

Table 2.1 *Interview schedule: patient's experience of renal dialysis*


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(A) *Dialysis*

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- 1 Can you tell me the brief history of your kidney problem from when it started to you beginning dialysis?
- 2 Could you describe what happens in dialysis, in your own words?
- 3 What do you do when you are having dialysis?
- 4 How do you feel when you are dialysing?  
prompt: physically, emotionally, mentally.
- 5 What do you think about?
- 6 How do you feel about having dialysis?  
prompt: some people – relief from previous illness, a bind.
- 7 How does dialysis/kidney disease affect your everyday life?  
prompt: work, interests, relationships.
- 8 If you had to describe what the dialysis machine means to you, what would you say?  
prompt: what words come to mind? what images? do you have a nickname for it?

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(B) *Identity*

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- 9 How would you describe yourself as a person?  
prompt: what sort of person are you? most important characteristics: happy, moody, nervy.
- 10 Has having kidney disease and starting dialysis made a difference to how you see yourself?  
prompt: if so, how do you see yourself now as different to before you started dialysis? how would you say you have changed?
- 11 What about compared to before you had kidney disease?
- 12 What about the way other people see you: members of your family? friends? has this changed?

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(C) *Coping*

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- 13 What does the term illness mean to you? how do you define it?
- 14 How much do you think about your own physical health?
- 15 Do you see yourself as being ill?  
prompt: always, sometimes? would you say you were an ill person?
- 16 On a day to day basis how do you deal with having kidney disease (the illness)?  
prompt: do you have particular strategies for helping you? ways of coping? (practical, mental)
- 17 Do you think about the future much?

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3 Try to use open not closed questions. Closed questions encourage Yes/No answers rather than getting the respondent to open up about his or her thoughts and feelings.

*Bad:* Should the president resign?

*Better:* What do you think the president should do now?

A strategy often employed in this type of interviewing is to try to encourage the person to speak about the topic with as little prompting from the interviewer as possible. This point can be seen as a development of the requirement to ask neutral rather than leading questions. One might