Group Discussion Questions
The following questions can be discussed as a class or in small groups and provides students with the opportunity to talk about the core concepts this module is based on.

1. After reading the American Dietetic Association’s position paper on Total Diet, referenced above, discuss the psychosocial consequences of good and bad food messages on dietary patterns. List 3 ways this may lead to confusion and frustration.

Facilitator Discussion Points:
  • Categorizing foods as good or bad promotes dichotomous thinking and leads individuals to make judgments in terms of black/white or, all/none, or good/bad and do not incorporate abstract or complex options into their decision.
  • An example is the quick fix approach to weight control and as long as someone stays on the diet the person feels a sense of perceived control. However when a tempting food is present loss of control may occur or interpersonal conflict or guilt if the food is eaten.
  • To help the individual make well-reasoned food choices and adopt behavior patterns that are sustainable overtime is the food and nutrition professional’s responsibility.

2. Discuss how using a total diet approach may decrease or eliminate confusion and frustration.

Facilitator Discussion Points:
  • The value of a food should be determined within the context of the total diet because classifying foods as “good” or “bad” may foster unhealthful eating behaviors.
  • No single food or type of food ensures good health. Rather, the consistent excess of food, or absence of a type of food over time, may diminish the likelihood of a healthful diet.
  • Healthful eating may be blindly defined as eating according to the latest fad focusing on a few single foods to include or to delete from one’s overall eating pattern
  • Promote variety, proportionality, moderation, and gradual improvement that include foods from all MyPyramid food groups. Emphasize food patterns, rather than individual nutrients or foods.

3. Contrast a direct with a guided counseling style.

Facilitator Discussion Points:
  • When is each style appropriate?
  • What would a counseling session sound like in terms of what the registered dietitian would say using the two different styles.
  • What tools for conversation are unique for a guided counseling style?
4. After reading A Celebration of Culture—A Food Guide For Educators
http://www.dairycouncilofca.org/PDFs/CulturalFoodGuide.pdf

- Which cultural food traditions are you most familiar with? Which food traditions are you least familiar with?
- Which foods are you not familiar with? Identify two ways that you could become more familiar with cultural foods commonly consumed by people residing in your community.