

Compassion is the Best Placebo:

Managing Anxiety in Endodontic Microsurgery

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4 Strategies For Communicating with Patients

1. Establishing Rapport

- Develop a trusting relationship with the patient so that a free exchange of information is possible

2. Listening

- Reflective listening is an effective way to respond to anger

3. Building Empathy

- Trust cannot be earned if the patient feels a lack of concern from the clinician

4. Use Nonverbal Strategies

- Silence can be a useful tool when listening to any patient, especially a frightened one



Anxiety and Fear



Conscious Sedation Techniques



1. Pharmacosedation analgesics



2. Sedatives



4. Inhalation



5. Intravenous administration

6. Local Anesthetics

FEAR:

- Individuals' psychological and emotional response to a perceived immediate and identifiable threat or danger involving the sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system

ANXIETY:

- Emotional arousal compared with fear, but the source of the threat is ambiguous, ill defined, and not immediate
- Anxious patients may express their feelings to clinician or staff in the form of anger or blame
- The emotional and physiologic response a patient reports when imagining a dental appointment

DENTAL PHOBIA:

- Special case of dental fear, characterized as a consistent and persistent fear that often leads to avoidance

EVENT	VALUE	EVENT	VALUE
Death of a spouse or partner	100	Son or daughter leaving home	29
Divorce	73	Trouble with in-laws	29
Marital separation	65	Outstanding personal achievement	28
Jail term	63	Spouse begins or stops work	26
Personal injury	53	Starting or finishing school	26
Marriage	50	Change in living conditions	25
Fired from work	47	Revision of personal habits	24
Marital reconciliation	45	Trouble with boss	23
Retirement	45	Change in work hours, conditions	20
Changes in family member's health	44	Change in residence	20
Pregnancy	40	Change in schools	20
Sex difficulties	39	Change in recreational habits	19
Addition to family	39	Change in religious activities	19
Business readjustment	39	Change in social activities	18
Change in financial status	38	Mortgage or loan under \$10,000	17
Death of a close friend	37	Change in sleeping habits	16
Change to different line of work	36	Change in # of family gatherings	15
Change in # of marital arguments	35	Change in eating habits	15
Mortgage or loan over \$10,000	31	Vacation	13
Foreclosure or mortgage or loan	30	Christmas season	12
Change in work responsibilities	29	Minor violation of the law	11

Source: Reprinted from *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 11 (2), T.H. Holmes and R.H. Rahe, "The Social Readjustment Rating Scale," 1967, with permission from Elsevier.

References:

1. Cohen S, Hargreaves KM. *Pathways of the pulp*. 11th ed. St. Louis, Mo. Elsevier Mosby, 2011.
2. Arens' *Practical Lessons in Endodontic Surgery*, 1998

