

Model for Personal Awareness Training

- a) Ensure personal awareness as a learner's objective
- b) Recognize previously unrecognized responses
 - i) Consistent with the resident's comfort level, faculty respectfully raise emotional responses to their awareness and link them to a behavioral response
 - ii) Later, we sometimes can facilitate learner's understanding of the origin and scope of the newly recognized responses
- c) Determine if the unrecognized responses (emotions, behaviors) are helpful or harmful
- d) Change harmful responses, the ones that do not mirror the patient's reality; e.g., anger at all alcoholics
- e) Encourage helpful responses, the ones that do mirror the patient's reality; e.g., feeling empathic
- f) None of the above work occurs on an individual basis but, rather, in a group setting, nor are we conducting psychotherapy; no more than 5-10 minutes at any one critique is devoted to personal awareness, its impact being from ongoing work over time and the group's support.
- g) To facilitate this work, we also encourage residents to work on improving their own *emotional awareness* in general; e.g., read stories of courage in face of patient suffering, read/watch emotion-laden material, re-visit music and art, and work with emotional people. We also recommend *other pursuits* that can broaden their emotional lives; e.g., physical exercise, mindfulness and other meditation techniques, taking personal time.

