KEY CONCEPTS

Facilitators' strategies for managing emotions during post simulation debriefing

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Simulation scenarios may evoke strong emotional responses for learners hindering learning outcomes [1,2]. Facilitators need to develop skills to recognize and appropriately respond to the emotions of the learners. It is also important to attend to our own emotions as facilitator's too. We have shared an acronym that summarizes strategies a facilitator may consider in managing emotions during a post-simulation debriefing [3,4]. The key concepts illustrated here as an infographic framework was developed from a Focus Group qualitative content analysis depicting effective strategies a facilitator can use for managing debriefing following highly emotional simulation scenarios. This framework was locally piloted and reviewed by experts.

FEELS Framework

FACILITATORS' STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING EMOTIONS DURING POST SIMULATION DEBRIEFING

F FACILITATOR PERSONA
- **Being Direct** : Be straightforward and transparent
- **Being Patient** : Hold on to the pause
- **Being Judgmatic** : Judge actions, not people
- **Being Authentic** : Offer genuine perspectives
- **Being Inclusive** : Involve all participants

E EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
- **Questioning** : Ask open ended questions to explore
- **Paraphrasing** : Restate responses to clarify meaning
- **Validating** : Acknowledge feelings and experiences
- **Reflecting** : Mirror back emotions to encourage awareness
- **Summarising**: Recap for shared understanding and to settle emotions

E EMPATHY
- **Observing** : Notice subtle emotional cues
- **Acknowledging** : Name the emotions and feelings
- **Normalising** : State that these emotions are expected
- **Comforting** : Offer reassurance and support
- **Gaining Trust** : Be sensitive to psychological safety

L LISTENING
- **Focusing** : Give undivided attention
- **Respecting** : Value each input and emotion
- **Allowing emotional processing** : Pause for emotions
- **Clarifying** : Ask follow up questions to clarify
- **Supportive body language** : Use open physical gestures and postures

S STRUCTURED APPROACH
- **Engaging** : Actively involve all participants
- **Emotional unpacking** : Explore emotions before analysing
- **Navigating group emotions** : Balance differing emotions to maintain group cohesion
- **Being flexible** : Adapting the approach to the emotional needs of the participants
- **Pacing the debrief** : Pause or proceed based on the emotional readiness of the group

Declarations
Authors' contributions

All authors participated in the conceptualization, planning and design of the qualitative research process described in this key concept paper. All authors contributed to the design of the infographic. All authors have followed the instructions for authors and have read and approved the manuscript.

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Competing interests

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