Kleinman’s Explanatory Model

Conducting a successful assessment while simultaneously building a trusting relationship can be challenging. The Kleinman Explanatory Model uses a narrative approach to help gather information through an informal approach, guided by a list of assessment questions and topics. This model takes into account world-view, culture, social context, and spirituality.

Explore a client’s understanding of their health concern by asking:

1. What do you call your problem? What name do you give it?
2. What do you think has caused it?
3. Why did it start when it did?
4. What does your sickness do to your body? How does it work inside you?
5. How severe is it? Will it get better soon or take longer?
6. What do you fear most about your sickness?
7. What are the chief problems your sickness has caused for you (personally, family, work, etc.)?
8. What kind of treatment do you think you should receive? What are the most important results you hope to receive from the treatment?

Tip: Try and blend the timing and phrasing of these questions into your discussion with your client in a non-formal manner.

Reference: