The role of emotions in hearing healthcare

Emotions and...

...hearing loss:
1. Emotional wellbeing of patient and family member is impacted by the hearing loss and the problems.1
2. Speech intelligibility can improve or worsen depending on the emotion with which a sentence is spoken.1

...decision making:
Emotions influence our behavior and decision-making processes.2

Understanding the central role of emotions is important to:

understand better patient and family member.

develop a strong therapeutic alliance.

reinforce the motivation to address communication difficulties.

Pitfalls when discussing emotions with patient and family member:

- Responding with too little empathy: emotionally focused communications in HCP-patient communication3
- Overestimating own communication abilities: of cases, the speaker is misunderstood by the listener even though he thinks he is being understood4

Emotional Communication in Hearing Questionnaire (EMO-CheQ):
17-item questionnaire designed to better understand communication handicap

Questions include:
- It is harder for me to identify emotions expressed by others in a noisy environment.
- I find it challenging to identify emotions expressed by others if someone is talking at the same time.
- Difficulties identifying emotions in speech make me feel left out in groups.

Benefits of effective HCP-patient communication:
1. Higher uptake of hearing aids
2. Better treatment adherence
3. Greater patient satisfaction

Communication Skills: use e.g. attentive listening, empathy, and open-ended questions
Communication Training: understand, learn and practice communication regularly
Collaborative Communication: use two-way exchange of communication
Conflict Management: identify problematic barriers and foster understanding of both patient and family member’s perspectives
Health Beliefs: identify beliefs and values of patient and family member and address perceived barriers