the bathe technique
Use of the B.A.T.H.E. Technique in communicating with patients

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... Ever felt “stuck”?
A story:

How I Learned

The BATHE technique
Numerous studies confirm that emotional problems are prevalent in patients who present to family physicians. Few of these patients are referred for psychiatric care, in part because the current managed care climate discourages specialty mental health referrals. Even when patients are referred, they are often reluctant to follow through with mental health specialists for a variety of reasons. Therefore, family physicians should develop strategies to manage these patients while simultaneously tending to their medical problems. In particular, they need an effective method of incorporating psychotherapy into the patient visit. The BATHE technique is a form of psychotherapeutic intervention that is designed to fit smoothly into a 15-minute appointment.
“Numerous studies confirm that emotional problems are prevalent in patients who present to family physicians” .... “Many patients are reluctant to follow through with mental health specialists”

“Need to develop strategies to manage these patients while simultaneously tending to their medical problems”

“The BATHE technique is a form of psychotherapeutic intervention that is designed to fit smoothly into a 15-minute appointment”
The BATHE TECHNIQUE

- Is very easy to do
- Takes very little time
- Is therapeutic to patient
- Enhances patient AND clinician satisfaction
- Enhances the therapeutic relationship
Mrs. Jones: A 48 year old woman with:

DM II, HTN, recently admitted for Asthma exacerbation, PNA.

Also hx of Domestic Violence, Depression, Anxiety, recent loss of job and divorce.

She is here to see you in clinic 2 weeks after hospital discharge... (15 min)
Background?
(more questions)
Empathy?

(“That sounds really hard”)
? Problem-Solving?
The B.A.T.H.E. Technique to the rescue!
Patient feels heard & supported, and Clinician still has some control re: flow and time
I'M INTRIGUED

TELL ME MORE

What, exactly, IS this BATHE Technique?
BACKGROUND: 
How have you been? 
What’s been going on?

AFFECT: 
How do you feel about...?

TROUBLES: 
What troubles you the MOST about...?

HANDLING: 
How are you handling (coping) ?

EMPATHY: 
I am so sorry that ... 
Thank you for sharing ...
Background
Affect
Troubles
Handling
Empathy
Demonstration

( the old way )

the BATHE technique
Background
Affect
Troubles
Handling
Empathy
Where/When can I use the BATHE technique?

A. In hospital
B. In clinic
C. Before a procedure
D. When Delivering Bad News
E. In End of Life discussions
F. Anytime you are “stuck”
G. All of the Above
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G. All of the Above
With Whom Can I Use the BATHE technique?

A. With patients
B. With friends
C. With family
D. With neighbors *
E. With yourself ! *
F. With Anyone, Anytime, & Anywhere
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A SLIGHT VARIATION

BACKGROUND:
How have you been?
What’s been going on?

AFFECT:
How do you feel about...?

TROUBLES:
What troubles you the MOST about...?

HANDLING:
How are you handling (coping)?

EMPATHY:
I am so sorry that ...
Thank you for sharing ...

What is the best thing about...?
Is there anything good about...?

How do you WANT to handle it....
And now,

a brief message about

“worms”...
Don’t worry about any “can of worms”
Because now you have an effective tool!
(PS there are no “worms”)
Background?  
Empathy?  
Problem-solve?  

Yikes!
No worries! Now it’s time for the BATHE technique.
Thanks for listening... I feel better. I can talk about other things now..
I am glad that I could hear you and that you feel better! We have some time... Can we talk about your asthma now?...
“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

~ Maya Angelou ~
BATHE-ing

BACKGROUND

AFFECT

TROUBLES

HANDLING

EMPATHY
the **bathe** technique

I love to B.A.T.H.E !