The Communication Tool Belt
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Version 1.1

1) Physical Tools (using self and environment)
   a) Location
   b) Body language
   c) Arrangement
   d) Mirroring
   e) Appearance
   f) Attendees

2) Emotional Tools (interacting with emotions)
   a) Empathy
   b) Rapport
   c) Active Listening:
      (1) Therapeutic Presence
      (2) Echoing “so I hear you saying”
   d) Silence
   e) Naming (emotion/action)
   f) Normalize
   g) Validate
   h) Rationalize
   i) De-escalation
   j) Touch
   k) Self-Monitoring

3) Cognitive Tools (helping pt/family understand)
   a) Barrier Identification:
      i) Knowledge deficits
      ii) Language barriers
      iii) Cultural barriers
      iv) Psychosocial barriers
      v) Learning disabilities
      vi) Hearing disabilities
      vii) Visual disabilities

4) Orchestrating Tools (leading/guiding the conversation)
   a) Atmosphere
   b) Mode:
      i) Verbal
      ii) Written
      iii) Open vs. close ended questions
      iv) Yes or No questions
      v) Intentional Body Movement Communication
   c) Approach:
      i) Paternalism (“owning” plan of care)
      ii) Aligning (allying, partnering)
      iii) Permissive (accommodating, avoiding)
      iv) Neutral (impartial)
   d) Delivery:
      i) Titration of Info (Simple vs. detailed)
      ii) Organization/Prioritizing
      iii) Tempo
         (1) Rate
         (2) Rhythm
            (a) Pauses
            (b) Interrupting
            (c) Redirecting (steering conversation)
      iv) Manner: Soft (gentle) to Direct (blunt)

b) Teaching Methods:
   i) Interpretation of medical language
   ii) Visual aids
   iii) Analogy/metaphor
   iv) Gestures
   v) Reframing
   c) Understanding Checks
      i) Summarize
      ii) ‘Take one for the team’ clarification
      iii) Request questions
      iv) Request a teach-back