' skills and provide emotionally intuitive care.

How is the Canadian Home Care Association accomplishing this?

- Building awareness of the Canadian Interdisciplinary Palliative Care Competency Framework.
- Providing Emotional Intelligence e-learning training courses.
- Supporting the learning with tools and the Knowledge Seminar series to reinforce skills.
- Through our SPRINT™ Accelerator we are supporting teams from across Canada to adopt and practice these skills.

Changing Attitudes



Developing
emotionally intuitive,
competency-based
palliative care skills

Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Palliative Care

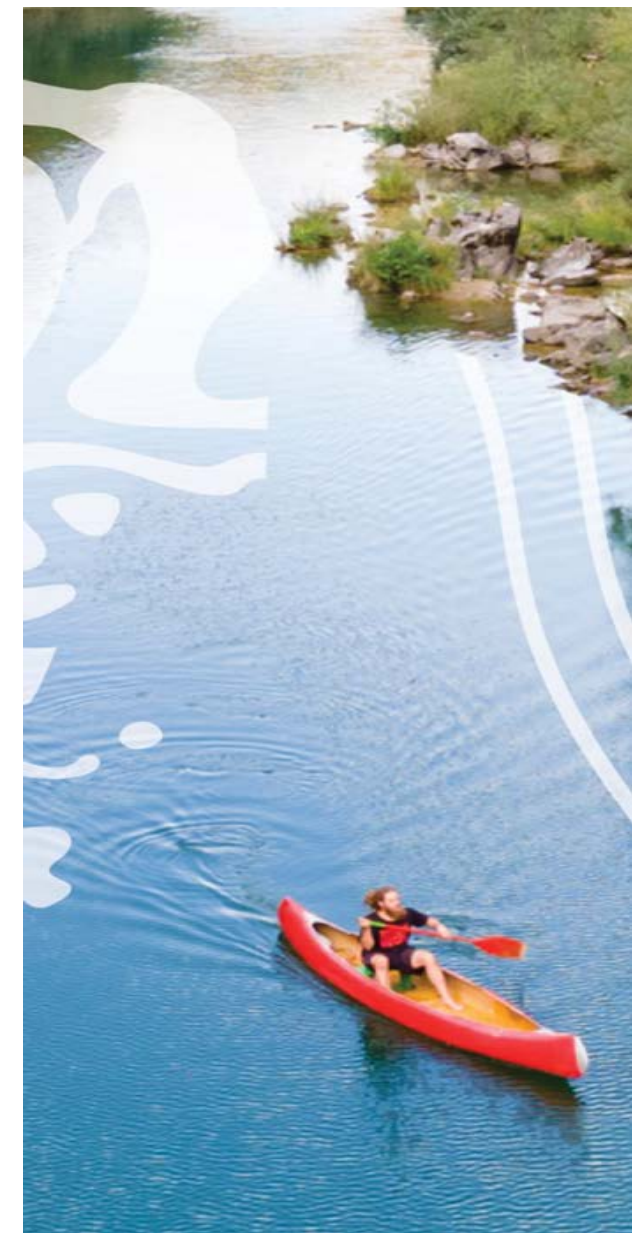
- Healthcare providers with high EI demonstrate **40% better patient outcomes** in terms of managing pain, anxiety, and depression. (Greenberg 2016)
- Family members and caregivers report a **20% higher satisfaction rate** when healthcare providers exhibit high EI - primarily due to better communication and emotional support. (Huber 2018)
- Nurses with higher levels of emotional intelligence showed a **50% reduction in burnout** compared to those with lower EI scores. (Lamarche 2018)
- Palliative care team members with higher EI scores were **25% more effective** in collaborative decision-making. (Whitaker, 2018)



Checking In



from The Centre for Compassion Inspired Health



Objectives



1. **Develop and enhance EI skills** such as social awareness and adaptability, to better connect with families during conversations about dying, death and grief.



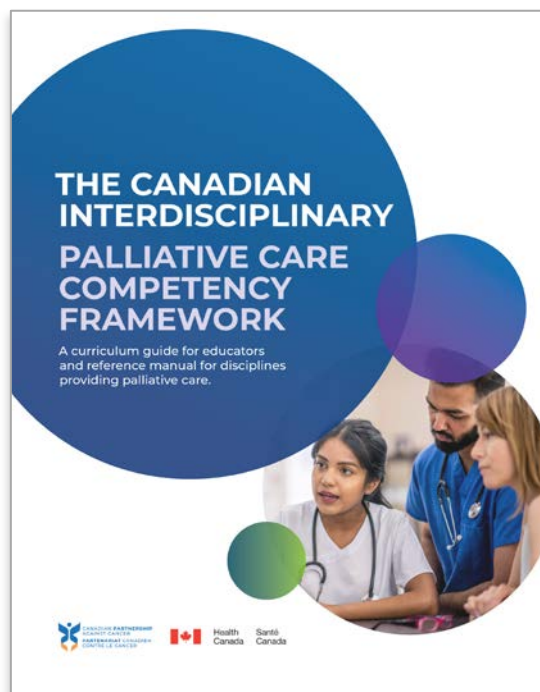
2. **Consider how to Adapt Communications** using the D.I.S.C. model to tailor the conversation.



3. **Understand practices to Adapt Communications for Kids** – to include toddlers, children and adolescents in clear and honest conversations about serious illness and encouraging them to ask questions.



3 Communication



Communication is essential in care of those affected by life-limiting illness. The person, their designated family or caregivers, and team may experience uncertainty and strong emotions. Effective communication helps to establish therapeutic relationships, ensures that people, and families and caregivers understand and participate in decision-making, enables interdisciplinary teamwork, and facilitates smooth transitions between care settings.

- Palliative Care Competency Framework



3 Communication

Competencies



3.1 Recognizing and respecting that each person and their designated family or caregiver(s) has a unique perspective

- Ask and seek to understand the unique perspective of each person



3.2. Listening and providing emotional support

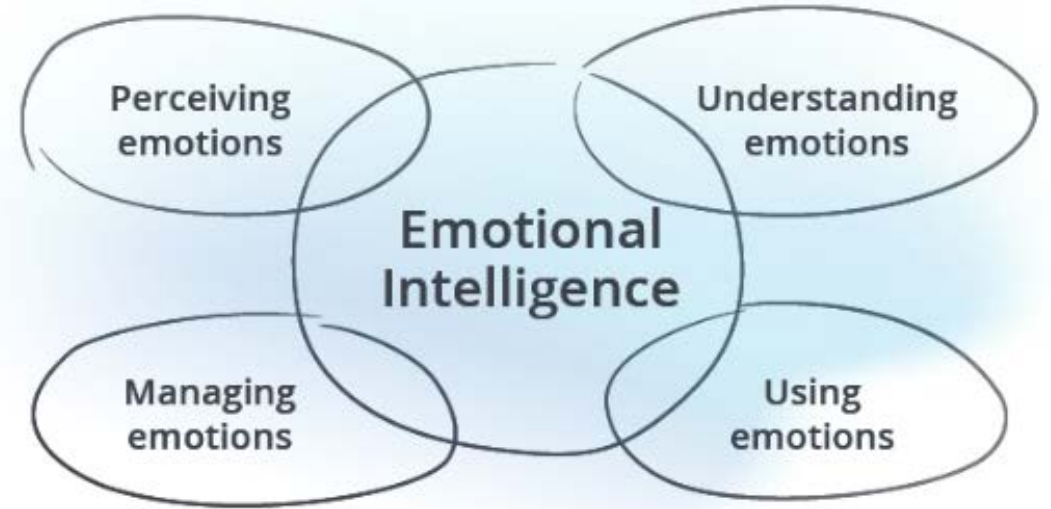
- Provide emotional support to the person and designated family or caregivers from diagnosis to bereavement.



3.3 Adapting Communication for Children

- Recognize that designated family or caregiver conversations may involve toddlers, children and adolescents, and that may require different communication approaches.

Competency Development and EI



Emotional intelligence isn't inherited, it's developed. The brain's neuroplasticity allows us to learn and improve our emotional skills throughout our lifetime.

Dr. Richard Davidson

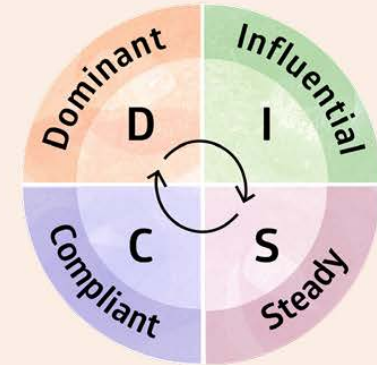
Neuroscientist and Founder and Chair of the Center for Healthy Minds

Adapting Communication

Adapting Communication

Emotional Intelligence in Palliative Care

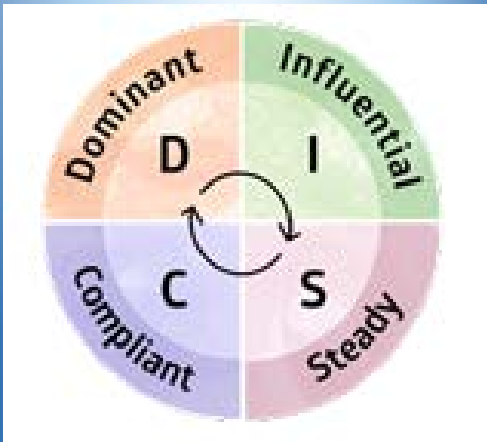
Communication: Using the D.I.S.C. Model



- People are different and so are the ways they like to talk and listen
- Adapting your communication style helps you be a better communicator, and tailor your approach:
 - *How does this person want to hear and receive information?*
 - *What tone and approach would work best to connect with this person?*

Adapting Communication

Type of Communicator	Communication Preferences	Information Preferences	Best Communication Approach
Dominant Communicators 17% of the population	Prefer quick, direct, and to-the-point conversations.	Facts, results, and outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Ask what they want to know · Notice their urgency ^w or when they may be frustrated · Observe confident posture and direct eye contact
Influential Communicators 38% of the population	Like to be social and enjoy lively discussions and sharing ideas.	Stories, personal experiences, and goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Engage in friendly, upbeat conversations · Show enthusiasm · Value their opinions
Steady Communicators 32 % of the population	Like discussions that are calm and thoughtful with time to think about what has been said.	Detailed explanations and practical details.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Be patient · Provide clear explanations · Give time for processing information
Compliant Communicators 13% of the population	Prefer details, evidence and explanations.	In-depth facts, data, and structured information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Use a precise, analytical approach · Provide detailed explanations · Share evidence if you have it



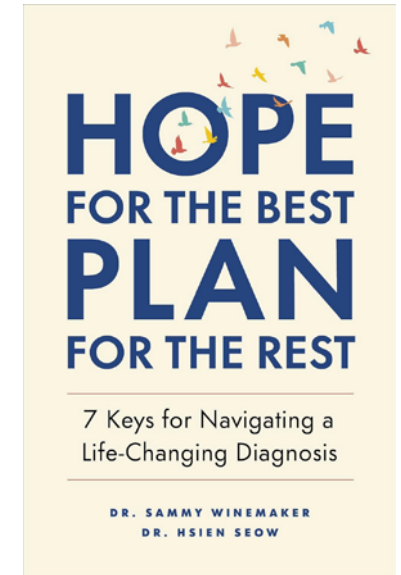
Adapting Communication

How do you prefer receiving information?

- Do you like to gather lots of information early on or learn as you go?
- When receiving serious information do you like people to be direct or do you prefer to focus only on good news?
- Do you like to consult with many people for advice or learn on your own?

Checking In

- “How are you feeling about this information so far? Please let me know if anything feels overwhelming or unclear.



Adapting Communication

A
Acknowledge

Notice and talk
about feelings,
yours and
others'.

C
Control

Handle your
emotions well,
staying calm in
different
situations.

T
Tailor

Adjust your
words based on
how you or
others feel,
making
conversations
kinder and
clearer.



PUT ON YOUR RAINBOOTS

INCLUDING AND SUPPORTING
CHILDREN THROUGH SERIOUS
ILLNESS, DEATH, DYING, AND GRIEF

Shaindy Alexander, BA, CCLS, MSc
shaindy.alexander@sickkids.ca



**WHAT ARE YOU
AFRAID OF?**



NOT MY JOB

SELF DOUBT

**WORRY ABOUT
UPSETTING THE
PARENTS/PATIENT**

**FORCED TO FACE
UNCERTAINTY**

DISCOMFORT

VULNERABLE

**WHAT IF I SAY THE
WRONG THING?**



SHELTER AND PROTECT



~~SHELTER AND~~
~~PROTECT~~

INCLUDE AND
SUPPORT



PARTNER WITH CAREGIVERS





Lead the way and Take their lead

Let children guide the conversation, so you can answer their underlying question, concern, or fear.



Chapter One

Billie B Brown has two messy pigtails, fifteen freckles and one wobbly tooth. Do you know what the B in Billie B Brown stands for?

“What have you heard?”

“Tell me about your journey so far with this illness”

“What’s changed for you since they got sick?”

“What do you call the type of sick they are dealing with?”

“There are a lot of big things happening right now. Let me share a bit about how we can help...” —



3 W'S

WONDERS

WORRIES

WISHES



**HOW DO I
FIX THIS?**



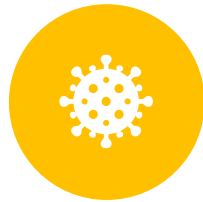
The 6 C's



What is it **CALLED**?



Did I **CAUSE** it?



Can I **CATCH** it/give it to others?



Can I **CURE** it?



Who will take **CARE** of me?



Will I always be **CONNECTED** to the people I care about?



LISTEN
HAS THE
SAME
LETTERS AS
SILENT



WARNING

YOU HAVE AN ADULT
BRAIN WITH ADULT
THOUGHTS...

DON'T MAKE
ASSUMPTIONS

Do

- Use simple explanations
- Explain why, when, where and how long
- Encourage questions and self expression
- Get down to the child's level
- Optimize parental involvement
- Provide choices and jobs for kids

Don't

- Answer questions you're not sure of
- Use terms without explanation
- Make promises you cannot keep



Talking to Kids about Serious Illness

The 6 C's and the 3 W's



The 6 C's

The 6 Cs are common concerns and questions that children have when they or someone they care about has a serious illness. They are:

- What is it **CALLED**?
- Can I **CATCH** it?
- Did I **CAUSE** it?
- Can I **CURE** it?
- Who will take **CARE** of me?
- How can I **CONNECT** to people I care about?

It's important to address these concerns even if your child hasn't brought them up. Many children wonder about these things but don't always share

What is it CALLED?

It is important to name the condition, illness, or event that is causing the serious illness. Just calling the illness "sick" can be confusing and scary for young children. They might wonder if they or someone they care about could become seriously ill the next time they are "sick". Naming the condition allows for greater understanding and an opportunity for kids to ask questions. Providing children and youth with information that is honest, timely, and appropriate to their age and stage of development can help them build trust and feel better able to cope with the situation.

Can I CATCH it?

Most children are familiar with colds and flu – which they know they can "catch". If your child is sick with an illness that isn't contagious, reassure other children that they can't catch it or spread it. It is also important to share this information directly with your child that is ill, as they might worry about getting people around them sick. *Clarke explains that they can safely*

My Life, Their Illness

Activity Book

Welcome! These activities will help you think about how someone else's illness is affecting your life.

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We can't keep them
from suffering, but
we can try to keep
them from suffering
for the wrong
reasons



Thank you for
listening!



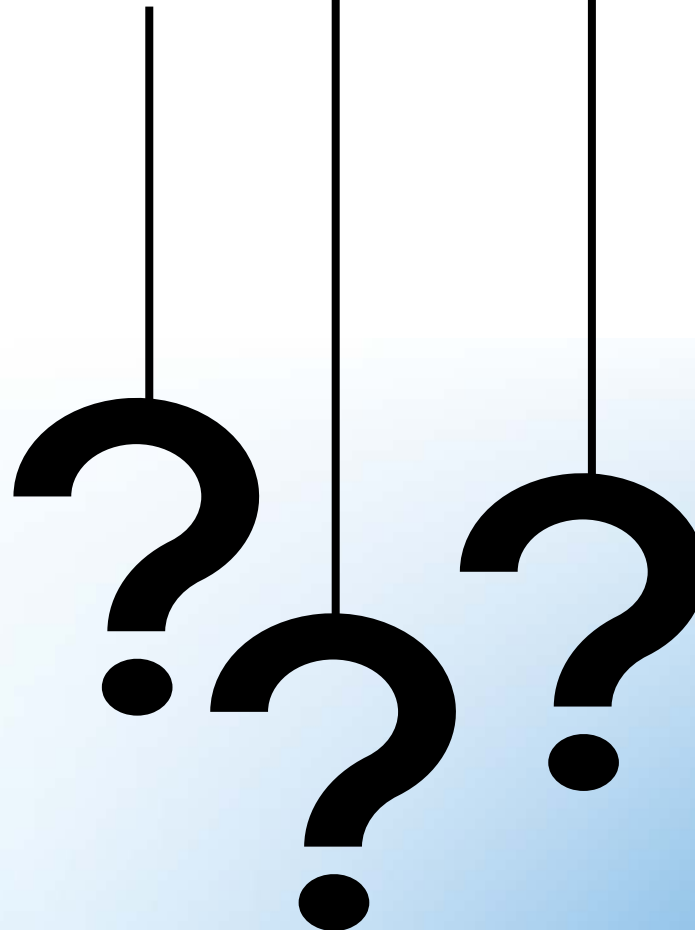
A person wearing a white t-shirt and a dark apron is holding a large, brown paper bag. The bag is the central focus of the image. The background is dark and out of focus. The text is overlaid on the bag and the person's torso.

What is one thing that you
will take with you from this
workshop?

Resources

- Virtual Hospice www.virtualhospice.ca
- Kids Grief: kidsgrief.ca
- Dougy Centre: www.dougy.org
- Mind Your Mind: www.mindyourmind.ca
- Children and Youth Grief Network:
<https://www.childrenandyouthgriefnetwork.com/>
- Winston's Wish: www.winstonswish.org.uk

Questions?



Upcoming Knowledge Webinars

February 19, 2025 | 12:00 pm–1:00 pm ET

Communication and Shared Decision-Making

Discover how empathetic communication and shared decision-making can align care plans with patients' values, improving their experience and outcomes.



March 19, 2025 | 12:00 pm–1:00 pm ET

Attending to Grief and Loss – Empathy in Action

Build the skills to support families, colleagues, and yourself through grief and loss, fostering healing and emotional resilience.

