

Gathering a History

The components of a history and its benefits

History of Present Illness

- Take notes if you need to
- Why are you here what led you to this program
- What have you been suffering with and how long
 - When did it first start and are you currently stable (sober)
 - Have you tried quitting before, were you successful, what led to your relapse/failure
- Go into as much detail as you can about their life as it pertains to the issue they are currently struggling with
 - Take as much time is necessary (days/weeks)

Medical/Psychiatric History

- Learn what medical problems they are dealing with as well as any psychiatric problems
 - Have they attempted suicide, what is a serious attempt
- Are they suffering from any serious medical issues you need to be aware of
- Are they on any psychiatric or general medical medications

Formulate a Plan

- Come to an agreement on a goal for the client
 - Create SMART goals
 - What are the steps necessary to achieve this goal
 - Goals should be centered around the illness they are struggling with from the history of present illness

Benefits of Gathering a detailed history

- Will help you give the best advice to the client
- Will help the client gain an objective view of their life
- Come up with relevant strategies to help the client to succeed
 - Not what you or anyone else impose on them
 - Success to one person may not be for everyone else
- When you see the client making poor decisions you can remind them of their past history and how its effected them in the past
- You and the client are now familiar, the “you don’t know me” defense is now invalid