

# **National Youth Leaders Certification**

A Program by Division of Youth,  
Ministry of Youth, Sports & Culture

Produced by Jan Smith



## Acknowledgements

This manual was produced by Jan Smith under the leadership and direction of Division of Youth Director Darron Turnquest. This manual reflects their commitment to producing a resource that is both methodically sound and highly practical.

Materials were used from a variety of sources including but not limited to the researched-based Act for Youth Positive Youth Development 101 manual by Jutta Dotterweich, Leadership Skills MTD Training by Sean McPheat, Strengthening Non-Profits: A Capacity Builder's Resource Library by the National Resource Center, Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical approach by Harry Hatry and Therese van Houten and the Commonwealth of Learning.

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## Introduction

**Mission:** *To aid young people in the successful transition into adulthood*

**Program Vision:** *To equip every youth worker in this country with the proper tools to successfully build our youth.*

**Motto:** *Engaging, Enabling and Empowering Our Youth*

In the Bahamas, we feel the urgency for a change as we witness youth violence and death across our nation leaving many of our youth feeling abandoned. But we know all hope is not lost. Each one must do what he or she can to help bring about change.

You have decided to be an agent of change by working with our youth. While laudable, we know that this journey to helping our youth is not easy. Sometimes we want to help but do not know where to start or we may know where to start but the resources and tools may not be there. Of course, every action we take with our youth we want to know that it helps and doesn't harm, that it nurtures and doesn't neuter, and that it inspires but doesn't inhibit growth.

We, the Division of Youth, have encountered many worthy and passionate people like you, who are willing to commit the time, effort and even personal resources to bring about change for our youth and consequently, our country. We have been waiting for you and are excited to have you!

At the Division of Youth, we wish to partner with you and want to be there every step of the way. We know and understand that you need sharp tools to assist with building our youth. We want to ensure that every youth leader in this country has access to these tools. As Winston Churchill said, "*Give us the tools, and we will finish the job.*" Our country desperately needs you to finish the job of youth work.

It is for this reason that we first started the Youth Leaders Certification Course. It is our aim to:

- Train, expose and sharpen the skills of present youth leaders in techniques and methods in youth work;
- Provide training in leadership skills;
- Assist youth leaders and youth workers in developing competencies necessary to effectively manage young people, and,
- Formulate basic concepts regarding the role of the youth organization.

Beyond this, however, we also want to strengthen social support systems and collaborate with key stakeholders in youth development; promote the participation of young people in decision making; professionalize the youth work sector and monitor and evaluate progress in youth development. Here's our secret: *we cannot do this without you!* We implore you to keep going even in those moments that you feel you cannot go on anymore. And, yes, please let us know how we can help!

In the interim, we want you to know that we appreciate you. We hope you will enjoy your learning journey in this course.

## Manual Content

This manual is divided into 12 modules.

Module 1	Positive Youth Development
Module 2	Adolescent Development
Module 3	Leadership
Module 4	Designing a Researched-Based Program
Module 5	Effective Communication
Module 6	Introduction to Counselling
Module 7	Ethical and Cultural Issues in Counselling
Module 8	Dealing with Child Abuse Issues
Module 9	Dealing with Substance Abuse
Module 10	Mediating and Resolving Conflict
Module 11	Career and Vocational Guidance
Module 12	Coping with Stress

This Youth Manual provides youth workers with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to effectively support the healthy development of children and youth in their care. There are twelve (12) modules in this course. **Positive Youth Development** emerged after research revealed there is greater success in youth work if we focus more on strengthening positives as opposed to reducing negatives. **Adolescent Development** provides an understanding of why adolescents make risky decisions. Indubitably for you to be effective, we must ensure you have the **Leadership** skills necessary to guide our young people. Great leaders are even more effective in strong programs so we will make sure you can **Design a Researched-Based Program** and have **Effective Communication Skills** to truly make a difference in the lives of youth. We are aware that adolescents experience a lot of difficulties as they transition into adulthood so we provide an **Introduction to Counselling** being sure to review **Ethical and Cultural Issues in Counselling** so you will have the ability to navigate the complex situations. Youth workers in the Bahamas constantly find themselves **Dealing with Child Abuse Issues** and **Dealing with Substance Abuse** among youth so we will ensure you can recognize the signs of abuse. **Mediating and Resolving Conflict** will provide the knowledge necessary to manage conflicts as they arise. You will gain the skills to provide **Career and Vocational Guidance** as youth enter the workforce. Finally, this process of mentoring our youth is not easy so our final topic will advise how to **Cope with Stress**.

## Format

Most units include the following sections:

- Introduction
- Objectives
- Lessons
- Activities
- Summary
- Glossary
- References
- Notes Page

For you to be successful in this course, we suggest you allocate 3 to 4 hours each week to studying the materials and preparing for the upcoming class. This course will be assessed by assignments, tests, field work and presentations.

The following grading system will be used in awarding final grades for academic performance in this course:

### Pass Grades

Grades	Percentage (%)	Description
A+	85+	Pass with Distinction
A	78 – 84	Pass with Distinction
B+	71 – 77	Pass with Credit
B	64 – 70	Pass with Credit
C+	57 – 63	Pass
C	50 – 56	Pass

### Fail Grades

Grade	Percentage (%)	Description
D	40-49%	Work below the standard required for a pass
E	40 (less than)	Very weak performance or failure to complete to the satisfaction of the examiner

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# **Module 1:**

# **Positive Youth Development**

## Introduction

Positive Youth Development is different from traditional youth services offered in the Bahamas in that emphasis is placed on encouraging positive behavior as opposed to reducing negative behaviour. It is believed that by encouraging positive outcomes like competence, character, connections, confidence and contribution, youth will naturally discontinue negative behaviours. This is quite different from traditional youth services which target youth who have already made mistakes or are geared towards reducing negative behaviours such as smoking or fighting.

Whereas most youth programs see youth as empty vessels that need to be filled, Positive Youth Development acknowledges that young people already have a contribution to make and should be recognized as partners in their journey to becoming productive citizens. Positive Youth Development also states in order to have positive outcomes, the community should be involved.

## Objectives

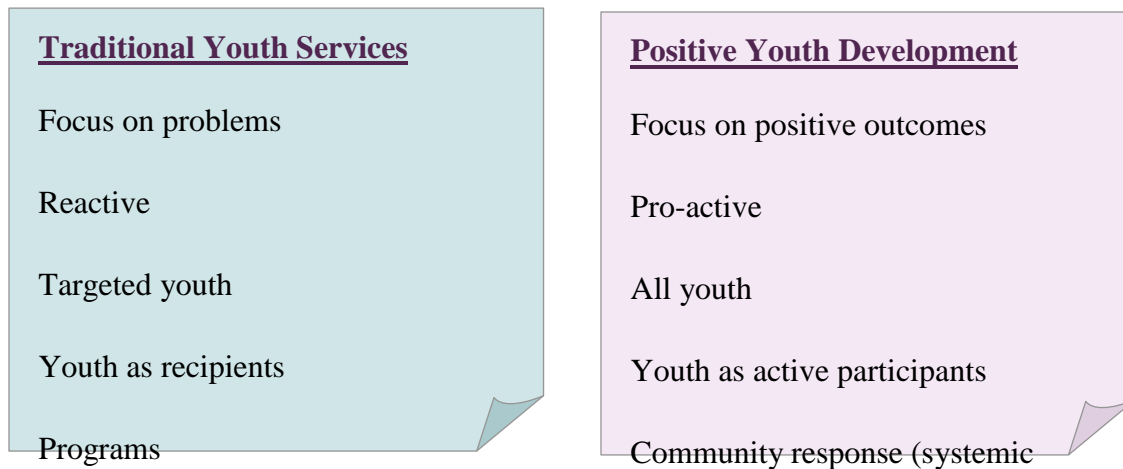
By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Define Positive Youth Development
2. Explain the importance of Positive Youth Development
3. Understand the difference between Positive Youth Development and Traditional Youth Services
4. Explain the process and goals of youth development
5. Give examples of personal and social assets that facilitate Positive Youth Development
6. Define resiliency
7. Explain risk and protective factors
8. Define developmental assets and explain its importance

## LESSON ONE

### What is Positive Youth Development?

Youth development experts have not yet agreed on a clear definition of positive youth development, but there has been consensus about key components that need to be included in this approach. With this in mind, positive youth development can be described as a philosophy or approach promoting a set of guidelines on how a community can support its young people so that they can grow up competent and healthy and develop to their full potential.



**Emphasis on positive outcomes:** The approach highlights positive, healthy outcomes (in contrast to reducing negative outcomes such as teen pregnancy, substance abuse, violence). Although most parents have clear ideas of the positive characteristics and behaviors they would like to see in their children, there is still a lack of clarity of what exactly positive outcomes are. Since researchers only recently have focused on positive outcomes, definitions and categories of positive outcomes are still evolving. Examples of desired youth development outcomes are competence (academic, social, vocational skills), self-confidence, connectedness (healthy relationship to community, friends, family), character (integrity, moral commitment), caring and compassion.

**Youth Voice:** It is essential to include youth as active participants in any youth development initiative. They have to be equal partners in the process. Youth involvement presents a great challenge to adults and charges them to rethink how they have engaged in planning and program development and implementation.

**Strategies aim to involve all youth:** Youth development strategies are generally aimed at all youth. The assumption is that creating supportive and enriching environments for all youth will lead to the desired positive outcomes as well as reduced negative outcomes. However, experts in the field recognize the need to blend universal approaches with approaches that are targeting youth facing extra challenges.

**Long-term involvement:** Youth development assumes long-term commitment. Activities and supportive relationships have to endure for a long period of time to be effective. They have to accompany young people throughout their growing up years. While short-term positive results

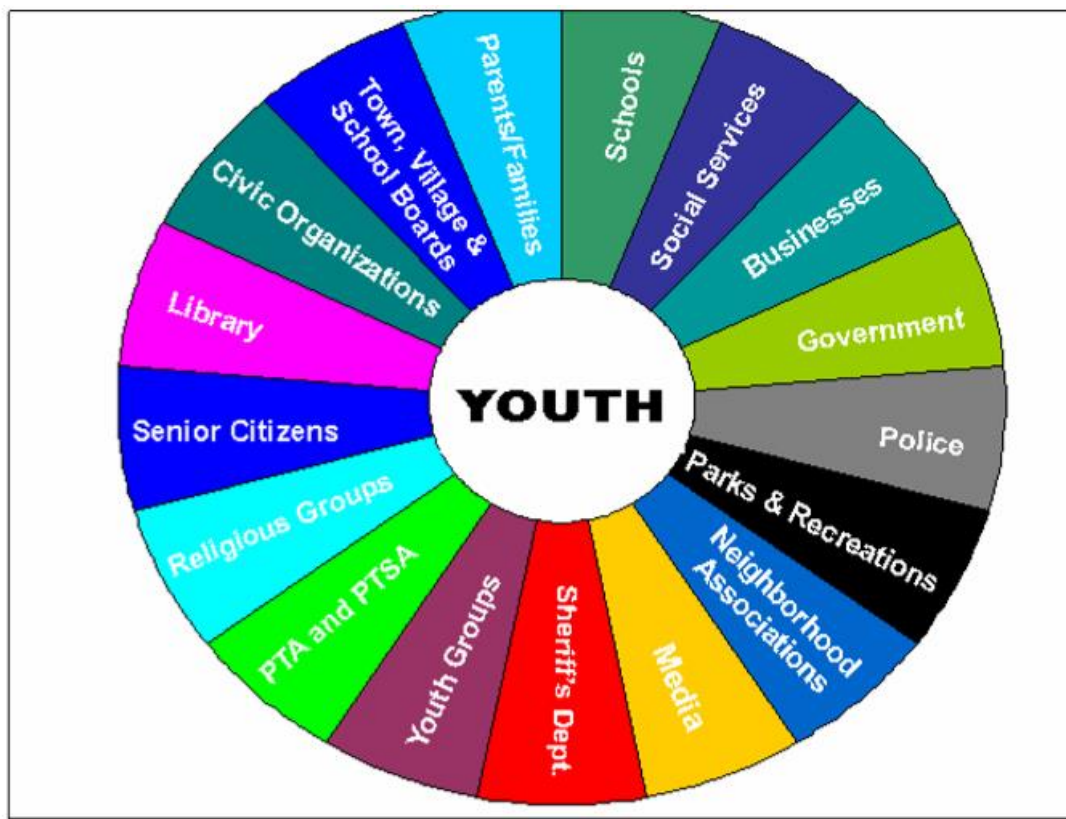


may be seen and should be built on, both community-organizing models mentioned below state that positive community-based, youth outcomes may not be measurable for 15-20 years. Youth development strategies have to embrace and ready themselves for long-term engagement.

**Community involvement:** Youth development stresses the importance to engage the larger social environment that influences how young people grow up and develop. This includes family and friends, but also the community they live in. Community is more than social service and youth organizations, schools, law enforcement agencies; it involves business, faith and civic groups, and private citizens who are not attached to any organization. Currently there are two popular, researched community organizing models, Search Institute and Communities that Care, that provide strategies and tools to involve large sectors of the community in the task of making the community a better place for young people to grow up in.

**Emphasis on collaboration:** Youth development requires people from various agencies and community groups to work together. Collaboration can express itself in different forms e.g., agencies coming together to write a grant proposal to community groups forming a coalition to achieve one common goal by sharing resources and expertise.

### Community Groups and Organizations



**Source:** Dotterweich, 2017. [www.actforyouth.net](http://www.actforyouth.net)

### *Activity 1*

Does your youth program focus on problems (i.e., reducing crime, smoking or teenage pregnancy) or does it focus on positive outcomes (i.e. developing character, teaching skills, etc.)?

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Does your youth program include youth as partners with valuable contributions to make or are youth mostly regarded as recipients that need to be helped?

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Does your program try to actively include the community to assist with its efforts?

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Have you ever tried to collaborate with other youth groups by pooling resources or writing a grant together? If you did, what were the results?

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## LESSON TWO

### The Process and Goals of Youth Development

**D**evelopment is a process, not a goal. People continue to develop throughout their lifetimes. Therefore, promoting youth development is an enduring, overarching purpose, not a goal that is ever finally achieved. John Dewey (1938) captured this quality by noting that **the purpose of development is to enable a person to continue to develop**. Viewing development in this way complicates the identification of goals. Rather than setting out concise measurable behaviors, developmental goals identify demands for growth. **Progress, opposed to attainment, is the key** (Kohlberg & Mayer, 1972).

This circular quality of development makes it difficult to separate goals from methods for achieving goals. Goals and methods, ends and means, and process and product are intertwined. Because goal setting is such an important part of program planning, we will refer to developmental goals, recognizing that even though such goals are not always amendable to measurable outcomes or behavioral objectives, they can provide a helpful framework to guide action.

Human qualities that we wish to promote

**A simple formulation is that development leads to the “Five Cs”: competence, character, connections, confidence, and contribution**

can be described in multiple ways. A simple formulation is that development leads to the “Five Cs”: competence, character, connections, confidence, and contribution (listed as caring and/or compassion in other formulations) (Pittman, Irby, Tolman, Yohalem, & Ferber, 2002). *Competence* includes knowledge and skills that enable a person to function more effectively to understand and act on the environment. *Competence* enables a person to accomplish what he or she intends, provided external circumstances are favorable, or to adapt to circumstances to achieve as much as possible. *Character* is what makes a person intend to do what is just, right, and good. *Connections* refer to social relations, especially with adults, but also with peers and with younger children. *Confidence* is the assuredness a person needs to act effectively. It enables a person to demonstrate and build competence and character in challenging situations. *Contribution* means that a person uses these other attributes not only for self-centered purposes but also to give to others.

Notice that none of these developmental goals has an upper limit. One is never perfectly competent or of such high character that no further progress is needed. However, it is possible to get out of balance, especially with connections and confidence. We denigrate as a “social butterfly” a person who cares too much about superficial connections, especially when that person seems to sacrifice character, adopting whatever opinions or behaviors are popular.

When confidence outruns competence, danger looms. We think of the “Five Cs” as logically linked. Competence and character are central. Young people gain competence and character by being connected with others; especially caring adults, and their competence and character in turn help them form new connections. *Confidence* flows from *competence*, and the two mutually reinforce each other. Finally, contributions demonstrate one’s *character* and provide an outlet for competence.

The “Five Cs” briefly summarizes the goals of youth development. They are useful as a quick mental checklist when thinking about what a particular program, organization, or initiative offers to youth. They can provide a focus for community-wide initiatives. However, each is broad enough to pose challenges when it comes to designing and evaluating programs. Programs might try to enhance the competence of young people in a multitude of ways and across a range of contexts or settings, making it difficult to know when progress occurs and what led to it. For program-planning purposes, a longer, finer grained analysis of the goals of development is needed.

The Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth, convened by the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, has provided an authoritative summation of the critical domains of youth development, adopting the terminology of personal and social assets (see next page). They categorized these assets as physical, intellectual, psychological and emotional, and social development.

**The “Five Cs” briefly summarizes the goals of youth development. They are useful as a quick mental checklist when thinking about what a particular program, organization, or initiative offers to youth.**

Note that the term asset allows for the same ambiguity we have attributed to developmental goals. Assets are both desirable in themselves (think of cash and real estate) and useful in obtaining other desirable things that may themselves also be assets (buying artwork with cash, using real estate to secure a loan).

**Source:** Hamilton, Hamilton & Pittman, 2015

**Watch YouTube Video: The 5 C’s of Positive Youth Development (2:39 Minutes)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-JDByTeT6I>

## Personal and Social Assets That Facilitate Positive Youth Development

### Physical Development

- Good health habits
- Good health risk management skills

### Intellectual Development

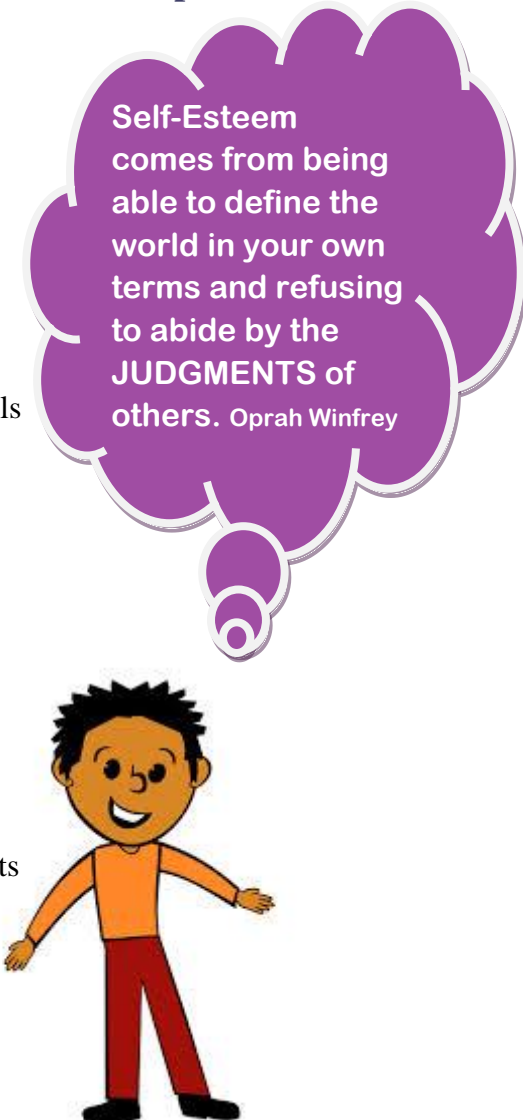
- Knowledge of essential life skills
- Knowledge of essential vocational skills
- School success
- Rational habits of mind-critical thinking and reasoning skills
- In-depth knowledge of more than one culture
- Good decision-making skills
- Knowledge of skills needed to navigate through multiple cultural contexts

### Psychological and Emotional Development

- Good mental health, including positive self-regard
- Good coping skills
- Good conflict resolution skills
- Mastery motivation and positive achievement motivation
- Confidence in one's personal efficacy
- "Planfulness" – planning for the future and future life events
- Sense of personal autonomy/responsibility for self
- Optimism coupled with realism
- Coherent and positive personal and social identity
- Pro-social and culturally sensitive values
- Spirituality or a sense of a "larger" purpose in life
- Strong moral character
- A commitment to good use of time

### Social Development

- Connectedness-perceived good relationships and trust with parents, peers and some other adults
- Sense of social place/integration-being connected and valued by larger social networks
- Attachment to pro-social/conventional institutions, such as school, church, non-school youth programs
- Ability to navigate in multiple cultural contexts
- Commitment to civic engagement



Self-Esteem comes from being able to define the world in your own terms and refusing to abide by the **JUDGMENTS** of others. Oprah Winfrey

**SOURCE:** National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2002, Box 3-1, pp. 74-75).

### *Activity 2*

Which of the personal and social assets listed on the previous page does your organization try to develop in its youth?

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Can your organization commit to trying to develop more personal and social assets in its youth members?

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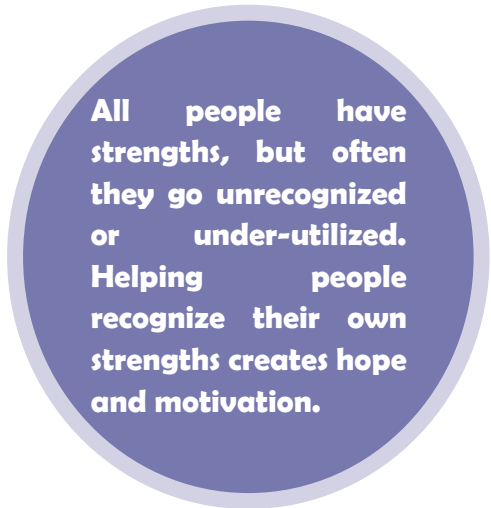
## LESSON THREE

### Resiliency

Resiliency in youth work is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties. Research has greatly shaped the field of positive youth development. It shifted the focus from risk factors and fixing problems to co-creating with youth, the conditions for positive youth outcomes. We can do this in part by building on internal protective factors, or strengths, and attending to the systems that provide external protective factors.

The idea of identifying and nurturing protective factors has gained a lot of momentum in social work practice. Saleebey described these key aspects of a strengths-based approach in social work:

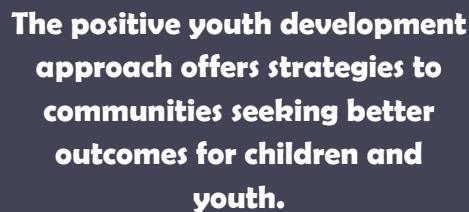
- A strengths-based approach engages people as active participants in the change process rather than passive recipients of services. By identifying and utilizing their strengths, internal and external, they can take an active role, take control, and create change.
- All people have strengths, but often they go unrecognized or under-utilized. Helping people recognize their own strengths creates hope and motivation.



**All people have strengths, but often they go unrecognized or under-utilized. Helping people recognize their own strengths creates hope and motivation.**

This approach is easily transferable to youth work. Young people are often unaware of their strengths. **We can help them become aware of their internal, personal strengths and their external, environmental strengths.** We can provide opportunities for them to develop these strengths further. In addition to nurturing internal protective factors, it is critical to provide a supportive and caring environment. Resiliency research has taught us that caring adults are the most critical asset in a young person's life. High expectations and opportunities for participation are also important.

Resiliency proponents like Nan Henderson have worked with schools and other program settings to develop strategies for creating supportive environments.



**The positive youth development approach offers strategies to communities seeking better outcomes for children and youth.**

Clearly, the most effective interventions would reach across all of the settings in which children grow. For some children, risk factors compound: racism, sexism, homophobia, poverty, and all of the challenges and deficits that under-resourced families and communities face stack the odds against them. To thrive, these children need the protective elements that foster resiliency. They need to be connected in empowering ways to the services, opportunities, and supports that can



make a difference. The positive youth development approach offers strategies to communities seeking better outcomes for children and youth.

When working with young people and their families, we can become overwhelmed by the daunting challenges they face—but resiliency research can give us hope. As researcher, Ann Masten, stated so eloquently:

*“What began as a quest to understand the extraordinary has revealed the power of the ordinary. Resilience does not come from rare, special qualities, but from the everyday magic of ordinary, normative human resources in the minds, brains, and bodies of children, in their families and relationships, and in their communities.”*

## **Youth Development Research Base**

### **Resilience**

Findings from resiliency studies, which began to appear in the 1980s, greatly influenced the development of the positive youth development approach in the 1990s. Resiliency research helped to shift practice in a positive, strength-based direction, asking "Why do many young people do well despite the risk factors they face? How do young people beat the odds against them?" Researchers have attempted to answer these questions by following groups of individuals from childhood to adulthood (see, for example, the 40-year Kauai study by Emmy Werner and Ruth Smith [2]). Using a risk- and protective-factors framework, resiliency analysis identifies the characteristics that buffer the impact of risk factors, thus increasing the likelihood of positive behaviors. These characteristics may be intrinsic to the child, or part of the child's environment. For example, the presence of caring adults in a young person's life is a key environmental factor that promotes positive outcomes.

Importantly, protective factors have a more profound impact on the life course than do specific risk factors.

### **Developmental Assets**

More recently, research has begun to focus on positive outcomes, addressing the question "What makes young people succeed?" Taking a positive youth development approach, Peter Benson and his colleagues at Search Institute in Minneapolis have identified 40 developmental assets that make it possible for young people to thrive [3]. Developmental assets are experiences, values, skills, and opportunities that young people need to develop to their full potential. Two sets of assets are proposed: external -- those traits that communities, schools, and families provide, and internal -- those traits that the individual brings to the table.

One of Search Institute's important contributions to the field has been to demonstrate a relationship between assets and outcomes: the fewer assets a young person experiences, the more likely it is that he will engage in negative behaviors such as alcohol use and violence. Similarly,



the more assets a young person has, the more likely he is to succeed in school and make healthy behavior choices.

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- [3] Benson, P. L. (2006). All kids are our kids (Second ed.). San Francisco: John Wiley.

## 40 Developmental Assets

### Support

1. Family Support – Family life provides high levels of love and support.
2. Positive Family Communication – Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate.
3. Other Adult Relationships – Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.
4. Caring Neighborhood – Young person experiences caring neighbors.
5. Caring School Climate – School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
6. Parent Involvement in Schooling – Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.

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**Developmental assets are experiences, values, skills and opportunities that young people need to develop to their full potential.**

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### Empowerment

7. Community Values Youth – Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
8. Youth as Resources – Young people are given useful roles in the community.
9. Service to Others – Young person serves as in the community one hour or more per week.
10. Safety – Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.

### Boundaries & Expectations

11. Family Boundaries – Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.
12. School Boundaries – School provides clear rules and consequences.
13. Neighborhood Boundaries – Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.
14. Adult Role Models – Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
15. Positive Peer Influence – Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.
16. High Expectations – Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.

### Constructive Use of Time

17. Creative Activities – Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community.
18. Youth Programs – Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community.
19. Religious Community – Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.
20. Time at Home – Young person is out with friends “with nothing special to do” two or fewer nights per week.

### **Internal Assets Commitment to Learning**

- 21. Achievement Motivation – Young person is motivated to do well in school.
- 22. School Engagement – Young person is actively engaged in learning.
- 23. Homework – Young person is actively engaged in learning.
- 24. Bonding to School – Young person cares about her or his school.
- 25. Reading for Pleasure – Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.

### **Positive Values**

- 26. Caring – Young person places high value on helping other people.
- 27. Equality and Social Justice – Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.
- 28. Integrity – Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.
- 29. Honesty – Young person “tells the truth even when it is not easy.”
- 30. Responsibility – Young person accepts and takes person responsibility.
- 31. Restraint – Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.

### **Social Competencies**

- 32. Planning and Decision Making – Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
- 33. Interpersonal Competence – Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.
- 34. Cultural Competence – Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.
- 35. Resistance Skills – Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
- 36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution – Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.

### **Positive Identity**

- 37. Personal Power – Young person feels he or she has control over “things that happen to me.”
- 38. Self-Esteem – Young person reports having a high self-esteem.
- 39. Sense of Purpose – Young person reports that “my life has a purpose.”
- 40. Positive View of Personal Future – Young person is optimistic about his or her personal future.

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Source: ©1997 by Search Institute, [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org). This page reproduced for educational, noncommercial use only. Note: Search Institute has identified the above building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

## LESSON FOUR

### What are Risk and Protective Factors?

A **risk factor** is anything that increases the probability that a person will suffer harm.

A **protective factor** is something that decreases the potential harmful effect of a risk factor.

#### *Activity 3*

List some risk factors in the lives of youth.

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List protective factors in the lives of youth.

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## Types of Protective and Risk Factors (adapted from youth.gov)

Risk and protective factors for child delinquency have been identified in several domains:

- Individual
- Family
- Peers
- School, neighborhood, and community

The table below provides examples of risk and protective factors by domain.

<i><b>Risk Factors</b></i>	<i><b>Domain</b></i>	<i><b>Protective Factors</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early antisocial behavior and emotional factors such as low behavioral inhibitions</li> <li>• Poor cognitive development</li> <li>• Hyperactivity</li> </ul>	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High IQ</li> <li>• Positive social skills</li> <li>• Willingness to please adults</li> <li>• Religious and club affiliations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate or inappropriate child rearing practices</li> <li>• Home discord</li> <li>• Maltreatment and abuse</li> <li>• Large family size</li> <li>• Parental antisocial history</li> <li>• Poverty</li> <li>• Exposure to repeated family violence</li> <li>• Divorce</li> <li>• Parental psychopathology</li> <li>• Teenage parenthood</li> <li>• A high level of parent-child conflict</li> <li>• A low level of positive parental involvement</li> </ul>	Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in shared activities between youth and family (including siblings and parents)</li> <li>• Providing the forum to discuss problems and issues with parents</li> <li>• Availability of economic and other resources to expose youth to multiple experiences</li> <li>• The presence of a positive adult (ally) in the family to mentor and be supportive</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spending time with peers who engage in delinquent or risky behavior</li> <li>• Gang involvement</li> <li>• Less exposure to positive social opportunities because of bullying and rejection</li> </ul>	Peer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive and healthy friends to associate with</li> <li>• Engagement in healthy and safe activities with peers during leisure time (e.g., clubs, sports, other recreation)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor academic performance</li> <li>• Enrollment in schools that are unsafe and fail to address the academic and</li> </ul>	School/Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment in schools that address not only the academic needs of youth but also their social and emotional needs and</li> </ul>

social and emotional needs of children and youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low commitment to school</li> <li>• Low educational aspirations</li> <li>• Poor motivation</li> <li>• Living in an impoverished neighborhood</li> <li>• Social disorganization in the community in which the youth lives</li> <li>• High crime neighborhoods</li> </ul>		learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools that provide a safe environment</li> <li>• A community and neighborhood that promote and foster healthy activities for youth</li> </ul>
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It is important to note the following:

- No single risk factor leads a young person to delinquency.
- Risk factors “do not operate in isolation and typically are cumulative: the more risk factors that [youth] are exposed to, the greater likelihood that they will experience negative outcomes, including delinquency.”
- When the risk factors a youth is exposed to cross multiple domains, the likelihood of delinquency increases at an even greater rate.
- Different risk factors may also be more likely to influence youth at different points in their development. For example, peer risk factors typically occur later in a youth’s development than individual and family factors.
- Because risk and protective factors are dynamic in nature, service providers and agencies should adopt ongoing assessments of these conditions.

While youth may face a number of risk factors it is important to remember that everyone has strengths and is capable of being resilient: “All children and families have individual strengths that can be identified, built on, and employed” to prevent future delinquency and justice system involvement. In recent years, studies of juvenile delinquency and justice system involvement have increasingly examined the impact of these strengths (protective factors) on youth’s ability to overcome challenges and thrive.

## References

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001

Jessor, 1998

A study group comprised of nearly 40 experts convened by the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) identified four domains for risk and protective factors.

Kendziora and Osher, 2004, p. 182

Wasserman et al., 2003

Osher, 1996, p. 186

Kendziora & Osher, 2004

Website: [www.youth.gov](http://www.youth.gov)

## LESSON FIVE

### Strengths and Sparks

We stated in the beginning that positive youth development is an approach that is strength based. It shifts youth work from a problem focus to building positive outcomes and building on strengths. What do we mean by “building on strengths” or “using a strength-based approach”?

Emerging from the field of social work and supported by resiliency research, a strength-based approach is a powerful set of ideas, assumptions, and techniques:

- People are not recipients, but active participants in the helping process which is very empowering. Let’s remember that young people should be agents in their development.
- All people have strengths, but often they are not used or even recognized. As all of you have experienced, if you ask young people what their strengths are, they don’t know what to say.
- Being able to use your strengths creates motivation to grow and learn. The converse is also true: We all know that it is not very motivating to focus on your weaknesses and work on improving your weak spots.
- Finally, we know from resiliency research that we have internal strengths such as abilities and talents, and external strengths such as relationships and opportunities *to matter*, to be responsible for something.

Identifying and nurturing strengths is a critical step in engaging young people. In recent years Peter Benson (2008) from Search Institute coined the term “sparks”, bringing concrete meaning to this concept of strengths.



Peter Benson called a special quality, skill, or interest that we are passionate about a “spark.” Sparks originate from inside a person. When we express it, we feel alive, useful. Life has a purpose.

All young people have one or more sparks. Sparks are more than just things we like to do. They’re a prime source of meaning, self-directed action, and purpose.

If the word “sparks” doesn’t work for the youth you are working with, you can talk to them about their strengths, interests, passions, or purpose.

Watch the video: Sparks Matter (5 mins)

Search Institute: “*Sparks Matter: Finding your Spark*”

<http://www.search-institute.org/sparks>

#### **Activity 4**

Did you know what your sparks (interests, passions) were as a teenager? What were they? What were you excited about? How did you find your sparks?

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How did you work on your spark? What did you do to improve it? What skills did you learn along the way?

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Who were your spark champions (people who supported your spark)? How did they help you?

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## Passions/Interests

In life, there are things we just absolutely, *love* to do! There are things we *naturally* feel drawn to. There are activities we lose ourselves in – getting in the *flow*. There are things we're passionate about, that inspire us, or that get us all riled up. In a search for your purpose, an important place to look are at **THESE** things! Purpose implies meaning, yet it also implies something that it feels like we were made to do. The good news is, we instinctually or intuitively know what we're "made for" – we can feel it. It's that inner nudge that pulls us toward what we love, do naturally, and are passionate about.

Use the following activity to remember your greatest passions and interest. You can have the youth in your organization complete this activity to discover their passions.

Source: Transformation Services, Inc. [www.transformationservices.org](http://www.transformationservices.org)

### Activity 5

When I was a child, I wanted to do this when I grew up:

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In the past (and as a child), I enjoyed: (everything you can think of from food to activities, places you've gone to traditions you've had – list what you liked and **WHY** you liked it).

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The activities I love now are:

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### Activity 5 Cont'd

My best qualities are:

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The qualities I would like to develop are:

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I am most myself when:

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**I am:** (my top qualities)

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(Ideas)

Humorous	Enthusiastic	Comforting	Determined	Intelligent
Gentle	Kind	Courageous	Direct	Optimistic
Inspiring	Visionary	Compassionate	Flexible	Supportive
Entertaining	Knowledgeable	Practical	Open	Generous
Strong	Energetic	Calm	Adventurous	Persuasive
Patient	Insightful	Spontaneous	Quick-thinking	Original

### *Activity 5 Cont'd*

What aspects of my life am I committed to?

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What would I like to change in the world?

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What would it take for me to be living in integrity?

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What innovative ideas have I had that excited me?

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What happened to them?

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## Talents/Skills

All of us have a magnitude of talents and skills but that does not mean that we are supposed to use them all to follow our purpose. In fact, just because we are good at something does not mean that we have to do it or that it will bring us joy. For example, I may be good at typing but does that mean that it is part of my purpose? Well, it depends on if I feel alive while doing it and if it brings me true joy. If it does not bring me joy, should I spend my time doing it? Probably not. But, there's more to purpose than joy. Maybe that skill was or will be useful at some point that will help me along my path or it may be stepping stones to my purpose. At the same time there may be things you are good at that you enjoy that are not part of your greater purpose... they may just be something that you enjoy, and that's okay.

Sometimes, we have talents that we fail to notice because it seems so normal to us that we do not see that for others it does not come as a natural. For example, we were having a conversation with a colleague and that person had an amazing talent to bring people together. It seemed that when they wanted to do something at the last minute they would reach out and would have over forty people joining them. After we talked to them, they remembered that since they were young they liked doing things in groups and how it came naturally to just reach out to people and coordinated it things to make it happen. However, they had never considered that it was a talent. Through further reflection they were able to see the power within this ability and realized they could follow their passion and purpose of bringing people together and at the same time, monetize it.

In this section we will ask you to reflect on these talents and skill, but dig deep on what truly comes natural to you. For part of this you may solicit the help of people around you because they may be able to point out things that you may have not realized before. You can survey family members, friends, and coworkers (those that are truly supportive) and ask them to tell you at least three things that they consider to be your talents or skills, whether big or small. Let them know that even if it is something that they think you already know, that you would appreciate the confirmation via feedback. This is important because they may be reluctant to say things that may seem obvious to them, but they may not be obvious to you.

**Source:** Transformation Services, Inc. [www.transformationsservices.org](http://www.transformationsservices.org)

### Activity 6

My key talents/abilities that come naturally to me are: (What do you excel at or do effortlessly?)

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I shine when:

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Others tell me I'm good at:

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What skills do you have that are unique?

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What skill have you acquired that you found were more useful than you had anticipated?

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What talents do you have that come easy to you which other might find difficult?

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## Summary

This unit introduced you to Positive Youth Development where youth work focus has shifted from problems to positive outcomes, from being reactive to proactive and from youth being recipients of services to active participants in their own development. This module also spoke to the importance of engaging the whole community in youth development including businesses, agencies, family and friends. Research has identified 40 developmental assets that make it possible for young people to thrive and organizations should focus on these assets. Finally, identifying sparks in young people can give their life meaning and purpose.

## Glossary

**Character:** is what makes a person intend to do what is just, right, and good.

**Competence:** enables a person to accomplish what he or she intends

**Confidence:** is the assuredness a person needs to act effectively.

**Connections:** refer to social relations, especially with adults, but also with peers and with younger children.

**Contribution:** means that a person uses these other attributes not only for self-centered purposes but also to give to others

**Developmental Assets:** are experiences, values, skills and opportunities that young people need to develop to their full potential.

**Positive Youth Development:** a philosophy or approach promoting a set of guidelines on how a community can support its young people so that they can grow up competent and healthy and develop to their full potential

**Protective Factor** is something that decreases the potential harmful effect of a risk factor.

**Risk Factor:** is anything that increases the probability that a person will suffer harm.

**Spark:** A spark is something that gives your life meaning and purpose. It's an interest, a passion, or a gift.

**Strengths-based Approach:** engages people as active participants in the change process rather than passive recipients of services.

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## NOTES

[illegible]



## NOTES

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# Module 2:

# Adolescent

# Development

## Introduction

Research now supports what parents have long suspected: the teenager's brain is different from the adult brain (Dotterweich, 2015). So the task that is upon youth leaders or caregivers in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas is to design a youth driven program to meet the obvious and unseen needs and challenges faced by the youth in this country. As individuals transition from childhood to adults, they must pass through several stages. It is your duty to provide the necessary knowledge for youth to make the transition through life and overcome challenges.

### Objectives:

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Explain the stages of adolescent development
2. Explain Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and its relation to youth
3. Develop strategies to keep youth safe and help them make better decisions
4. Explain the teenage brain and why teenagers make risky decisions
5. Outline and carry out Intervention Strategies
6. Guide youth with identity formation

# LESSON ONE

## Stages of Adolescent Development

By: Sedra Spano (May, 2004)

Adolescence is a time of great change for young people. It is a time when physical changes are happening at an accelerated rate. But adolescence is not just marked by physical changes— young people are also experiencing cognitive, social/emotional and interpersonal changes as well. As they grow and develop, young people are influenced by outside factors such as: parents, peers, community, culture, religion, school, world events and the media. There are a number of different theories or ways of looking at adolescent development (see chart). Each theory has a unique focus, but across theories there are many similar elements. While it is true that each teenager is an individual with a unique personality and interests, there are also numerous developmental issues that just about every teen faces during the early, middle and late adolescent years (AACAP, 2003).

The feelings and behaviors of middle and high school adolescents can be categorized into five broad areas: 1.) moving toward independence; 2.) future interests and cognitive development; 3.) sexuality; 4.) physical changes; and 5.) ethics and self-direction. Specific characteristics of adolescent behavior within each area are described in the following material. Teenagers do vary slightly from the following descriptions, but the feelings and behaviors are, in general, considered typical for each stage of adolescence.

### Early Adolescence (approximately 10-14 years of age)

**Movement Toward Independence:** emerging identity shaped over time by internal and external influences; moodiness; improved abilities to use speech to express oneself; more likely to express feelings by action than by words (may be more true for males); close friendships gain importance; less attention shown to parents, with occasional rudeness; realization that parents are not perfect; identification of their own faults; search for new people to love in addition to parents; tendency to return to childish behavior during times of stress; peer group influence on personal interests and clothing styles.

**Future Interests and Cognitive Development:** increasing career interests; mostly interested in present and near future; greater ability to work.

**Sexuality:** girls physically mature faster than boys; shyness, blushing, and modesty; more showing off; greater interest in privacy; experimentation with body (masturbation); worries about being normal.

**Physical Changes:** gains in height and weight; growth of pubic and underarm hair; increased perspiration - body odor develops; increased oil production of hair and skin; breast development and menstruation in girls; growth of testicles and penis, nocturnal emissions (wet dreams), deepening of voice, growth of hair on face in boys.

**Ethics and Self-Direction:** rule and limit testing; occasional experimentation with cigarettes, marijuana, and alcohol; capacity for abstract thought.

### **Middle Adolescence (approximately 15-16 years of age)**

**Movement Toward Independence:** self-involvement, alternating between unrealistically high expectations and worries about failure; complaints that parents interfere with independence; extremely concerned with appearance and with one's own body; feelings of strangeness about one's self and body; lowered opinion of and withdrawal from parents; effort to make new friends; strong emphasis on the new peer group; periods of sadness as the psychological loss of parents takes place; examination of inner experiences, which may include writing a diary.

**Future Interests and Cognitive Development:** intellectual interests gain importance; some sexual and aggressive energies directed into creative and career interests; anxiety can emerge related to school and academic performance.

**Sexuality:** concerns about sexual attractiveness; frequently changing relationships; more clearly defined sexual orientation, with internal conflict often experienced by those who are not heterosexual; tenderness and fears shown toward opposite sex; feelings of love and passion.

**Physical Changes:** males show continued height and weight gains while female growth slows down (females grow only 1-2 inches after their first menstrual period).

**Ethics and Self-Direction:** development of ideals and selection of role models; more consistent evidence of conscience; greater goal setting capacity; interest in moral reasoning.

### **Late Adolescence (approximately 17-21 years of age)**

**Movement Toward Independence:** firmer identity; ability to delay gratification; ability to think through ideas; ability to express ideas in words; more developed sense of humor; interests become more stable; greater emotional stability; ability to make independent decisions; ability to compromise; pride in one's work; self-reliance; greater concern for others.

**Future Interests and Cognitive Development:** more defined work habits; higher level of concern for the future; thoughts about one's role in life.

**Sexuality:** concerned with serious relationships; clear sexual identity; capacities for tender and sensual love.

**Physical Changes:** most young women are fully developed; young men continue to gain height, weight, muscle mass, body hair.

**Ethics and Self-Direction:** capable of useful insight; focus on personal dignity and self-esteem; ability to set goals and follow through; acceptance of social institutions and cultural traditions; self-regulation of self-esteem.

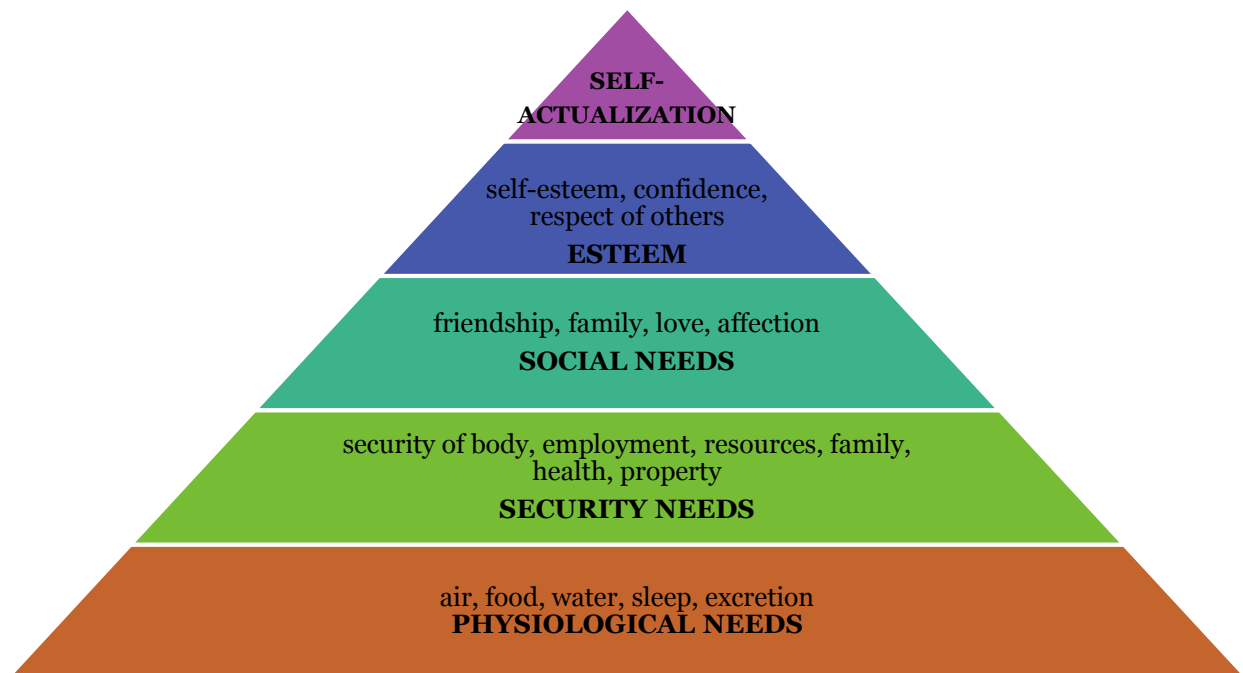
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## LESSON TWO

### Youth and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Most youth workers are motivated by a desire to help youth achieve personal growth. Youth workers who have grasped a deep understanding of the needs of youth are more likely to yield positive results. Abraham Maslow and his hierarchy of needs theory has shed light on how to achieve personal growth and this can be applied to youth. Maslow originally wrote about the hierarchy of needs in 1943 in a paper entitled *The Theory of Human Motivation* and again, in his book *Motivation and Personality* published in 1954. He studied many successful people to determine what the key to their success was and he produced the following chart:



#### Hierarchy of Needs Explained

The word *hierarchy* can be defined as a graded or ranked series. Maslow believed that it is possible to rank human needs, and that the lower needs have to be satisfied before people can move onto the higher ones. The hierarchy of needs, in order of importance includes physiological needs, security needs, social needs, esteem needs and finally, self-actualization. The terms are explained below.

- **Physiological needs** are the most basic and this includes things like food, air, and sleep. Until these physiological needs are met the individual will be focused on just staying alive.
- **Security needs** refer to those things that keep the individual safe from harm. This can include things like membership of a community where there is protection given by belonging to this group.

- Humans are referred to as social animals and this means that they have **social needs**. Once the individual has taken care of their physiological and security needs their next concern will be companionship, love, and affection.
- Next up on the hierarchy of needs is **esteem**. The individual needs to feel valued (respect and admiration) not only by other people but also by themselves (self-esteem).
- At the top of the pyramid is **self-actualization**. This refers to the ability of people to live up to their potential – they will not be able to do this until the lower needs are satisfied.

In reviewing Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and its application to youth, the ranking becomes intuitive. After all, although it is great to build up the self-esteem of youth, how much of your efforts will be fruitful if the youth you are leading are hungry, have no place to stay or do not feel safe? When working with youth, it is important to have a holistic understanding of their needs, especially the needs at the bottom of the pyramid. It is only when these needs are addressed that young people will be successful.

Adapted from: <http://alcoholrehab.com/addiction-recovery/maslows-hierarchy-of-needs/>

### *Activity 1*

When you were growing up, did the child and youth organizations you were a part of try to address the needs at the bottom of Maslow's Hierarchy?

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Do you think you have achieved self-actualization? Why or why not?

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## LESSON THREE

### Adolescents and Risk: Helping Young People Make Better Choices By Eric Wargo (September, 2007)

Adolescence, as every teenager, parent, and youth professional knows, is a time of risks. With greater freedom and independence, young people face new choices involving automobiles, addictive substances, and sexuality—frequently in combination. Poor choices about these risks can have terrible consequences for individuals, families, and society as a whole.

The statistics are frightening, but they are not unknown to young people. For decades, adolescents have been bombarded by facts about the risks they face. Yet efforts to scare young decision makers with numbers and percentages have met with limited success (Reyna & Farley, 2006). There is even evidence that some risk-awareness-raising programs, such as DARE, actually increase the behaviors they are designed to prevent (see Lilienfeld, 2007). To reduce adolescent risk taking, a different approach is needed: one that recognizes how adolescents reason.

#### The Immortality Myth

We've all heard the cliché that young people think they are immortal and invulnerable to harm. This cherished assumption about the adolescent mind is expressed as a truism in countless public health messages aimed at

parents of teens, and underlies many efforts to educate young people about their risks. The problem is, it's not true.

A growing body of scientific data shows that young people are actually well aware of their vulnerability. Adolescents estimate some of their risks, such as the odds of becoming a mother by age 20, quite accurately (Fischhoff et al., 2000); and they actually overestimate their risks for negative outcomes like contracting HIV and other STDs, getting lung cancer, and suffering adverse consequences of drinking alcohol (Reyna & Adam, 2003; Romer & Jamieson, 2001). Although young individuals do sometimes display an optimistic bias—that is, thinking they are at less risk than their peers—adults display the same fallacy in their thinking, so this does not explain why adolescents take risks that adults avoid (Reyna & Farley, 2006).

Dr. Valerie Reyna and her colleagues at Cornell University and elsewhere have studied patterns of reasoning in children, adolescents, and adults, and they have reached a startling, highly counterintuitive conclusion about the reasons for adolescent risk taking: young people take risks not because of a belief that they are invulnerable, but because they engage in too much rational calculation when making

★★★★★★★★★  
**To reduce adolescent risk taking, a different approach is needed: one that recognizes how adolescents reason.**

★★★★★★★★★

choices. Even if they know the risks they run, adolescents mentally weigh those risks against perceived benefits. When risks are engaged in “only once or twice,” the odds may appear favorable (Reyna & Farley, 2006). Adults, in contrast, tend to “go with their gut”—they don’t proceed down the slippery slope of trading off serious risks (such as dying in a car accident) against immediate rewards (such as approval of peers), and their choices are better as a result.

The Science of Risky Decisions  
Psychologists now believe that the brain encodes, stores, and retrieves representations of our experiences in two very different ways, involving separate brain areas and distinct mental processes (see Reyna, 2004). Any decision involving risk may use either or both of these separate forms of processing. According to “fuzzy-trace theory,” developed by Reyna and her colleague Dr. Charles Brainerd (Reyna & Brainerd, 1991; see also Reyna, 2004; Reyna & Farley, 2006), one of these dual paths to processing risk judgments is highly deliberative and oriented toward facts and details. This is the type of thinking that corresponds to classical, logical models of economic decision making—the rational balancing of benefits against costs. And it is the type of reasoning that children and adolescents rely on most when making choices (Reyna, Adam, Poirier, LeCroy, & Brainerd, 2005).

The other route to making risk judgments tends to ignore details and focuses instead

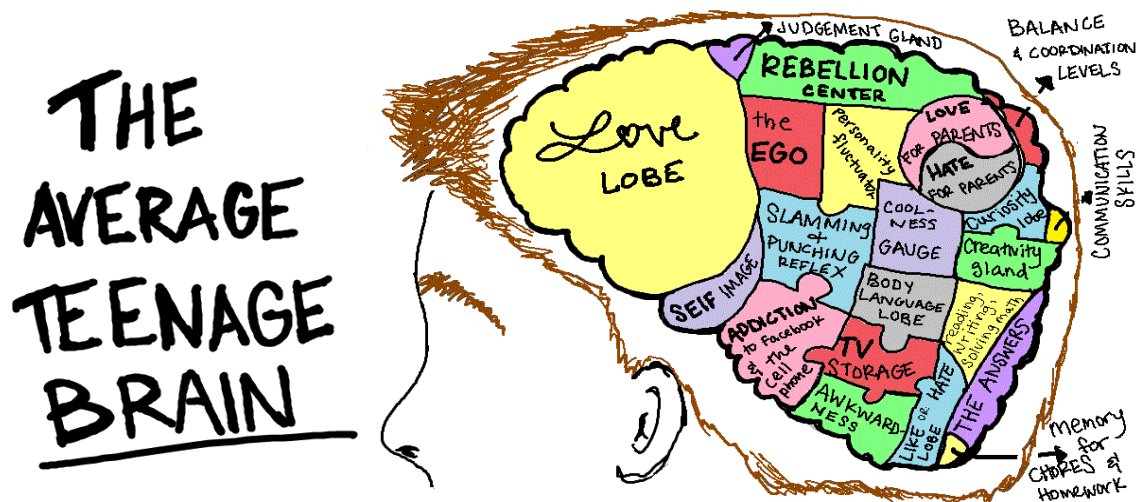
on the overall meaning or gist of a situation (Reyna & Kiernan, 1994). This form of thinking is more intuitive, and relies more on emotional reactions and situational cues than on deliberative calculation. It is also more categorical—seeing things in terms of black and white instead of shades of gray. With greater age and life experience, people increasingly utilize this second, “gist-based” path to making decisions (Reyna, 2004).

The tendency toward gist-based reasoning also characterizes relatively expert decision makers in skilled fields such as medicine. Physicians with more experience don’t focus on the details of a case but follow their informed intuitions, and they are more often correct than their less experienced colleagues (Reyna & Lloyd, 2006). (Informed intuition, which is what experts have, is not the same as naïve intuition.) The bottom line: intuitive, gist-based reasoning leads to better and more effective decisions in all walks of life. Not only is it good to think with your gut, it’s also more mature.

**The bottom line:  
intuitive, gist-based  
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more mature.**

## LESSON FOUR

### The Adolescent Brain



Consider a typical scenario: an adolescent alone in the house with her boyfriend thinks about whether to have unprotected sex with him. To her rational adolescent mind, educated in the facts and deliberating on the odds, it may seem like a good bet. There is only a modest chance of becoming pregnant or catching an STD from a single encounter, and the perceived benefits—particularly in the heat of the moment, or under the influence of alcohol—may seem to outweigh the risks.

In contrast, an adult faced with the temptation of unprotected sex would be more likely to skip the deliberation and go to the main point: the risks of disease, or of an unwanted pregnancy, are just not worth quantifying and cannot be weighed against immediate rewards like brief pleasure or social approval. In other words, the grown-up brain quickly grasps the gist of the situation: nothing is worth risking one's health or future happiness.

**...bombarding youth with the facts won't help them make better decisions, and may actually encourage a less mature, riskier form of reasoning.**

The trouble is, getting young brains to compute a quick and categorical “no” rather than weigh the odds is not easy. In a recent study, people of different ages were asked to respond quickly to easy, risk-related questions like “Is it a good idea to set your hair on fire?” and “Is it a good idea to swim with sharks?” (Baird & Fugelsang, 2004). Adolescents took about a sixth of a second longer than adults to get to the obvious “no.” A sixth of a second may not seem like a lot, but it reflects a major difference between the brains of adolescents and adults.

The brain areas that quickly grasp the gist of situations and regulate judgments (specifically, the dorsolateral and ventromedial parts of the frontal lobe) are still developing during the teenage years, and don’t reach full maturity until the early to mid-twenties for most people (see Reyna and Farley, 2006). The adolescent brain just isn’t yet optimized for making that adult beeline to the bottom line.

**Watch TED Talk: Insight into the Teenage Brain: Adriana Galván (Duration 9:42)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWUkW4s3XxY>

### *Activity 2*

Write down two social challenges you faced as a teenager.

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What helped you to overcome those challenges?

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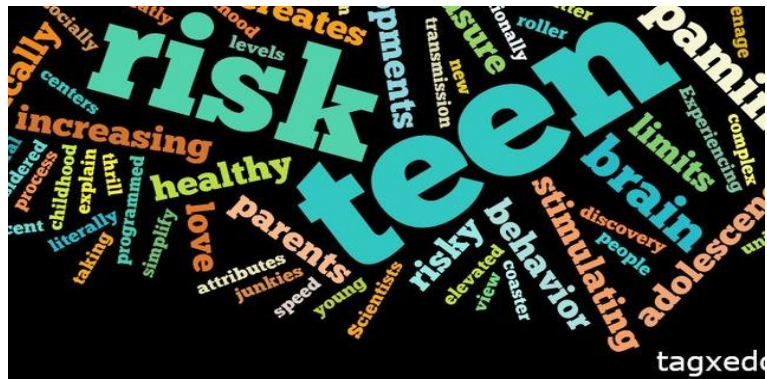
## LESSON FIVE

### Intervention Strategies

The science of adolescent risk-taking leads to two broad conclusions for designing interventions. First, bombarding youth with the facts won't help them make better decisions, and may actually encourage a less mature, riskier form of reasoning. Interventions should instead encourage less deliberative, more categorical thinking about risk. Second, because adolescents' brains are not yet mature, exposure to major risks should be limited as much as possible.

The safety of young people is a community concern, not solely a matter of individual choice. However, interventions that help young people learn to make better choices can be an effective component of a larger commitment to youth development and healthy communities. The following strategies can be used by parents, youth professionals, and communities to keep young people safe and help them make better choices (see Reyna & Farley, 2006):

- **Don't assume that adolescents think they are immortal—they don't!** Research clearly shows that young people are well aware that they live in a world full of perils.
- **Help adolescents see benefits differently, not just risks.** Risks will have less appeal if young people perceive greater benefit from alternative, safer courses of action. For younger adolescents, highlight short-term benefits and risks, as these are the most salient.
- **Use positive images or models of healthy behaviors and negative images of unhealthy ones.** Positive, emotionally evocative images—such as those in the media, films, or fiction—can assist gist-based thinking and serve as reminders of the benefits of safer behavior.
- **Use analogies to steer adolescents away from deliberative calculation toward more categorical thinking about risk.** To help young people see that no possible payoff of risky behavior is worth risking death, ask questions like “Would you play Russian Roulette for one million dollars?”
- **Develop emotional and personal cues.** The most salient cues to making mature decisions are simple, visceral, and personal. A sexual health intervention could personalize risk by having young people write answers to questions like “What would happen if you were diagnosed with HIV? Who would you tell? How would it change your life?”
- **Give adolescents practice at recognizing environmental signs of danger.** Teach kids about “red and yellow alerts” that indicate the possibility of various risks—for



example, being at home after school with a boyfriend or girlfriend (and no parents or other adults) as a signal of the possibility of unwanted or unsafe sex. Have them practice finding such alerts in various scenarios so that they can avoid such risks and, if the risks cannot be avoided, thinking through actions they could use to extricate themselves.

- **Teach self-efficacy; provide opportunities to practice concrete skills.** Giving young people real world tasks and concrete strategies helps them become responsible and capable. For example, young teens who are not ready for sex can practice refusal skills; repeated practice leads to better self-confidence in using these skills when they are needed, often in situations involving high emotion that can disrupt thinking. A well-practiced skill can be used automatically, without requiring a lot of thinking.
- **Limit adolescents' exposure to risky substances and situations.** For example, limit the number of peers in automobiles; avoid exposing minors to addictive substances (rather than exposing young people to alcohol to teach them to drink responsibly, which has been shown to be ineffective and in fact is associated with higher rates of binge drinking and other bad outcomes; Grube, 2005).
- **Monitor and supervise younger adolescents.** Rather than rely on reasoned choices, remove younger teens' opportunity to engage in risk taking by occupying their time with positive activities.
- **Train young people strategies to help them avoid dangerous situations.** Teach youth to avoid circumstances in which they will need to make an immediate, risky choice—for instance, encourage them to stay away from situations where alcohol and drugs may be present.

### *Activity 3*

Write about a risky decision that a youth in your care made. What were the consequences of that decision? What reason did the youth give for making that decision?

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**Watch TEDx Video: What teenagers want you to know** (Duration 17:55)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fC2z69q3L0o>



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## LESSON SIX

### “Who Am I?” - Identity Formation In Adolescence

Rachel Sumner, PhD - Cornell University [www.actforyouth.net/adolescence/identity](http://www.actforyouth.net/adolescence/identity)

#### What is Identity?

People can identify with lots of different groups, like their gender, race, nationality, or political party (just to name a few). A personal identity is a cohesive sense of self, and it includes ideas about all of these group identities, in addition to values and goals. If asked about their identity, someone might say something like “I’m a Bahamian woman, I want to make the world a better place, and I take care of my family.”

#### Identity in Adolescence

Many adolescents begin developing a sense of identity. They’re trying to answer the question, “Who am I?” Lots of things teens do, like trying new activities or wearing different kinds of clothes, are part of their search for an identity. Even though identity development often begins during the teen years, it can be a life-long process; people can change the way they think about themselves when they experience changes in life, like starting a new job or becoming a parent.

“Be yourself. Everyone else is already taken.” - Oscar Wilde

#### How do teens develop an identity?

Psychologists who study identity have described two processes that are involved in identity development: exploration, which involves trying out different roles or options, and commitment, which involves committing to some aspect(s) of identity.

#### Identity Exploration

In order to try out different roles and options for themselves, teens might try things like:

- Hanging out with a new group of friends
- Trying new activities
- Learning more about something that interests them

#### Identity Commitment

There are lots of benefits associated with identity commitment. People who have committed to some aspect(s) of identity tend to experience more self-esteem and life satisfaction, and fewer symptoms of depression or anxiety.



### **Benefits:**

- People who report high levels of exploration and high levels of commitment usually have the best outcomes
- Researchers have found that having engaged in identity exploration in the past is associated with facets of adaptive psychological functioning, like self-esteem

### **Pitfalls:**

- Exploring one's options for identity is associated with identity confusion, or feeling a lack of certainty about one's identity.
- People who are currently engaging in identity exploration and experiencing identity confusion might experience increased symptoms of

## **Consequences of Engaging in Identity Exploration**

There are benefits associated with having explored one's identity, but the process of exploration can be unsettling and uncomfortable. Adolescents should be encouraged to explore their identity, but they may require some additional social and emotional support while doing so.

## **Tips for Supporting Identity Formation**

- Role models can help adolescents imagine different roles or options for their future selves. Look for role models in your family, schools, or community.
- Talk about values, goals, and identities with youth. They may be interested to know how you made decisions about the kind of person you want to be.
- Try to support commitments that have been made. Identity commitments can help someone feel grounded and less confused while they engage in identity exploration.

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## Social Media Article

February 21, 2017

### **The Dangers of Social Media on Self Worth: An Interview with Kari Kampakis by Jonathan Petersen**

Would you rather be liked *online*—or loved *in person*? Social media can be great. But for girls growing up in a generation saturated with social media, getting enough “likes,” comments, and online friends can become an unhealthy obsession.

Bible Gateway interviewed [Kari Kampakis \(@KariKampakis\)](#) about her book, **Liked: Whose Approval Are You Living For?** (Thomas Nelson, 2016).

#### **What problems are you addressing in the book?**

**Kari Kampakis:** *Liked* addresses four primary topics: identity, social media, friendship, and faith. I dove into these because they’re so relevant to the lives of teen and tween girls, and they all tie together. My goal with *Liked* is to help girls tune into the quiet voice of God inside them over the megaphone of public opinion, and to trust Him when making decisions, understanding their worth, and searching for who they are.

#### **Why can social media be so damaging to girls?**

**Kari Kampakis:** Like most things, social media has an upside and a downside. It can be used for good—to spread positivity and hope—or it can be used in narcissistic or hurtful ways. In today’s world, social media is often seen as a way to get famous, get even, or get attention. It doesn’t matter what you post as long as you attract a large following and get tons of likes and shares. Girls who buy into this will end up making some poor choices and will give social media a power it doesn’t deserve: the power to dictate their worth based on the fleeting opinions of people rather than the timeless truths of God.

This can be especially damaging for teen and tween girls because they’re figuring out their identity. They aren’t firm in who they are yet, and if they rely on the world to shape them and define them, they’ll end up disillusioned and disappointed. This is why I’m passionate about helping girls find their identity in Christ and things with eternal value, because that is what takes their lives in a meaningful direction.

#### **How should girls incorporate the Bible into their social networking lives?**

**Kari Kampakis:** The best way for girls to incorporate the Bible into their social networking lives is to pick a goal that pleases God. One verse I like is [Philippians 4:8](#) says, “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”

This verse is a great filter for social media. It’s a reminder that God is found in the good, and by posting things that reflect his light—that is, a picture of a baby cousin, a birthday tribute to a friend, a rainbow over the ball field—you honor God and potentially inspire others to do the same.

## Social Media Article Cont'd

February 21, 2017

**The Dangers of Social Media on Self Worth: An Interview with Kari Kampakis** by Jonathan Petersen

**What are 10 biblical truths about self-worth and how should girls live by them?**

**Kari Kampakis:** In *Liked*, the chapter on confidence begins with this: “What other people say about you is opinion. What God says about you is fact. The way to know your worth is to focus on the facts.” Here are 10 biblical truths to support that:

1. I am made in God's image (Genesis 1:26-28), and I have great potential to grow more like Him and reflect His goodness to others.
2. God is within me, so I will not fall (Psalm 46:5).
3. Nothing can separate me from the love of God that I receive through Christ (Romans 8:39).
4. God has begun a good work in me, and He'll continue that work until the day Jesus returns (Philippians 1:6).
5. God's love toward me is great (Psalm 86:13).
6. God's plan for me is worth the wait (Jeremiah 29:11).
7. Everything God makes, including me, is good (Genesis 1:31).
8. I can confidently trust the Lord to care for me and not fear bad news (Psalm 112:7).
9. Jesus looks for me when I'm lost (Matthew 18:12-14).
10. The world needs my light because God created me to shine for Him (Matthew 5:14-16).

The way to live by truths is to truly embrace them, and to tuck them away in your heart so that when heartaches or disappointments arise, you can counsel yourself with what you know to be true deep down—regardless of what the world says.

**What are your thoughts about Bible Gateway and the Bible Gateway App?**

**Kari Kampakis:** I love Bible Gateway! It makes my job much easier by literally putting Scripture at my fingertips. Both my books include Scripture, and while writing the manuscripts I often visited Bible Gateway to get precise wording or search for a verse related to a subject. In addition to being a credible resource, Bible Gateway is user-friendly and a fantastic tool to help spread the Gospel.

**Is there anything else you'd like to say?**

**Kari Kampakis:** Parents often tell me they wish social media would go away. They see no benefit, only the harmful and negative effects. I agree there is great danger we need to protect our kids from, but I also believe social media presents a huge opportunity to create good. It gives every individual a stage and a microphone to easily and quickly share messages that might help or inspire people. Rather than fight social media and treat it as the enemy, I believe we should empower our kids to use it wisely. After all, they were created for this moment in time, designed for the digital age, and as far as I can tell, social media will only become a bigger part of the world that they are growing up in.

### *Activity 4*

Read the Social Media Article found on the previous pages. Have you noticed the effects of Social Media on the identity of youth in your organization?

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What strategies have you used to show youth in your organization that their self-worth and identity should not come from the amount of “likes” they receive on Social Media?

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Many persons believe Social Media is only negative and wishes it would go away. What is your perception of Social Media?

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## Summary

The Stages of Adolescent Development include independence, future interests and cognitive development, sexuality, physical changes and ethics and self-direction. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs illustrated the importance of first satisfying youth's basic human needs at the bottom of the pyramid before moving to the higher levels of security, social needs, esteem and self-actualization. Brain areas which quickly grasp the gist of situations and regulate judgments are still developing during the teenage years, and reach full maturity during the mid-twenties. When helping adolescents reduce risky decisions, it's best to help them to think with their "gut". You should help adolescents explore their identities offering your full support. Finally, you learned intervention strategies to help youth make better choices.

## Glossary

**Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs:** A pyramid displaying human needs in order of importance including physiological needs, security needs, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualization.

**Immortality Myth:** The idea that young people think they are invincible

**Dorsolateral:** A part of the frontal lobe of the brain in charge of judgments

**Ventromedial:** A part of the frontal lobe of the brain in charge of judgments

**Personal Identity:** A cohesive sense of self including ideas about group identities, values and goals

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## NOTES

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## NOTES

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# **Module 3:**

# **Leadership and**

# **Decision-Making**

# **Skills**

# Introduction

## What are Leadership Skills?

When we talk about leadership skills, what exactly do we mean? Leadership skills are the tools, behaviors, and capabilities that a person needs in order to be successful at motivating and directing others. Yet true leadership skills involve something more: the ability to help people grow in their own abilities. It can be said that the most successful leaders are those that drive others to achieve their own success.

### Objectives:

By the end of this unit you will:

- Understand that leadership can be learned
- Understand and apply the traits every successful leader should have
- Create a mission and vision statement for your organization
- Understand the difference between leadership and management
- Understand there are different leadership styles

## LESSON ONE:

### Three Traits Every Successful Leader Must Have

Is there such a thing as a “Born Leader”? You’ve certainly heard the phrase. Who do you think of when you hear it? Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, or other popular leaders in history? Or perhaps there are leaders in your own life that have had a positive impact on you. What skills did all of these people have that made them effective leaders? Here are a few, but there are certainly others:

- Is committed to a vision or mission
- Understands his or her role
- Demonstrate integrity
- Sets an example
- Understands how to motivate the behavior of others
- Communicates effectively
- Is willing to take risks
- Is adept at problem-solving

Whereas many leaders may be so committed to a vision that they naturally find ways to pull others along with them, most of us cannot claim to have been born with that level of leadership ability. We certainly may have grown over time and learned many effective skills by experience.

There is good news for anyone who doesn’t consider themselves a born leader or who has specific areas of leadership skills that need work: leadership skills can be learned. All that is required is an open mind, patience with yourself as you learn these skills, and the commitment to put what you learn into action.

Without exception, there are three traits that every leader must have in order to be successful. You can attempt to lead without them, but at least one of four things will eventually happen if you do:

- You will be so miserable that you will burnout
- Your team will fail in completing their work
- Your team members will leave
- Your team will lose respect for you

So what are these three required traits? First is the desire to lead. Without it, you will never be comfortable in the leader role. You will struggle every day with the basics, and your team members will sense it in everything you do. If you don’t burn out first, you’ll find that work suffers or that your team is frustrated because they can’t do their work without you doing yours. They may eventually leave – if you don’t first.

The second trait of successful leaders is commitment to the mission and vision of the organization where they work. Imagine trying to convince others to give their best in order to

accomplish something they don't believe in. That's difficult. But trying to convert them to believing in the mission and vision of an organization when you don't believe it yourself? That's simply impossible.

The final trait every successful leader must have is integrity. Integrity in this sense has a simple meaning: doing what you say you will do and behaving the way that you expect your team to behave. At first glance, that may sound simple. But if you can truly master integrity, you will find that it changes whole teams and even whole organizations for the better.

### **The Desire to Lead**

As with any job, resisting the work of leading will make it difficult to be effective – and impossible to find fulfillment or enjoyment in what you do. Without the desire to lead, you will not be willing to do the work that it takes to become the leader of the team. You won't put in the effort to acquire the skills you need to motivate others or to handle conflict. Instead, you'll stick with the comfortable patterns of behavior you've already developed, regardless of whether or not it helps you to lead.

Are you sure that you want to be a leader? If you are, then you are already a step ahead. But if you aren't certain that you want to be someone who is followed rather than someone who follows, you need to consider whether or not a leadership role is right for you.

There are a number of characteristics and feelings that can help you determine your level of desire to lead. The activity below describes the characteristics which generally indicate your motivation to be a leader. Don't worry if you don't meet all of these criteria. Just use them to gauge where you are now in your leadership development. No matter what your score is, your commitment, desire, and determination are the biggest indicators of your ability to become a leader.

**Watch TED Video:** Drew Dudley: Everyday leadership (7:33 Minutes)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/drew\\_dudley\\_everyday\\_leadership](https://www.ted.com/talks/drew_dudley_everyday_leadership)

## Activity 1

### *Leadership Self-Assessment Questionnaire by Donald Clark*

1. 1 2 3 4 5 I enjoy working on teams.
2. 1 2 3 4 5 I am able to speak clearly to others.
3. 1 2 3 4 5 I enjoy relating to others on an interpersonal basis.
4. 1 2 3 4 5 I am good at planning.
5. 1 2 3 4 5 I can interpret rules and regulations.
6. 1 2 3 4 5 I feel comfortable asking others for advice.
7. 1 2 3 4 5 I enjoy collecting and analyzing data.
8. 1 2 3 4 5 I am good at solving problems.
9. 1 2 3 4 5 I am comfortable writing memos to others.
10. 1 2 3 4 5 I can delegate work to others.
11. 1 2 3 4 5 I am effective at handling employee complaints.
12. 1 2 3 4 5 Giving directions is comfortable for me.
13. 1 2 3 4 5 I know how to develop goals and carry them out.
14. 1 2 3 4 5 I am comfortable at implementing new techniques.
15. 1 2 3 4 5 I enjoy appraising performance and giving feedback.
16. 1 2 3 4 5 If I made a mistake, I would admit it and correct it.
17. 1 2 3 4 5 I am able to resolve conflict in the workplace.
18. 1 2 3 4 5 I believe in diversity in the workplace.
19. 1 2 3 4 5 I thrive on change.
20. 1 2 3 4 5 One of my greatest desires is to become a leader.

### **Scoring**

Score the survey by adding the numbers that you circled: \_\_\_\_\_

A score of fifty or higher indicates a desire to become a leader and a perceived ability to perform the tasks required of a leader.

A score of fifty or less indicates a general dislike of wanting to become a leader or a perceived inability to perform the tasks required of a leader.

## Activity 2

Based on the assessment completed in Activity 1, what skills and abilities can you continue to improve (strengths)?

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What skills and abilities do you need to develop (opportunities for growth)?

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If you don't like the work that you do, chances are that you are not going to be inspired to lead others to do it either. In that case, you won't reach your potential as a leader until you are working for an organization that you believe in. This brings us to the second trait that successful leaders all possess.

## Commitment to the Mission and Vision of the Organization

The first leaders of any organization were those that first created it. They had a mission and a vision about what the organization would do, who it would serve, and what changes it would make to the industry of sector they were entering. Those leaders had to take risks like borrowing money or leaving the job they were in at the time in order to start the organization. There were likely personal sacrifices, long nights and weeks of work, and times of significant stress before the organization could be considered a success.

Those first leaders then had to hire others who could share the vision and believe in the mission of the company. The leaders would coach these new hires, helping them learn how to make

decisions which would move the team or organization towards the company's goals. This trend would hopefully continue as each layer of administration was added to the organization. In an ideal world, every employee would perform as if fulfilling the mission and vision of the organization were his or her own personal goal.

Of course, we don't live in an ideal world. The more layers of administration or bureaucracy there are between the visionaries at the head of an organization and the front-line employees who deliver the actual services or product, the more difficult it is to see the mission and vision translated to the employees.

At this point, there is one question you need to ask yourself. Do you know what the mission and vision are of your organization? If you responded by naming what you do, that's not the same thing. For example, a telecommunications company employee might answer, "We sell telecommunication product". But is that the mission of the organization? The mission could be something like "we help people stay connected by providing the highest quality communication products and the best customer service in the industry". Can you see the difference? One is what you do. The other is how you do it. If you know what you do, but not the way you are expected to do it, you cannot effectively lead others to assist in accomplishing the organization's goals.

### **What's the difference between a Mission Statement and a Vision Statement?**

**A Mission Statement** states the main purpose and objectives of an organization. It defines those key actions and measures that can be used to determine whether or not an organization is a success.

**A Vision Statement** also addresses the purpose of an organization, but indicates the values of the organization as well.

Whereas a mission statement defines what a company does, a vision statement helps to explain how that work should be done.



## Integrity

The third trait that every leader must have in order to be successful is integrity. Integrity can be defined simply as being true to your word, being authentic in your actions and speech, and demonstrating the kind of behaviour that you would like to see your employees have. Integrity, like leadership skills, is something that you have to practice. It takes effort to honour your word every time and to be the example you want from your employees even when you are under stress or simply have a personality conflict. But the benefits you can gain from developing integrity are enormous when compared to the damage you can do in the workplace if you lack it.

### Activity 3

Think for a moment about characteristics of bosses you have had that you didn't like. What, specifically, were the attitudes, behaviours, or traits of that person that has you still thinking of them in a negative light?

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Probably you would list things like favoring certain employees, not coming through on promises he or she made, gossiping, taking credit for your work, or treating you disrespectfully. All of these issues can be traced to a lack of integrity.

What was the workplace environment like when you worked for someone who lacked integrity? Did you enjoy going to work? Did you feel inspired to take ownership of your projects and put forth the best effort that you could? Did you feel loyal to the company or believe that there was significant chances for your own personal growth and development? It's a safe bet that your answer to these questions is no. And it's just as safe a bet that as a leader, you could be creating the same kind of environment that you hated if you aren't practicing integrity in the workplace.

So how do you practice integrity? There are three key areas that you can concentrate on developing. As you read each description, ask yourself how you would feel if a leader you worked for did not possess these key characteristics.

### Sincerity

Also called authenticity, leaders with this facet of integrity:

- Do not put up a false front
- Accept responsibility for their commitments and strive to meet them

- Are honest about their own limitations
- Accept responsibility for their mistakes
- Tell the truth

### Consistency

Leaders demonstrate this facet of integrity by:

- Treating employees equally as much as possible
- Following through on promises
- Working as hard or harder than their employees
- Having the same expectations or rules for themselves as for their employees

### Substance

Substance refers to integrity becoming a part of who you are being in all of your work relationships by:

- Keeping private employee information private
- Not gossiping or complaining about team members to other team members
- Doing what's best for the team and not just yourself
- Giving credit where credit is due
- Caring about the development of your employees
- Making it a priority to maintain clear communication and resolve any conflicts

If you have read this information and realized that you have not always acted with integrity in the workplace, you are certainly not alone. But going forward, you can now recognize that integrity can be built one action at a time. As you get more practiced at it, you will find that it becomes a habit. And once you start seeing the results that come from practicing integrity, you will want to keep going.

***A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion, to listen to the needs of others. He does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by the equality of his actions and the integrity of his intent. Douglas McArthur***

## LESSON TWO

### Leadership Development Methods

Explaining and understanding the nature of good leadership is probably easier than practicing it. Good leadership requires deep human qualities, beyond conventional notions of authority.

Good leaders are an enabling force, helping people and organizations to perform and develop, which implies that a sophisticated alignment be achieved - of people's needs, and the aims of the organization. The traditional concept of a leader being the directing chief at the top of a hierarchy is a very incomplete appreciation of what true leadership must be, and often at times, not effective.

Effective leadership does not necessarily require great technical or intellectual capacity. These attributes might help, but they are not pivotal. Good leadership in the modern age more importantly requires attitudes and behaviors which characterize and relate to humanity. Leadership is centrally concerned with people. Of course, leadership involves decisions and actions relating to all sorts of other things, but leadership is special compared to any other role because of its unique responsibility for people - i.e., the followers of the leader - in whatever context leadership is seen to operate. Good leaders are followed chiefly because people trust and respect them, rather than the skills they possess. Leadership is about behaviour first, skills second.

This is a simple way to see how leadership is different to management:

- Management is mostly about processes. It is the process of dealing with or controlling things or people.
- Leadership is mostly about behaviour. Leadership is the action of leading a group of people or an organization.

Another way to see leadership compared with management is that leadership does not crucially depend on the type of management methods and processes a leader uses; leadership instead primarily depends on the ways in which the leader uses management methods and processes.

Good leadership depends on attitudinal qualities, not management processes. Humanity is a way to describe these qualities, because this reflects the leader's vital relationship with people.

Qualities critical for a leader's relationship with his/her people is quite different to conventional skills and processes: If it's not clear already, leadership is without doubt mostly about behaviour, especially towards others. People who strive for these things generally come to be regarded and respected as a leader by their people.

## **Additional Leadership Skills and Qualities**

### **Committed**

- Leading by example - always be seen to be working harder and more determinedly than anyone else.
- Helping alongside your people when they need it.
- Always doing what you say you will do - keeping your promises.

### **Responsible**

- Having an effective appreciation and approach towards corporate responsibility so that the need to make profit is balanced with wider social and environmental responsibilities.
- Always taking the responsibility and blame for your people's mistakes.

### **Knowledgeable, hardworking and humble**

- Working hard to become expert at what you do technically, and at understanding your people's technical abilities and challenges.
- Reading good books, and taking advice from good people, to help develop your own understanding of yourself, and particularly of other people's weaknesses. Achieve the company tasks and objectives, while maintaining your integrity, the trust of your people, are a balancing the corporate aims with the needs of the world beyond.

### **Inclusive and encouraging**

- Listening to and really understanding people, and showing them that you understand (this doesn't mean you have to agree with everyone - understanding is different to agreeing)
- Asking for people's views, but remaining neutral and objective.
- Always giving your people the credit for your successes.
- Backing-up and supporting your people.
- Encouraging your people to grow, to learn and to take on as much as they want to, at a pace they can handle.
- Involving your people in your thinking and especially in managing change.

### **Confident**

- Being very grown-up - never getting emotionally negative with people - no shouting or ranting, even if you feel very upset or angry
- Never self-promoting

### **Positive**

- Always accentuating the positive (say 'do it like this', not 'don't do it like that')
- Smiling and encouraging others to be happy and enjoy themselves

### **Determined**

- Being decisive - even if the decision is to delegate or do nothing if appropriate - but be seen to be making fair and balanced decisions

## Sensitive

- Being honest but sensitive in the way that you give bad news or criticism
- Relaxing - breaking down the barriers and the leadership awe - and giving your people and yourself time to get to know and respect each other

## Planning and Management Skills

- Taking notes and keeping good records
- Planning and prioritizing.
- Managing your time well and helping others to do so

## Important points to note about good leadership

People with these sorts of behaviours and attitudes tend to attract followers. Followers are naturally drawn to people who exhibit strength and can inspire belief in others. These qualities tend to produce a charismatic effect.

Some people are born more naturally to leadership than others. Most people don't seek to be a leader, but many more people are able to lead, in one way or another and in one situation or another, than they realize.

People who want to be a leader can develop leadership ability. Leadership is not the exclusive preserve of the wealthy and educated. Leadership is a matter of personal conviction and believing strongly in a cause or aim, whatever it is.

Leadership sometimes comes to people later in life, and this is no bad thing. There is no real obstacle to people who seek to become leaders if leadership is approached with proper integrity. Anyone can be a leader if he/she is suitably driven to a particular cause.

Many qualities of effective leadership, like confidence and charisma, continue to grow from experience in the leadership role.

Leadership can be performed with different styles. Some leaders have one style, which is right for certain situations and wrong for others. Some leaders can adapt and use different leadership styles for given situations. Adaptability of style is an increasingly significant aspect of leadership, because the world is increasingly complex and dynamic.

Good leaders typically have a keen understanding of relationships within quite large and complex systems and networks.

Leadership is often more about serving than leading. Besides which, individuals and teams tend not to resist or push against something in which they have a strong involvement/ownership/sense of control. People tend to respond well to thanks, encouragement, recognition, inclusiveness, etc. Tough, overly dominant leadership gives teams a lot to push against and resist.

Leaders of course need to be able to make tough decisions when required, but most importantly leaders should concentrate on enabling the team to thrive, which is actually a 'serving' role, not the dominant 'leading' role commonly associated with leadership.

### **Difference between a Leader and a Manager**

Do leaders have the same attributes as managers? Many people confuse or merge the different attributes of management and leadership. In the reading earlier, you learned management is more about processes, and leadership is more about qualities. However, managers are leaders just as leaders can take on management roles. This exercise enables people to understand the differences.



### Activity 4

#### Leadership vs Management

Now that you have some knowledge of a leader and a manager, in the space provided identify the qualities of the leader and manager from the list below. Place what you think are the more significant skills or qualities higher up in the list so that you create a highly visual 'map' of management and leadership competencies.

reporting monitoring budgeting being honest with people consulting with team giving responsibility to others explaining decisions assessing performance problem-solving reporting the performance of the team in a way that attributes praise and credit to the team	decision-making negotiating motivating others thanking people communicating instructions recruiting sharing a vision with team members working alongside team members	resolving conflict reviewing performance time management team-building running meetings interviewing organizing resources accepting criticism and suggestions giving constructive feedback
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<i>Leadership Qualities</i>	<i>Management Skills</i>	<i>Reason for Ranking</i>

By now, you should realize that leadership is not the exclusive responsibility of the school principal or the Member of Parliament in your community or the boss of your organization. Anyone can lead, inspire, motivate others, encourage people at all levels to aspire to and apply the principles of good leadership, and the whole community or organization will benefit. Everyone, in their own way, can be a leader. In fact organizations which have poor leadership at the top provide a great opportunity for ordinary staff, and junior managers and students to take responsibility for leading, inspiring and helping to develop others.

<b>A Manager....</b>	<b>A Leader...</b>
Thinks short term	Thinks long term
Thinks tactics	Thinks strategy
Plans how and when	Asks what and why
Looks at the bottom line	Looks to the horizon
Knows the day-to-day business	Knows the customer
Focuses on improving existing products and processes	Focuses on new products and breakthrough processes
Builds success through quality	Builds success through employees
Supervises	Influences
Gains authority from his/her position	Gains authority by his/her mindset and behavior

**Table 1: Managers vs. Leaders**



## LESSON THREE

### Leadership Styles

People lead in many ways, but the following are four of the more common styles of leadership by managers. You may recognize some of the leaders that you know as fitting into one or more of the following categories:

#### Autocratic Leadership Style

- The classical approach
- Manager retains as much power and decision-making authority as possible
- Does not consult staff; staff is not allowed to give any input
- Staff expected to obey orders without receiving any explanations
- Structured set of rewards and punishments

The authoritative style is most effective in times of crisis, such as in a company turnaround or a takeover attempt, or during an actual emergency like a tornado or a fire. This style can also help control a problem teammate when everything else has failed. However, it should be avoided in almost every other case because it can alienate people and stifle flexibility and inventiveness.

#### Bureaucratic Leadership Style

- Manages “by the book”
- Everything done based on procedure or policy
- If not covered by the book, referred to the next level above
- A police officer not a leader
- Enforces the rules

The bureaucratic style works best when the team is already motivated and skilled, and the leader needs quick results. Used extensively, however, this style can overwhelm team members and squelch innovation.

#### Democratic Leadership Style

- Also known as participative style
- Encourages staff to be a part of the decision-making
- Keeps staff informed about everything that affects their work and shares decision-making and problem solving responsibilities

The democratic style is most effective when the leader needs the team to buy into or have ownership of a decision, plan, or goal, or if he or she is uncertain and needs fresh ideas from qualified teammates. It is not the best choice in an emergency situation, when time is of the essence for another reason or when teammates are not informed enough to offer sufficient guidance to the leader.

## Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

- Also known as the “hands-off” style
- The manager provides little or no direction and gives staff as much freedom as possible
- All authority or power given to the staff and they determine goals, make decisions, and resolve problems on their own

Laissez-faire leadership is most effective in situations where group members are highly skilled, motivated and capable of working on their own. Laissez-faire leadership is not ideal in situations where group members lack the knowledge or experience they need to complete tasks and make decisions.

Most leaders have a dominant style, one they use in a wide variety of situations. Introverted and extroverted leaders tend to have different styles (See Appendix B for additional information). There is no single leadership model that can be considered the best or the most effective. Determining which leadership style would depend on the situation at hand and the people being led. Based on this theory, the best leaders are those who are able to adapt their style to what is happening around them using cues, such as the nature of the group, type of task or other contributing factors that could help get the job done.

### Activity 5

**Purpose:** To identify your style of leadership

**Directions:** For each of the statements below, circle the number that indicates the degree to which you agree or disagree. Give your immediate impressions. There are no right or wrong answers.

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Employees need to be supervised closely, or they are not likely to do their work.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Employees want to be a part of the decision-making process.	1	2	3	4	5
3. In complex situations, leaders should let subordinates work problems out on their own.	1	2	3	4	5
4. It is fair to say that most employees in the general population are lazy.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Providing guidance without pressure is the key to being a good leader.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Leadership requires staying out of the way of subordinates as they do their work	1	2	3	4	5
7. As a rule, employees must be given rewards or punishments in order to motivate them to achieve organizational objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Most workers want frequent and supportive communication from their leaders	1	2	3	4	5
9. As a rule, leaders should allow subordinates to appraise their own work.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Most employees feel insecure about their work and need direction.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Leaders need to help subordinates accept responsibility for completing their work.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Leaders should give subordinates complete freedom to solve problems on their own.	1	2	3	4	5
13. The leader is the chief judge of the achievements of the members of the group.	1	2	3	4	5
14. It is the leader's job to help subordinates find their "passion."	1	2	3	4	5
15. In most situations, workers prefer little input from the leader.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Effective leaders give orders and clarify procedures	1	2	3	4	5
17. People are basically competent and if given a task will do a good job.	1	2	3	4	5
18. In general, it is best to leave subordinates alone.	1	2	3	4	5

### *Activity 5 Cont'd*

#### **Scoring**

1. Sum the responses on items 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, and 16 (authoritarian leadership).
2. Sum the responses on items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, and 17 (democratic leadership).
3. Sum the responses on items 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, and 18 (laissez-faire leadership).

#### **Total Scores**

Authoritarian Leadership \_\_\_\_\_

Democratic Leadership \_\_\_\_\_

Laissez-Faire Leadership \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Scoring Interpretation**

This questionnaire is designed to measure three common styles of leadership: authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire. By comparing your scores, you can determine which styles are most dominant and least dominant in your own style of leadership.

If your score is 26–30, you are in the very high range.

If your score is 21–25, you are in the high range.

If your score is 16–20, you are in the moderate range.

If your score is 11–15, you are in the low range. If your score is 6–10, you are in the very low range.

The activity on the following page highlights real-word leadership problems. You should identify the leadership style used or the type of leadership style that you believe should be used according to the situation outlined.

### Activity 6

1. In 2010, Chile's Asociación Chilena de Seguridad (ACHS), a workers' insurance non-profit corporation, was facing rising accident rates and falling financial returns. It was also facing a leadership crisis. ACHS's 87-year old founder, Eugenio Heiremans who had led the organization for its entire 52-year history, was suffering from a debilitating disease.

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2. Chris Peterson was assigned to lead a newly formed regional consulting team at DSS Consulting. She carefully selected the team members, built a cohesive group, and led the team in developing a new consulting service. Both Peterson and her team were satisfied with their accomplishments and ability to overcome the indifference of others in the organization.

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3. Dr. Frank Young, who joined Huntington University Hospital's Center, was shocked when he discovered that the percentage of patients who received blood transfusions was significantly higher than the national average. It was no secret that patients who received blood transfusions after heart surgery had a 30% chance of survival after six months and 50% at 10 years. Furthermore, there were operational costs associated with the heavy use of blood products. In late 2013, Young set out to reduce the percentage of blood transfusions during cardiac surgery by two-thirds within one year. He was certain about his goal, but less certain on what he had to do to achieve it.

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4. In 1998, Jill Medvedow was hired as the director of Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art. Her mandate was to reinvent a museum that had no permanent collection, drew a mere 25,000 visitors a year, and had few members and almost no money. This case demonstrates how Medvedow was able to rebuild (literally and figuratively) a powerless organization by being disciplined, getting people to believe in an idea, and taking many risks.
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## LESSON FOUR

### Decision-making skills

Another important task of leaders is making decisions as part of their role of governance or leading, mobilizing resources, and even advocacy.

Problem solving and decision-making are important skills for everyone. Problem solving often involves decision-making, and decision-making is especially important for management and leadership. There are processes and techniques to improve decision-making and the quality of decisions. Decision-making is more natural to certain personalities, so these people should focus more on improving the quality of their decisions. People that are less natural decision-makers are often able to make quality assessments, but then need to be more decisive in acting upon the assessments made. Problem-solving and decision-making are closely linked, and each requires creativity in identifying and developing options, for which the brainstorming technique is particularly useful.

#### The processes involved in decision-making process are:

- Define and clarify the issue - does it warrant action? If so, now? Is the matter urgent, important or both?
- Gather all the facts and understand their causes.
- Think about or brainstorm possible options and solutions from all those involved.
- Consider and compare the pros and cons of each option - consult if necessary.
- Select the best option - avoid vagueness or 'foot in both camps' compromise, that is, choosing parts of both options.
- Explain your decision to those involved and affected, and follow up to ensure proper and effective implementation. Sometimes leaders have to make difficult decisions and thus, have to have uncomfortable conversations. See Appendix A to learn how to have difficult conversations.

#### Activity 7

Think about the last time you had to make a decision for your organization. Did you follow the process that was just outlined? Why or Why not?

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## Activity 8

This is a true story. It takes place in a remote area of Malaita in the Solomon Islands. The people who live there have been isolated for a long time. They have not had much contact with modern ways and live a traditional lifestyle.

One day a non-government organization (NGO) representative arrived and wanted to help. He noticed that the women walked five miles every day to get water. The village elders and the NGO representative together decided to build a well in the village. With the help of some strong men, they built the well and trained the men how to maintain it.

Several months later, the NGO field representative came to visit the village. He found that the well had not been repaired and was not used.

(Source: CETC Units)

What do you think had happened?

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Why did it happen? (Relate your answer to some of the skills and processes discussed earlier.)

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Relate this story to your own experience.

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## Summary

In this unit we looked at leadership: leadership behaviors, characteristics of good leaders and leadership strategies for leading teams and organizations. We examined the differences between effective and poor leaders and how these were demonstrated in various leadership styles in your community. We also looked at the different skills that leaders should possess, the difference between leaders and managers and the importance of vision and mission statements.

## Glossary

**Mission Statement:** states the main purpose and objectives of an organization.

**Vision Statement:** addresses the purpose and values of an organization.

**Integrity:** being true to your word, being authentic in your actions and speech, and demonstrating the kind of behaviour that you would like to see your employees have

**Management:** is mostly about processes. It is the process of dealing with or controlling things or people.

**Leadership:** is mostly about behaviour. Leadership is the action of leading a group of people or an organization.

**Autocratic Leadership Style:** Manager retains as much power and decision-making authority as possible

**Bureaucratic Leadership Style:** Manages “by the book”

**Democratic Leadership Style:** Encourages staff to be a part of the decision-making

**Laissez-Faire Leadership Style:** Manager provides little or no direction and gives staff as much freedom as possible



## Appendix A

### Leadership in Action: Preparing and Having Difficult Conversations by Brian Duggan

<http://marathonhrcg.com/blog/leadership-in-action-preparing-and-having-difficult-conversations>

Sometimes Supervisors, Managers and Leaders need to have difficult conversations with an employee or team. This is not our most preferred leadership activity!

Best practice indicates that difficult conversations are more effective when we are prepared, acknowledge the importance of the issue and the value of the employee or group and focus on tangible observations, actions and viable outcomes. It is much less effective to focus on the emotion and drama! This type of focus typically causes the emotion and drama to become the issue!

It is also ineffective when we enter a difficult conversation with our own uncertainty and confusion about the issue, its impact and the change needed. The best results come when we are able to be clear, focused, empathetic and firm at the same time. When preparing for a difficult conversation it is important to be very comfortable with all of these points:

#### **Clarify the issue?**

- In one or two sentences what is the situation and the behaviour or performance that is at issue?
- Provide 1-2 bullets of background (who, when).

#### **This issue is significant because?**

- Explain the behaviour, and its impact on people, process, business, cost....
- Speak to the future consequences if the performance or behaviour continues.

#### **Express confidence and trust in the person or group.**

- Speak about why you believe it is worth having this conversation.
- Identify the individual's positive behaviour.

#### **What is the change you need to see?**

- Specifically, what results do you want?

#### **Engage in developing solutions.**

- What does the employee or group see as the solution?
- What behaviour will they change?
- What can all of you agree on to move forward?

#### **What do you need from the other person to achieve the results?**

- Spell out the action plan.
- Identify the accountabilities.
- Name the specific behaviours.

#### **What will you do to support the change in behaviour?**

- What is your part in the solution?
- How will you acknowledge the change that occurs?

## **Commit to follow-up**

- What evidence indicates movement towards resolution?
- What will you measure and how will you measure it?
- What are your timelines for follow-up?

Leaders who have the foresight to prepare and engage in difficult conversations demonstrate trust and engagement in their people. Doing this well can be your defining moment as a leader.

## **Appendix B**

### **Are You An Introverted, Extroverted or Ambiverted Leader?**

By Mentorshipbc

Society often paints quite a humorous yet incorrect picture of introverts and extroverts. Introverts are stereotyped as shy, antisocial and perhaps even socially awkward. Extroverts are commonly thought of as extremely talkative, confident and bouncing off the walls with energy at social events. With these misconceptions in place, it is understandable why many believe extroverts would make better business leaders. However a recent inspirational Ted Talk by Susan Cain author of *The Power of Quiet* discusses the power of introversion. According to her research one-third to one-half of the population are introverts – and they make great leaders.

### **What is an Introvert, Extrovert or Ambivert?**

Stereotypes of introversion or extroversion incorrectly tend to suggest they relate to how shy or talkative you are. The terms actually relate to how you recharge your energy and your reaction to environmental stimulation such as people, noise, lighting etc. Introverts recharge by spending time alone and get drained by being in stimulating environments. Extroverts recharge in stimulating environments and get drained when they are alone.

But what if you like stimulating environments *and* being alone? Well, you are not alone. In fact Carl Jung the psychologist who coined the terms is quoted to have said: “There is no such thing as a pure introvert or extrovert. Such a person would be in the lunatic asylum.” Like most life theories, introversion and extroversion aren’t black and white. They run on a sliding scale. You can even be an equal mix of both – a term called an ambivert, a personality type that many identify with.

### **How do I Know Whether I am an Introvert, Extrovert or Ambivert?**

There are a lot of quick tests you can complete to find out what personality type you are, but it’s quite simple really. If you need time to recharge after being in a stimulating environment, you are likely an introvert. If you don’t need time to recharge after being in a stimulating environment, you are likely an extrovert. If you like an even mix of both, you are an ambivert. If you don’t agree with any of these statements, you are likely somewhere on the sliding scale in between introversion and extroversion.

### **Why do we Process Stimuli Differently?**

Interestingly extroversion and introversion are related to differences in how the brain processes stimuli. If you veer towards extroversion, you are more likely to process stimuli in the same area

visual and auditory sensory processing take place. However if you are an introvert, you are likely to process stimuli through a long, complicated pathway in areas of the brain associated with remembering, planning, and solving problems.

## **The Advantages of Being an Introverted or Extroverted Leader**

### ***Introverts***

- Introverted leaders tend to listen more carefully and show greater receptivity to suggestions making them more effective leaders of vocal teams.
- Introverted leaders usually prefer writing to talking which allows them to better leverage social networking tools.
- Introverts are more likely to let talented employees run with their ideas vs. the extroverts trying to own the idea themselves.

### ***Extroverts***

- Extroverts aren't as likely to get drained by stimulating networking events, press meetings or award shows.
- Extroverts are more likely to enjoy being in the spotlight which may be a necessary part of leadership.
- Extroverted leaders are better able to take risks and adapt to change.

Wherever you lie on the introversion/extroversion scale, finding your personality type can help you know what fuels or drains you allowing you to be an authentic and powerful leader.

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## NOTES

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## NOTES

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# **Module 4:**

# **Designing a**

# **Research-Based**

# **Youth Program**

## Introduction

As we've all heard, funders are looking for outcomes. In recent years, there has been increased pressure from funding agencies and the government for greater effectiveness and accountability of prevention and intervention programs. This rising demand for program quality, and evidence of that quality, has fueled a growing interest in research-based programs (EBPs).

If your organization's idea of outcomes measurement is to scramble for data at the end of the year, then you are going to have a hard time meeting funder requirements. Learning how to properly measure outcomes of a program is an important skill for today's social service organizations to master.

In this module we provide an overview of what it means for a program to be researched-based, and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of implementing a research-based program. We also provide information on creating your program's goals and objectives, creating a budget and measuring your program's outcomes.

Keep reading to find out exactly how to measure outcomes of a program and get tips for applying these strategies to your organization's processes.

### **Objectives:**

By the end of this module you will:

- Understand what is a research-based program
- Be aware of steps to create a youth leadership development program
- Be able to evaluate the organization's capacity
- Determine the program's goals and objectives
- Define outcomes and outcome indicators
- Be able to measure program outcomes
- Understand the importance of measuring program outcomes
- Be able to create a research-based program for your organization

## LESSON ONE

### Implementing a Youth Leadership Development Program

Research supports the premise that youth development and leadership programs positively shape the growth of young people. Youth leadership programs build on solid youth development principles, with an emphasis on those development and program components that support youth leadership. Youth development and youth leadership programs for all youth, including those with disabilities, consist of the same basic components necessary to build on each youth's capabilities and strengths and address a full range of developmental needs. Youth leadership programs place an additional emphasis on certain components central to leadership development (NCWD, 2005). This lesson provides a ten-step plan on implementing a youth leadership development program.

#### Steps for Implementing a Youth Leadership Development Program

##### 1. Evaluate Organization's Capacity

Before you start planning, examine whether your organization:

- values youth,
- has opportunities for youth to serve,
- is willing to support a program and
- has funding/time to develop and carry out a program.

It might be helpful to do a S.W.O.T analysis to identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in regards to your organization's ability to develop and sustain a leadership development program.

##### 2. Determine Program Purpose

Clearly define and articulate the program's goals and objectives. Drafting a statement of purpose will help you make future decisions. A clear statement of purpose should include:

- the values of the program,
- what the ultimate goals are,
- how to achieve those goals, and
- who is to be involved.

#### Goals and Objectives

A goal is a broad target that you want to achieve but may not all be necessarily achieved by the project. An objective is the specific activity or action by a project to produce outputs or results to achieve that goal. It can take more than one objective to achieve a goal. Likewise, an objective can yield more than one results or outputs. 'Objectives' are often known to use the infinite verb 'to do'. It is often said that good objectives must be specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic and within a timeframe (SMART).

- **Specific:** Be clear about what will be achieved
- **Measurable:** Quantify results and measure when they have been achieved



- **Achievable:** Ensure they can be achieved
- **Realistic:** Can be attained within project resources
- **Timed:** Can be attained within a specified timescale

The aims and objectives will give your project a direction and will allow you to focus on results. Throughout the project, revisit your objectives and measure what you have achieved. At the end of the project they will help you to demonstrate what you have achieved (Arnold, 2017).

### 3. Decide Target Population

Identify the type of youth that will be participating in your program:

- Determine any special needs, previous leadership experience or training, and qualities or skills they need to develop.
- Select adult leaders for the group based on the age, ethnicity/race, gender, socio-economic status, and life experiences of the targeted youth.
- Begin to explore the leadership approach that will best fit this group.

### 4. Investigate Youth Leadership Issues

- Seek to understand what youth leadership development actually means.
- Investigate current trends and ideas for youth leadership development.
- Identify the specific social and developmental issues that the youth in your target population face.

### 5. Identify and Involve Key Leaders

Determine key "decision makers" and leaders in your organization and community that should be involved in the program development process. Typically, when people are involved in a program, they will be supportive of it. Look for leaders among:

- current management and staff of your organization;
- members of the larger community; and
- local and national organizations that provide resources for leadership development programs.

This range of advisors can provide key insights about the operation of the program--possible problems and pitfalls to avoid. They may also help publicize and promote your program.

### 6. Create Budget and Explore Funding Options

Create a budget, estimating the cost of supplies and training materials, space (if you are renting or leasing), equipment, and labor. Also estimating the number of participants, staff and volunteers is important as this will affect cost.

- Determine how much funding can come from within your organization.
- Explore potential outside funding from private organizations or government agencies if necessary.

## 7. Determine Leadership Strategy and Select Curriculum

Determine your leadership strategy by asking *how* and *what* you want to teach your youth. You can then select curriculum based on your strategy. Youth leadership development curricula follow many different strategies, such as skill building, character development, or developing "competency arenas." See personal and social assets that facilitate positive youth development in the Positive Youth Development module.

## 8. Determine Volunteer Standards and Expectations

It's important to create a simple application and screening process for adult leaders or volunteers that includes checking references. Create "job descriptions" that outline the roles and responsibilities of youth, staff and other volunteers. In addition, if you want to use youth volunteers in the program, it's helpful to determine specific prerequisites for volunteer candidates such as leadership potential, interest, competency, and commitment.

## 9. Remember to Develop the Staff and Volunteers

Once you identify and select your youth and adult participants it is important to help *them* grow in leadership. Continually equip your adult staff to teach, model, nurture and develop young people as leaders.

## 10. Evaluate the Program

Assess the effectiveness of the program from all perspectives: youth, staff and volunteers. Measure the progress of youth leaders and assess the effectiveness of the program in meeting the goals set. Have the outcomes you desired been achieved? The following lesson will provide additional information on Program Evaluation.



## Activity 1

### Does your organization have the “DNA” required to start a Youth Leadership Development Program?

(Adapted from Designing Youth Leadership Programs by Mariam MacGregor, Youthleadership.com, 2001, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Used with permission from Mariam MacGregor.)

**Use this self-assessment checklist to determine whether your organization is ready – in terms of its organization culture – to launch a youth leadership development program.**

1. Does your organization value the opinions and participation of youth?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Does “youth leadership development” fit into the overall strategy/mission of your organization?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What youth leadership efforts are currently happening in your organization?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How will your staff respond to youth leadership development efforts? Will they offer support or participate? Will they value it?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Can you clearly state your reasons for wanting to offer youth leadership development?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you know about youth leadership development programs, resources, and opportunities available in your community?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What are some potential obstacles you will face in starting a program?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. How easy will it be to integrate youth leadership development with other programs in your organization? What, if anything, will need to change?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Are there financial resources available to support youth leadership activities?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON TWO

### What Is Project Evaluation (and Why Should You Do It)?

By Sumac

A couple of decades ago, funders handed out checks without worrying too much about whether the awardee really achieved the goals they'd set for themselves. Today, that's rarely the case. Most foundations care a great deal about whether their money was well spent, and they often require some form of evaluation to determine whether your approach worked, and how it could be improved.

This is not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, it's probably a good thing to be held accountable for the good works you've envisioned, and for the money entrusted to you. It's a positive thing to have tangible proof that your organization is working well: such proof will make it much easier to raise money in the future. And if your organization is not as successful as you'd hoped, it's helpful to actually know where the problems lie, and how best to fix them.

Evaluation can be a simple, do-it-yourself process, or a full-scale, professional study. The choice of how to evaluate a project or program is usually determined by:

- **The scope of the project:** A tiny one-day event doesn't warrant big-time evaluation.
- **The funding source:** Some sources, particularly large foundations, will tell you what kind of evaluation they want to see.
- **Your needs:** Do you need to prove a concept? Show outcomes to raise money? Or just satisfy your curiosity?
- **Your resources:** Do you have an evaluator on staff, or the funds to hire someone out of house? Or are you a shoestring operation?

If evaluation is built into the funding for your project, you're all set. All you need to do is ask for proposals, pick the one you like best, and pay the bills. Your evaluator does the rest.

Most project evaluations, however, are do it yourself projects that require some careful planning and thinking. As project evaluator, you'll need to understand the tools used to conduct evaluations, so that you can select the most appropriate tools for your particular project.

#### Evaluation Tools

Tools come in two groups; the best known are quantitative tools, which measure how many, how much, how big, and so forth. Quantitative tools allow you to say things like "500 people attended our event," "200 people got jobs as a result of our program," or "grades improved by 20% because of our tutoring services." Qualitative tools allow evaluators to measure intangible things like awareness, attitude, and appreciation.

In some cases, quantitative tools are all you need, because your project has simple, measurable goals. Typically, these are the straightforward projects that aim to lower or increase something easily measured. For example: increase grades; decrease addiction; increase employment; decrease homelessness. Did it work? To find out, just measure rates within your target audience before and after your program was implemented. Quantitative tools include basic, well known methods such as:

**Head count:** How many people attended?

**Testing:** Pre- and post-tests to see how many more correct answers attendees could get after participating in your program.

**Data analysis:** What percent of people who attended your program graduated, increased grades, became employed, etc.

**Comparison:** How many came to the events before your outreach project; how many came after your outreach project.

More interesting and complex are qualitative evaluations which look at intangible outcomes such as attitude, awareness, and so forth. These measures are used to evaluate projects with goals like “participants will understand the importance of obedience, reverence, discipline and self-respect” or “participants will become more fully aware of the importance of diet and exercise in maintaining good health.”

While it may seem impossible to actually measure such intangible outcomes, there are tools for doing just that kind of evaluation. You’ve probably used or at least heard of all of them. They include:

- **Surveys.** Typically, surveys are carefully crafted tools that allow you to take the pulse of a group of people before the start of a project, and then again after the project is completed. Surveys can measure almost anything, from prior and post knowledge of content you’re teaching to attitudes, preferences, achievements, self-esteem... you name it. When you survey your intended audience, you’re setting the bar for success. If your post-program survey shows improvement, you’ve done what you set out to do. Surveys can be conducted in one of several ways: electronically (using online systems like SurveyMonkey), with paper and pencil, or through a person-to-person interview. Electronic surveys offer the great benefit of being easy to distribute and easy to tabulate, but users may share limited information. Paper and pencil surveys are a good way to start a program that requires participants to show up, sit down, and engage in a classroom like situation. Interviews are versatile and flexible, and may gather a good deal of information – but they are time consuming and expensive.
- **Observation.** How do you know that youngsters are more interested in fine art after a workshop than they were before the workshop? One way to find out is to observe the group prior to and after the workshop. Using a stopwatch, you can compare the amount

of time they spend in front of individual works. Listening to conversation, you can hear which words they use to discuss and describe the art. You can also note body language: are they zipping past the works? Stopping to look? Pointing and discussing? All of these observations are data points to help you assess outcomes.

- **Case Studies.** Your nonprofit is running a program that prepares unemployed individuals for job placement by crafting resumes, building interview skills, honing business skills, and providing career-appropriate clothing. Each week, dozens of people go through the program. You know that X number are getting jobs – but you don’t really know which part of your program is most useful, or how clients feel about their experience. One way to find out is to conduct a series of case studies, in which you choose representative individuals and study them in depth. In the end, you’ll come out with transcripts of interviews, pre- and post-test results, and other data to help you tell the story of how several unique individuals arrived at your door, experienced your program, and either succeeded or failed in reaching their goals.
- **Focus Groups.** Your youth development program helps teens improve grades, build self-esteem, get involved with community service projects, and learn study and workplace skills. You have lots of participants, but you really don’t know how those participants’ attitudes and abilities changed as a result of their experience. To find out, you might run a focus group. A focus group usually consists of 3-5 individuals who, together, represent a cross section of your target audience. Through directed, open-ended questions, you can learn a great deal about how they perceive and are impacted by your program before it begins, as it runs, and after it ends. Focus groups are typically “facilitated” by someone with specific experience, recorded, and transcribed.
- **Interviews.** Have you ever been accosted by a person carrying a clipboard who asks whether you will answer a few questions? If so, you’ve seen the interview process in action. Typically, interviews are used to gather marketing information (who is coming, why are they coming, what are they coming for, are they satisfied, etc.) – but interviews can also be used to assess knowledge, interest, and so forth. For example, a museum might interview visitors to find out what they already know about the Impressionists, what they might like to know, which Impressionists they prefer, and so forth. That sort of information can provide a baseline for later comparison.

Whatever your project or your budget, there are tools available to evaluate your level of success. When you use those tools, you improve your ability to make your case for support, you gain critical information for refining your program, and you build a database of knowledge for developing new programs and projects for the future.

### Activity 2

Does your organization use evaluation tools? If so, which ones?

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## LESSON THREE

### Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach

#### Introduction to Outcome Measurement

If yours is like most human service agencies or youth-and-family-serving organizations, you regularly monitor and report on how much money you receive, how many staff and volunteers you have, and what they do in your programs. You know how many individuals participate in your programs, how many hours you spend serving them, and how many brochures or classes or counselling sessions you produce. In other words, you document program *inputs*, *activities* and *outputs*.

**Inputs** include resources dedicated to or consumed by the program. Examples are money, staff and staff time, volunteers and volunteer time, facilities, equipment, and supplies. For instance, inputs for a parent education class include the hours of staff time spent designing and delivering the program. Inputs also include constraints on the program, such as laws, regulations, and requirements for receipt of funding.

**Activities** are what the program does with the inputs to fulfill its mission. Activities include the strategies, techniques, and types of treatment that comprise the program's service methodology. For instance, sheltering and feeding homeless families are program activities, as are training and counselling homeless adults to help them prepare for and find jobs.

**Outputs** are the direct products of program activities and usually measure in terms of the volume of work accomplished – for example, the numbers of classes taught, counselling sessions conducted, educational materials distributed, and participants served. Outputs have little inherent value in themselves. They are important because they are intended to lead to a desired benefit for participants or target populations.

If given enough resources, managers can control output levels. In a parent education class, for example, the number of classes held and the number of parents served are outputs. With enough staff and supplies, the program could double its output of classes and participants.

If yours is like most human service organizations, you do not consistently track what happens to participants after they receive your services. You cannot report, for example, that 55 percent of your participants used more appropriate approaches to conflict management after your youth development program conducted sessions on that skill, or that your public awareness program was followed by a 20 percent increase in the number of low-income parents getting their children immunized. In other words, you do not have much information on your program's outcomes.

**Outcomes** are benefits or changes for individuals or populations during or after participating in program activities. They are influenced by a program's outputs. Outcomes may relate to behavior, skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, condition or other attributes. They are what



participants know, think, or can do; or how they behave; or what their condition is, that is different following the program.

For example, in a program to counsel families on financial management, **outputs – what the services produces** – include the number of financial planning sessions and the number of families seen. The desired outcomes – the changes sought in participants’ behavior or status – can include their developing and living within a budget, making monthly additions to a savings account, and having increased financial stability.

In another example, outputs of a neighborhood clean-up campaign can be the number of organizing meetings held and the number of weekends dedicated to the clean-up effort. **Outcomes - benefits to the target population** – might include reduced exposure to safety hazards and increased feelings of neighborhood pride. The program outcome model on the following page depicts the relationship between inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes.

### Questions to Consider When Identifying Program Outcomes

- Why do we do what we do as an organization?
- What do we want to accomplish with our programs?
- What benefits do the participants/clients of our program experience?
- How do the participants/clients change as a result of our program?
- “We are \_\_\_\_\_ (organization). We are working to \_\_\_\_\_ (activities) so that \_\_\_\_\_ (population) will be \_\_\_\_\_ (outcome).”

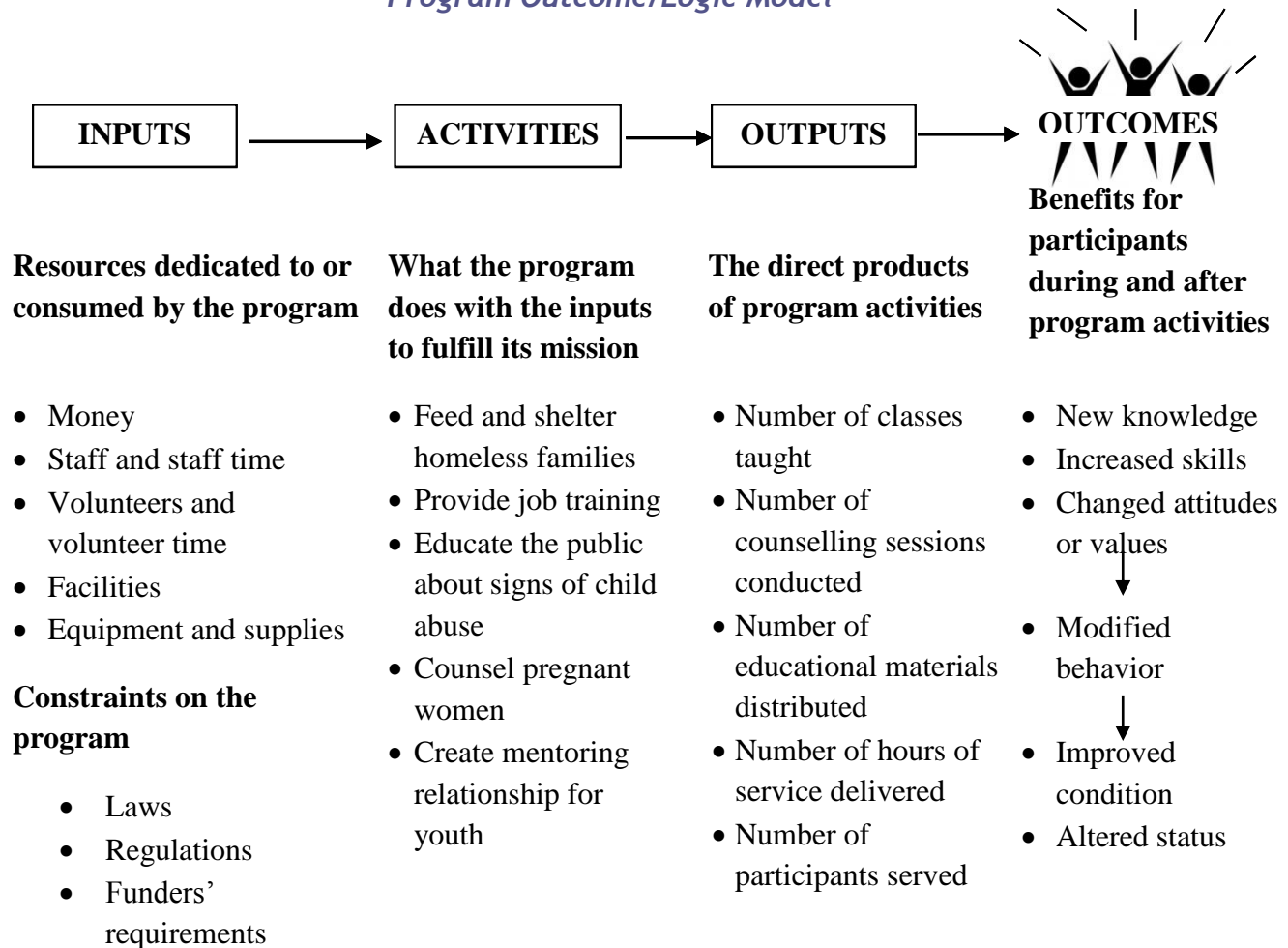
Note: *Outcomes* sometimes are confused with outcome **indicators**, **specific items of data that are tracked to measure how well a program is achieving an outcome**, and with **outcome targets, which are objectives for a program’s level of achievement**.

For example, in a youth development program that creates internship opportunities for high school youth, an outcome might be that participants develop expanded views of their career options. An indicator of how well the program is succeeding on this outcome could be the number and percent of participants who list more careers of interest to them at the end of the program than they did at the beginning of the program. A *target* might be that *40 percent of participants list at least two more careers* after completing the program than they did when they started it.





### *Program Outcome/Logic Model*



### **Why Measure Outcomes?**

In growing numbers, service providers, governments, other funders, and the public are calling for clearer evidence that the resources they expend actually produce benefits for people. Consumers of services and volunteers who provide services want to know that programs to which they devote their time really make a difference. That is, they want better accountability for the use of resources. One clear and compelling answer to the question of “why measure outcomes?” is to see if programs really make a difference in the lives of people.

Although improved accountability has been a major force behind the move to outcome measurement, there is an even more important reason: to help programs improve services. Outcome measurement provides a learning loop that feed information back into programs on how well they are doing. It offers findings they can use to adapt, improve and become more effective.

This dividend doesn't take years to occur. It often starts appearing early in the process of setting up an outcome measurement system. Just the process of focusing on outcomes – on why the program is doing what it's doing and how participants will be better off – gives program managers and staff a clearer picture of the purpose of their efforts. That clarification alone frequently leads to more focused and productive service delivery.

Down the road, being able to demonstrate that their efforts are making a difference for people pays important dividends for programs. It can, for example, help programs:

- Recruit and retain talented staff
- Enlist and motivate able volunteers
- Attract new participants
- Engage collaborators
- Garner Support for innovating efforts
- Retain or increase funding
- Gain favorable public recognition

Results of outcome measurement show not only where services are being effective for participants, but also where outcomes are not as expected. Program managers can use outcome data to:

- Strengthen existing services
- Target effective services for expansion
- Identify staff and volunteer training needs
- Develop and justify budgets
- Prepare long-range plans
- Focus board members' attention on programmatic issues

To increase its internal efficiency, a program needs to track its inputs and outputs. To assess compliance with service delivery standards, a program needs to monitor activities and outputs. But to improve its effectiveness in helping participants, to assure potential participants funders that its programs produce results, and to show the general public that it produces benefits that merit support, an agency needs to measure its outcomes.

These and other benefits of outcome measurement are not just theoretical. Scores of human service providers across the country attest to the difference it has made for their staff, their volunteers, their decision makers, their financial situation, their reputation, and most important, for the public they serve.

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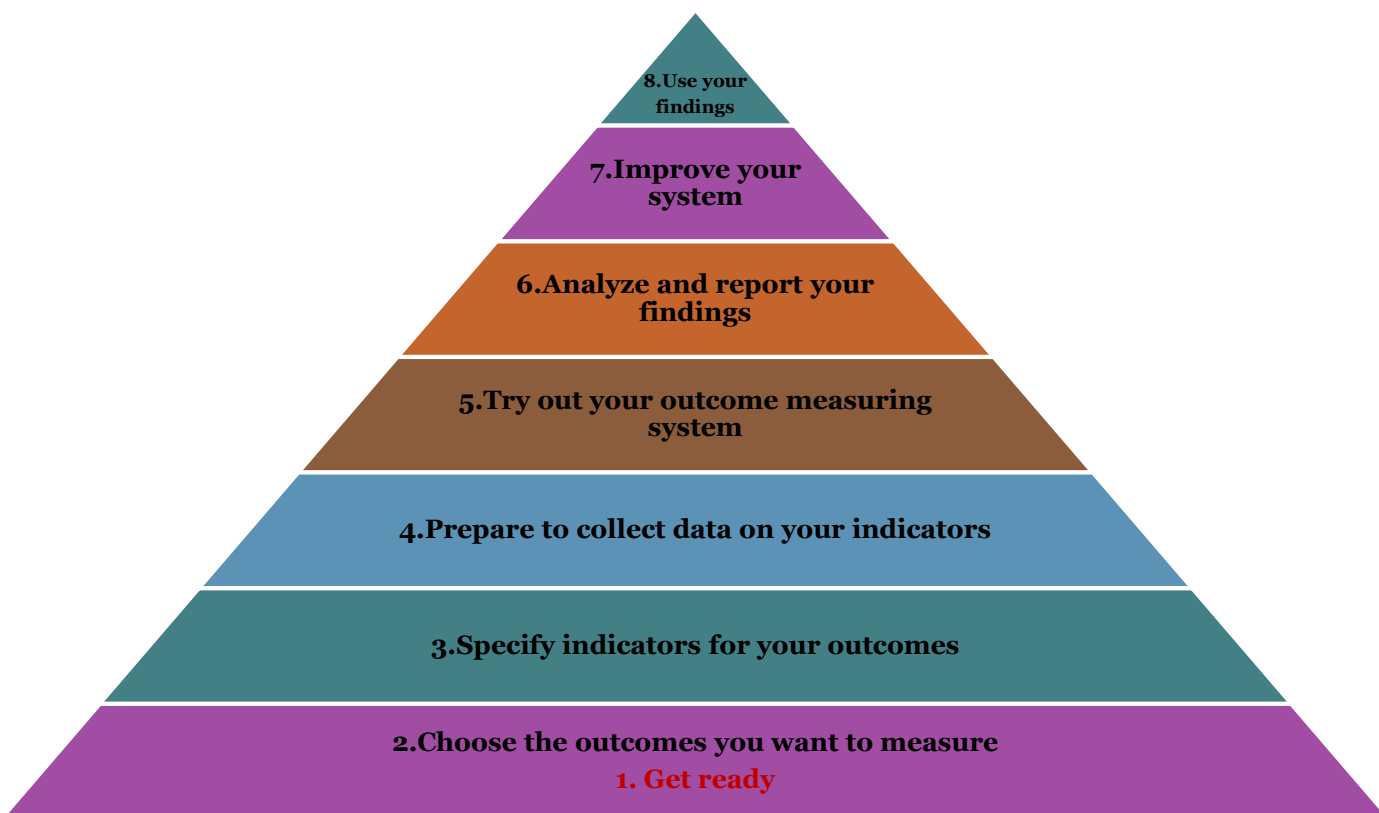
## LESSON FOUR

### Developing a System for Measuring Program Outcomes

Source: STRENGTHENING NONPROFITS: A Capacity Builder's Resource Library

#### Eight Steps to Success

Measuring Program Outcomes provides a step-by-step approach to developing a system for measuring program outcomes and using the results. The approach, based on methods implemented successfully by agencies across the country, is presented in eight steps, shown below. Although the illustration suggests that the steps are sequential, this is actually a dynamic process with a good deal of interplay among stages.



It's important to note that this module makes no assumptions about organization size, budget, funding sources, computer skills/equipment, setting or participant characteristics. A one-size-fits-all guide to developing an outcome measurement system is not realistic. For example, the nature of some programs presents particular challenges related to identifying and measuring outcomes. Examples include advocacy programs (how do you measure system change?), prevention programs (how do you measure that something did not happen?), and programs that have only one-time contact with participants (how do you assess change in individuals you never see again?).

## Get ready

Your outcome measurement efforts will benefit greatly from some planning at the front end. Before you jump in, bring together the staff that will be involved in the outcome measurement process and discuss the questions outlined below. The better the planning, the more impact the outcome measurement will have on your organization.

### Where Should We Focus?

In starting out, it's particularly important not to try to measure too much. Start slowly and learn from your experience. Don't try to perform outcome measurement at the same time. Pick one program or service as a beginning. Questions that will help you figure out where to begin include:

- Is a funder, board member, or staff person requesting that you look at a particular program?
- Do you have a new program with an unproven track record?
- Do you have an existing service with shaky performance?
- Do you have an effective program that you want to document as being so?

### What Do We Want to Accomplish with Our Outcome Measurement Efforts?

Once you have decided what program to evaluate, explore the purpose for the outcome measurement processes. There are often a variety of reasons underlying the decision to carry out outcome measurement related to your programs. Which options below apply most directly to the program you intend to examine?

- To identify what constitutes success for a program and how it will achieve that success (often as part of a program design process prior to funding and implementation)
- To determine whether the program theory underlying the program is correct (often as part of a program redesign when new research indicates that the assumptions underlying the program cannot be substantiated)
- To describe how you intend to measure a program or service's impacts (often as part of a funding request)
- To report on a program's impact (often as part of a staff or board planning process)
- To determine whether the program has been effective in achieving its intended outcomes (often as part of a funder's request for evidence that the program merits continued funding)
- To determine whether to continue the program and allocate ongoing funding (often as part of internal budget-related priority setting)
- To make improvements in how the program is delivered (often as part of a program-wide or organization-wide quality improvement effort)

### Who is on Our Outcome Measurement Team?

Once you have decided what you want to learn, it's time to make it operational. You can start by putting together a small team of people to manage the process. As you think about the roles of the team, consider who on your staff possesses the following skills:

- **Project coordination**, including laying out tasks in a sequence, informing other staff of their roles and assignments, providing assistance to people as they complete their parts of the evaluation process, and ensuring that the work is being done
- **Service or program knowledge**, including the ability to identify the relationship between the activities being provided and the intended impacts, and an understanding of the types of outcomes your program could achieve
- **Computer skills**, including expertise in formatting surveys and other data collection instruments, creating spreadsheets or databases, and entering data

Like any organizational activity, someone must be in charge of outcome measurement to make sure that it proceeds smoothly and according to a timeline. Among the team members, who should be designated as the team leader? Outcome measurement is more difficult to implement successfully when it is an unbudgeted add-on to a staff person's full-time job. Your outcome measurement work will go much more smoothly if you carve out the time for the lead staff person to manage these efforts. If you start with an outcome measurement focus on one program, ideally the team leader managing your evaluation will spend about one day per week to accomplish the work. You may need to get help if you do not have the staff capacity to implement outcome measurement activities.

### Choose the outcomes you want to measure

Outcomes define what you want a program or service to accomplish. As a youth development organization, your intended outcomes focus on the impacts or changes that the youth experience as a result of your help.

This phase has two objectives:

1. Establish a shared understanding of what the program or project is and how it is supposed to work by completing a logic model including inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes. Lesson Three has an example of a program outcome/logic model. The following page has another example of a logic model. This example is a Technical Assistance Program geared towards increasing the organizational capacity of Faith-Based & Community Based Organizations.

Technical Assistance Program Goal: Increased FBCO Organizational Capacity

INPUTS OR RESOURCES	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES
Resources available to the program that allow and support provision of technical assistance, including money, staff, volunteers, clients, materials or equipment	The technical assistance methods carried out by staff	The product delivered or unit of technical assistance provided, usually described numerically, such as number of organizations served or number of hours of service	The changes that occur for FBCOs, as a result of the technical assistance provided
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funding</li> <li>▪ Staff expertise</li> <li>▪ Training manuals</li> <li>▪ FBCO clients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide one-on-one financial management coaching</li> <li>▪ Conduct board development training workshops</li> <li>▪ Develop content-specific manuals</li> <li>▪ Provide phone and e-mail follow-up after training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ # of one-on-one coaching sessions</li> <li>▪ # of hours of coaching</li> <li>▪ # of training workshops</li> <li>▪ # of staff trained</li> <li>▪ # of hours of training</li> <li>▪ # of manuals</li> <li>▪ # of follow-up phone calls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increased FBCO compliance with financial management requirements</li> <li>▪ Improved FBCO</li> </ul>

7 Reisman, Jane and Judith Clegg. *Outcomes for Success!* (Seattle, WA: The Evaluation Forum, 2000), 28.

Look at the elements that make up the logic model and use the questions below to help you define the elements of your program:

- **Inputs/Resources:** What inputs or ingredients do you need to operate your program? How many staff? How large a budget? How many youth do you need to have as clients?
- **Activities:** What will you do? What methods will you use to deliver your program? What content areas will you cover? What level of assistance will you provide? (e.g., six one-on-one coaching sessions)
- **Outputs:** What will be the tangible products of your assistance? To how many FBCOs will you provide coaching? How many sets of financial policy guidelines will you produce? How many hours of training will you provide? How many people will you train?
- **Outcomes:** What impact will your technical assistance have on your FBCO clients? What is reasonable to expect in the way of change?

Finally, the second objective is to create a set of measures that relate to your logic model and can be used to assess the accomplishments of staff and project partners.

**Watch YouTube Video: STAND - Introduction to Monitoring & Evaluation (2:06 Minutes)** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y\\_z9H0alSqQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_z9H0alSqQ)

### Hints as to What Are and Are Not Outcomes

Here are some program components that agencies sometimes have trouble classifying as activities, outputs, or outcomes. These hints provide general guidelines and point out when exceptions may be appropriate.

**Recruiting and training staff and volunteers, purchasing and upgrading equipment, and various support and maintenance activities.** These are internal program operations intended to improve the quality of program inputs. The number of staff recruited, number of volunteers trained, amount of equipment purchased, etc. indicate the volume of these internal operations. However, the operations do not represent benefits or changes in participants, and thus *are not outcomes*.

**Number of participants served.** This information relates to the volume of work accomplished. In most cases, volume of service is an output. It tells nothing about whether participants benefitted from the service and therefore it is *not usually an outcome*.

In public education programs where the program aims to encourage citizens to seek a service, such as cancer screening, the fact that citizens become aware of the importance of the service and seek it out reflects a change in knowledge or attitudes and behavior resulting from the program. Thus, the number of citizens who are motivated to seek a service by a public education program is an outcome of that program.

**Participant satisfaction.** Most often, whether a participant is satisfied or not with various aspects of a program (e.g., courteousness of staff, timeliness of follow-up) does not indicate whether the participant's condition improved as a result of the service. Thus, participant satisfaction *generally is not an outcome*.

In rare instances, participant satisfaction may be part of the series of changes a participant experiences in achieving a successful outcome. For example, if an individual's willingness to continue with long-term counselling is critical to the program's success and satisfaction is a key determinant of continuation, then satisfaction may be a necessary, although not sufficient, outcome. In programs whose purpose is to meet participant's basic needs, such as food kitchens and homeless shelters, it may be nearly impossible to track participants far enough beyond the immediate delivery of service to identify outcomes beyond being fed and sheltered. In these cases, the program may have to settle for participant satisfaction as the closest approximation of an outcome it can measure.

## Specify indicators for your outcomes

The next step in putting together an effective outcome measurement system focuses on deciding how you are going to make your intended outcomes measurable, i.e., defining a set of performance measures or indicators. As written, outcomes are usually too broad to enable data collection tools to be developed directly from them. Remember, the purpose of outcomes is to describe the intended impact the client organization experiences. For this reason, indicators are used to serve as a bridge between intended outcomes and the actual data collection process. Indicators enable you to determine whether the FBCOs you work with have, in fact, changed in the specific ways that indicate your intended outcome has occurred. Please see Exhibit A and the diagram below for examples of indicators.

Indicators must be specific and observable. They answer questions like how you will know when changes have occurred and how you will know when you have achieved the outcomes. Thinking ahead to possible data collection methods will tell you if your indicators are specific enough. Ask questions like these to determine whether your indicators will work:

- How can I see the change? (Through what kind of observation?)
- How can I hear the change? (Through interviews? Focus groups?)
- How can I read the change? (Through surveys? In records?)

### Tips for Creating Appropriate Indicators

**Develop one to three indicators per outcome.** One to three indicators is usually a realistic number for each outcome you have identified. Some straightforward outcomes can be quantified easily through the use of only one indicator. Other more complex outcomes will necessitate two or three indicators.

**Refine to the fewest outcomes possible.** As you look at what indicators you need to adequately describe your progress in achieving your intended outcomes, it's important to use the fewest number of outcomes possible. It takes time and money to gather and analyze the data for each one. What's important is not quantity but quality. What's the best way to see, hear, or read about the change?

**Take into account the feasibility of collecting data for the measurement.** Select the indicator that is most feasible for staff to measure within the time and financial resources available to you.

**Identify the most useful indicators.** Select the indicator that is most useful to you and gives you the most useful information about the outcome.

## Prepare to collect data on your indicators

Once you have identified the data collection methods you intend to use (see Lesson Two for Evaluation Tools), you need to decide when you will collect the data and how often. Then consider the procedures you need to put in place to ensure that your outcome measurement system is sustainable and produces quality data.



To finish your planning work, a number of procedural issues must be considered. You and your team will need to think about the following questions as you formulate and implement your data collection plan:

- Who will collect the data?
- Have you prepared your youth/clients for data collection?
- How will you ensure confidentiality and informed consent?
- How will you ensure quality of data?
- How will you boost response rates?

SAMPLE DATA COLLECTION PLAN FOR OUTCOME MEASURES						
OUTCOME	INDICATOR	WHAT DATA COLLECTION METHOD?	WHEN WILL DATA BE COLLECTED?	WHO WILL COLLECT DATA?	WHAT WILL THEY DO?	HOW WILL DATA COLLECTED BE MONITORED?
Increased ability of FBCOs to raise funds for program services	Number and percent of organizations who put new fundraising practices in place	Survey of organizations receiving fundraising technical assistance	Once — three months after completion of technical assistance services	Technical assistance staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mail survey to organizations three months after the completion of technical assistance services</li> <li>▪ Send reminder postcards to organizations who do not return the survey within two weeks</li> </ul>	Program manager will track completion of services, mailing of surveys, and response rate to the survey and notify staff if additional follow-up is needed

Finally, when you put together your outcomes, indicators, data collection methods, frequency and schedule of data collection, as well as procedures, you will have created your plan for outcome measurement. Worksheets to assist you with your evaluation planning are in the appendices of this guidebook. Please complete these worksheets using the information you have read so far. The bottom line is that how you collect your data and your attention to those you're collecting it from will ensure that you have optimum quality data to work with in the analysis phase.

### Try out your outcome measuring system

In this phase you will use the evaluation tools you established at the beginning to carry out your outcome measuring system.

## Analyze and report your findings

### Analyze your findings

Once data is collected, the next step is to analyze the data. Data analysis is more than figuring out ways to make beautiful pie charts and other graphics. It is about looking at the information you have collected and asking yourself what it all means. This is a prime example for when data does not substitute for judgment or managerial decision making. Once you have the data, it is up to you to make use of it to inform decisions about your programs.

Moreover, analysis of data can be as simple or as complex as the tools you decide to use to apply to the data. You can simply count, sort, and order the pieces of data. You can perform statistical tests to determine the relationship between two sets of data, or use the information to find patterns that allow you to predict future behavior. Whichever tools you use for analysis, be sure to continue to ask yourself, “To what end?” And make sure that the analysis is used in service of the mission of your program.

### Report your findings

This area focuses on getting support from various external stakeholders and generating enthusiasm about the results of the program. When considering how to use the results externally, create a plan that incorporates 1) what to communicate, 2) how to communicate it, and 3) the target audience for each communication.

#### What to Communicate

The following suggestions are good ways to communicate your findings. You will determine the right mix of these six forms of communication:

- **Issue a formal report.** At the conclusion of the project, complete a full report of your evaluation efforts. Describe your desired outcomes and your logic model, the data collection plan, your results, and any recommendations or actions you have taken or plan to take as a result. See Effective Communication Module for additional information on Report Writing.
- **Present case studies or stories of impact.** These may be part of your formal report, but they can also be teased out and made available as a marketing or teaching tool. Focus on a single organization and the results that organization achieved through your capacity building intervention.
- **Develop press releases.** Draft a press release highlighting the strongest results you have discovered and distribute to local newspapers, columnists, bloggers, community e-mail lists, and neighborhood organizations.
- **Create snapshots or postcards.** Distill your key results into a short list, and turn that short list into a snappy display for use in print or online. Printed, laminated cards make great promotional materials and can be handed out at community meetings, mailed to constituents, and displayed on websites.

- **Incorporate visual aids.** Whenever possible, reinforce the numerical results with pictures—graphs or charts. You can also include photos.
- **Produce a promotional video.** Record interviews with organizational leaders discussing how the capacity building help they received improved their organization. Leaders of the capacity builder can discuss the program's goals and results. The video can be loaded for free on YouTube or hosted on the organization's website.

## How to Communicate

Having produced great materials from the suggestions above, it is important for you to put them to good use. The following are tried and true methods of connecting external stakeholders to the materials that communicate evaluation results:

- Enhance your web presence. Snapshots, case studies, stories, visual aids, and even your final report should be made available on your program's website, Facebook page, or any other online communities you are part of.
- Invite the media. Send press releases to local media outlets and invite them to tour your site.
- Give presentations. Invite stakeholders (board, partners, funders) for a meeting. Large organizations may be able to call a press conference. Go to your funders or stakeholders. If your organization is invited to give a speech or present information at a forum, be sure to include the key results in the introduction of your organization.

## Target Multiple Audiences

It will be important to include many audiences when discussing the results of your outcome measurement. Some possible audiences include: potential and current funders, partners, your clients, community leaders, management and staff inside your organization and other youth.

## Improve your system & Use your findings

The entire evaluation and outcome measurement process should be critically and thoroughly examined so that you can know what worked and what needs to be improved in the future. Each step should be reviewed while asking the following questions:

- **Logic model.** Is your program logic model accurate to what your program actually works toward? Are there inputs, outputs, or outcomes that are missing?
- **Outcome measures.** Were the outcome measures actually feasible? Did they capture the data you intended to about the outcomes?
- **Data collection plan.** Were the tools functional? Did the individuals collecting data or filling them out understand what was asked and provide the relevant data? How can they be improved? Was data collected at the right time? Were you able to perform quality control for the data?

- This is also a good time to look at the results. While your results are not likely to identify a statistical cause-and-effect relationship, if your outcomes are unexpected—for better or for worse—it is common sense to examine the practices. Why was this capacity building strategy put into place over another? Was it effective? What problems were encountered and what were the resolutions? You may find that your goals or outcomes need to be tweaked or perhaps rewritten altogether. The bottom line is that you should be sure to build in some time to learn from the results and reflect on the process and implementation of the outcome measurement plan. This will allow you to achieve better results in the future.



## Exhibit A: Example Outcomes and Outcome Indicators for Various Programs

Type of Program	Outcome	Indicator(s)
<b>Smoking cessation class</b>	Participants stop smoking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percent of participants who report that they have quit smoking by the end of the course</li> <li>• Number and percent of participants who have not relapsed six months after program completion</li> </ul>
<b>Information and referral program</b>	Callers access services to which they are referred or about which they are given information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percent of community agencies that report an increase in new participants who came to their agency as a result of a call to the information and referral hotline</li> <li>• Number and percent of community agencies that indicate these referrals are appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>Tutorial program for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students</b>	Students' academic performance improves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percent of participants who earn better grades in the grading period following completion of the program than in the grading period immediately preceding enrollment in the program</li> </ul>
<b>English-as-a-second-language instruction</b>	Participants become proficient in English.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percent of participants who demonstrate increase in ability to read, write, and speak English by end of the course.</li> </ul>
<b>Counselling for parents identified as at risk for child abuse or neglect</b>	Risk factors decrease. No confirmed incidents of child abuse or neglect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percent of participating families for whom Child Protective Service records report no confirmed child abuse or neglect during 12 months following program completion</li> </ul>
<b>Employee assistance program</b>	Employees with drug and/or alcohol problems are rehabilitated and do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percent of program participants who are gainfully employed at same company 6 months</li> </ul>

	not lose their jobs.	after intake
<b>Homemaking services</b>	The home environment is healthy, clean, and safe. Participants stay in their own home and are not referred to a nursing home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percent of participants whose home environment is rated clean and safe by a trained observer</li> <li>• Number of local nursing homes who report that applications from younger and healthier citizens are declining (indicating that persons in the past would have been referred to a nursing home now stay at home longer)</li> </ul>
<b>Prenatal care program</b>	Pregnant women follow the advice of the nutritionist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percent of women who take recommended vitamin supplements and consume recommended amounts of calcium</li> </ul>
<b>Shelter and counselling for runaway youth</b>	Family is reunified whenever possible; otherwise, youths are in stable alternative housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percent of youth who return home</li> <li>• Number and percent of youth placed in alternative living arrangement who are in that arrangement 6 months later unless they have been reunified or emancipated</li> </ul>
<b>Camping</b>	Children expand skills in areas of interest to them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percent of campers that identify two or more skills they have learned at camp</li> </ul>
<b>Family planning for teen mothers</b>	Teen mothers have no second pregnancies until they have completed high school and have the personal, family, and financial resources to support a second child.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percent of teen mothers who comply with family planning visits</li> <li>• Number and percent of teen mothers using recommended form of birth control</li> <li>• Number and percent of teen mothers who do not have repeat pregnancies prior to graduation</li> <li>• Number and percent of teen mothers who, at the time of next pregnancy, are high school graduates, are married, and do not need public assistance to provide their children</li> </ul>

## Summary

As you can see, learning how to measure outcomes of a program is an invaluable skill for any social service administrator. It's a fairly involved but also critical process in ensuring your organization's success.

Outcome measurement is not a passing fad. In the years ahead, collecting data on benefits for program participants will be as common as collecting data on the number of program participants is today.

Currently, however, there are many unresolved issues. There is debate over whether certain events are outputs, outcomes or another kind of result. There is worry over how to measure some outcomes and what else can be used for outcomes that defy direct measurement. There are issues concerning the need for technically sound methodologies, which can be expensive and time consuming, and the staffing, funding, and workload realities that constrain nearly all service agencies.

This youth manual does not pretend to resolve these issues. It does, however, lay the groundwork that will help you design more effective programs. For now, this module's purpose is to provide help for those committed to improving the quality of life for the youth they serve.

**Complete Appendices A, B and C before your next class.**

## Glossary

**Inputs** are resources a program uses to achieve program objectives. Examples are staff, volunteers, facilities, equipment, curricula and money. A program uses *inputs* to support *activities*.

**Activities** are what a program does with its input – the services it provides – to fulfill its mission. Examples are sheltering homeless families, education the public about signs of child abuse, and providing adult mentors for youth. Program *activities* result in *outputs*.

**Outputs** are products of a program's activities, such as the number of meals provided, classes taught, brochures distributed, or participants served. A program's *outputs* should produce desired outcomes for the program's participants.

**Outcomes** are the changes in the lives of individuals, families, organizations, or the community as a result of a program; the benefit for participants during or after their involvement in a program; or the impact of a program on the people it serves. Outcomes may be related to knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, behavior, condition or status. Example of outcomes include greater knowledge of nutritional needs, improved reading skills, more effective responses to conflict, getting a job, and having greater financial stability.

For a particular program, there can be various "levels" of outcomes, with initial outcomes leading to longer-term ones. For example, a youth in a mentoring program who receives one-to-



one encouragement to improve academic performance may attend school more regularly, which can lead to getting better grades, which can lead to graduating.

**Outcome indicators** are the specific items of information that track a program's success on outcomes. Another commonly used phrase is "performance measure." They describe observable, measurable characteristics or changes that represent achievement of an outcome. For example, a program whose desired outcomes is that participants pursue a healthy lifestyle could define "healthy lifestyle" as not smoking; maintaining a recommended weight, blood pressure, and cholesterol level; getting at least two hours of exercise each week; and wearing seat belts consistently. The number and percent of program participants who demonstrate these behaviors then is an indicator of how well the program is doing with respect to the outcome.

**Outcome targets** are numerical objectives for a program's level of achievement on its outcomes. After a program has had experience with measuring outcomes, it can use its findings to set targets for the number and percent of participants expected to achieve desired outcomes in the next reporting. It also can set targets for the amount of change it expects participants to experience.

**Benchmarks** are performance data that are used for comparative purposes. A program can use its own data as a baseline benchmark against which to compare future performance. It also can use data from another program as a benchmark. In the latter case, the other program is chosen because it is exemplary and its data are used as a target to strive for, rather than as a baseline.

**Anonymous data** – Information where you do not know who provided the responses. (Compare with "confidential data" below.)

**Baseline** – Data gathered to provide a comparison for assessing program changes or impact.

**Comparative standard** – Data used as a comparison or a standard of achievement for a specific indicator or outcome.

**Compliance monitoring** – Tracking and reporting information on what and how much service a program delivers, the clients it serves, how much money it expends, and, possibly, the outcomes it achieved, in relation to what an organization has agreed upon, generally referring to contractual arrangements made between an organization and its grant maker on the use of funds.

**Confidential data** – Information where you do know, or can find out, who provided the responses but keep the information private.

**Data** – Information collected in a systematic way that is used to draw conclusions about a program or its outcomes.

**Evaluation** – The systematic application of social research procedures for assessing the conceptualization, design, implementation, and utility of health or social interventions.



**Goal** – A broad statement of the ultimate aims of a program, generally beyond the ability of one organization to achieve on its own.

**Inputs** – The resources available to a program that allow and support service delivery, e.g., money, staff, volunteers, materials, or equipment.

**Instrument** – A tool used to collect data, including survey questionnaires, interview guides, observational checklists, and written record extraction forms.

**Objective** – A specific, measurable accomplishment within a specified time frame.

**Outcome evaluation** – Systematic examination of the impact of a program and what resulted for the participants, clients, consumers, or customers. Another commonly used phrase is “summative evaluation.” (Also see “process evaluation.”) **Outcome measurement** – A systematic way to assess the extent to which a program has achieved its intended results; generally used in the nonprofit world.

**Output** – The product delivered or the unit of service provided by a program, usually described numerically, such as number of people served or number of hours of service delivered.

**Performance measurement** – Similar to outcome measurement but generally used in business and government arenas.

**Process evaluation** – Systematic examination of the degree to which a program is operating as intended, looking at what services it provides, how they are provided, who receives the services, and how much service is delivered. Another commonly used phrase is “formative evaluation.” (Also see “outcome evaluation.”)

**Program logic model** – A representation of the linkages between the inputs to a program, the resources available to it, and the activities carried out, and the outputs and outcomes those resources and activities are believed to produce.

**Qualitative data** – Descriptive or subjective information provided in narrative terms.

**Quantitative data** – Numerical information gathered in a structured way.

**Reliability** – The extent to which data collected are reproducible or repeatable.

**Target** – The specific level of achievement for an indicator or outcome.

**Validity** – The accuracy of information collected

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## Appendix A: Sample Program Logic Model

Using this worksheet, you can create a logic model for your program with an outcome chain of short-term, intermediate, and longer-term outcomes.

Agency		Program Name:		Program Goal:	
Inputs or Resources	Activities	Outputs	Short-Term Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes
Resources available to the program that allow and support provision of technical assistance, including money, staff, volunteers, clients, materials or equipment.	The youth development/assistance methods carried out by staff	The product delivered or unit assistance provided, usually described numerically, such as number of youth served, number of hours of service, number of classes/meetings held	The first changes that occur for individuals, families, organizations, or the community as a result of the program	The subsequent benefit for people during or after their involvement in the program	The eventual impact on individuals, families, organizations, or the community for which the program is accountable

# Appendix B: Outcomes and Indicators Worksheet

Transfer the outcomes from your logic model into the first column of this worksheet and then use the remaining columns to identify up to three potential indicators for each outcome.

Agency		Program Name:	
Outcomes	Indicators	Indicators	Indicators
Select the most meaningful, relevant, important outcomes from your logic model and write them here	For each outcome, identify the specific, measurable information that will be collected to track success toward that outcome	Is there another possible indicator?	Another?

## Appendix C: Data Collection Plan Worksheet, Part 1

Select outcomes and indicators from the previous worksheet and identify for each one the data collection methods you will most likely use and the schedule for your data collection.

Agency:		Program Name:	
Outcome	Indicator	What data collection method?	When will data be collected?
Select the outcomes that will be measured and write them below	Identify which indicator(s) will be measured for the outcome and write them below	Identify which type of data collection method (survey, interview, observation, or record review) will be conducted	Describe the timing and frequency of data collection

## Data Collection Plan Worksheet, Part 2

Transfer the information on data collection methods from the previous worksheet to the first column in this worksheet and identify for each one the data collection procedures you believe will help manage your data collection process.

Agency:		Program Name:	
WHAT DATA COLLECTION METHOD?	WHO WILL COLLECT DATA?	WHAT WILL THEY DO?	HOW WILL DATA COLLECTED BE MONITORED?
Write the data collection methods from Part 1 of the Data Collection Plan below	Identify who will be responsible for collecting the data	Describe the steps that will be taken to implement the data collection	Identify who will monitor the data collection process for quality and consistency and how they will do so

## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]



# **Module 5:**

# **Effective**

# **Communication**

## Introduction

Effective communication helps us understand a person or situation and enables us to resolve differences, build trust, build respect, and create environments where creative ideas, problem solving, affection, and caring can flourish. As simple as communication seems, much of what we try to communicate to others—and what others try to communicate to us—gets misunderstood, which can cause conflict and frustration in personal and professional relationships. By learning these effective communication skills, you can better connect with youth, your spouse, kids, friends, and coworkers.

By the end of this module you will be able to:

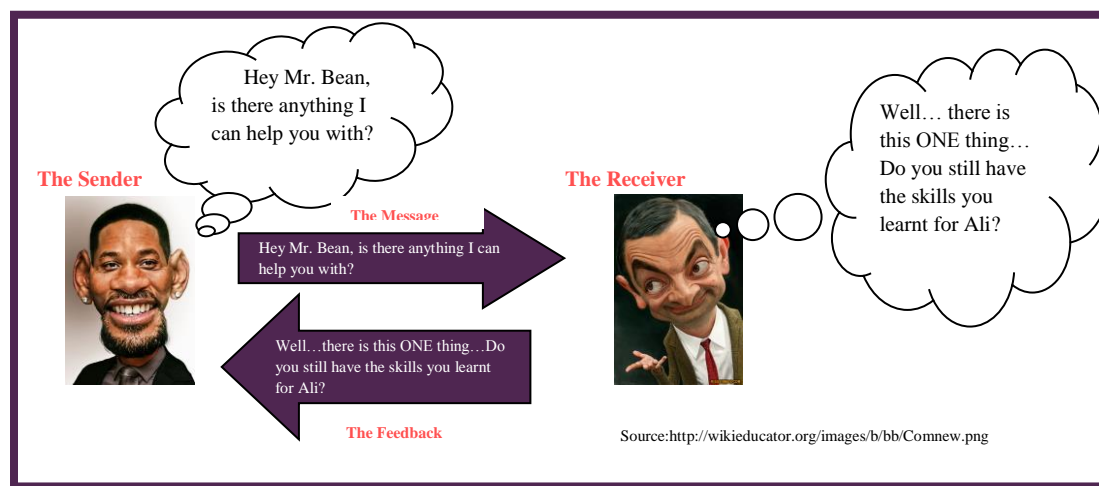
- Define Effective Communication
- Demonstrate skills of a good listener
- Learn to recognize and reduce signs of stress in a conversation
- Have a better understanding of emotional awareness
- Gain a better understanding of public speaking and presentation
- Explain the process of report writing

## LESSON ONE

### What is effective communication?

In the information age, we have to send, receive, and process huge amounts of messages every day. But effective communication is about more than just exchanging information; it's also about understanding the emotion behind the information. Effective communication can improve relationships at home, work, and in social situations by deepening your connections to others and improving teamwork, decision-making, and problem solving. It enables you to communicate either negative or difficult messages without creating conflict or destroying trust. Effective communication combines a set of skills including nonverbal communication, attentive listening, the ability to manage stress in the moment, and the capacity to recognize and understand your own emotions and those of the person you're communicating with.

While effective communication is a learned skill, it is more effective when it's spontaneous rather than formulaic. A speech that is read, for example, rarely has the same impact as a speech that's delivered (or appears to be delivered) spontaneously. Of course, it takes time and effort to develop these skills and become an effective communicator. The more effort and practice you put in, the more instinctive and spontaneous your communication skills will become.



### Why is Effective Communication Important for a Community Worker?

Community workers act as a source of information and advice to individuals and communities. They advocate on behalf of their clients and work to develop community-based services, such as improved living standards, financial advisory services, life skills training and awareness programs.

Community workers work with community groups, identifying what services people actually need. They work alongside welfare officers and various community service agencies, to encourage and assist people to meet those needs. They are also instrumental in the development of community services, which can have a powerful effect on people's lives.

Community workers are employed to plan, develop and deliver programs and services. This may involve the delivery of adult literacy programs or programs that help youth life skills, financial planning or in other areas where some people in the community need special help.

To successfully carry out the above tasks, effective communication is very important. No matter how brilliant your idea is, it is worthless unless you can share it with others. For this reason, effective communication is crucial. However, the ability to communicate effectively does not come easily to many people, and it is a skill that requires practice. Effective communication is important as it creates a mutually understanding environment between the community worker and the clients. Directly, it also helps in increasing the client's productivity. Clear speech is important so that youth can understand what you are saying. If it is written information it should include facts as well as opinions so it is not biased. It should be clear and to the point.

### **Effective communication skills #1: Listening**

Listening is one of the most important aspects of effective communication. Successful listening means not just understanding the words or the information being communicated, but also understanding how the speaker feels about what they're communicating.

Effective listening can:

Make the speaker feel heard and understood, which can help build a stronger, deeper connection between you.

Create an environment where everyone feels safe to express ideas, opinions, and feelings, or plan and problem solve in creative ways.

Save time by helping clarify information, avoid conflicts and misunderstandings.

Relieve negative emotions. When emotions are running high, if the speaker feels that he or she has been truly heard, it can help to calm them down, relieve negative feelings, and allow for real understanding or problem solving to begin.

### **Tips for Effective Listening**

If your goal is to fully understand and connect with the other person, listening effectively will often come naturally. If it doesn't, you can remember the following tips. The more you practice them, the more satisfying and rewarding your interactions with others will become.

- Focus fully on the speaker, his or her body language, and other nonverbal cues. If you're daydreaming, checking text messages, or doodling, you're almost certain to miss nonverbal cues in the conversation. If you find it hard to concentrate on some speakers, try repeating their words over in your head—it'll reinforce their message and help you stay focused.
- Avoid interrupting or trying to redirect the conversation to your concerns, by saying something like, "If you think that's bad, let me tell you what happened to me." Listening is not the same as waiting for your turn to talk. You can't concentrate on what someone's saying if you're forming what you're going to say next. Often, the speaker can read your facial expressions and know that your mind's elsewhere.

- Avoid seeming judgmental. In order to communicate effectively with someone, you don't have to like them or agree with their ideas, values, or opinions. However, you do need to set aside your judgment and withhold blame and criticism in order to fully understand a person. The most difficult communication, when successfully executed, can lead to the most unlikely and profound connection with someone.
- Show your interest in what's being said. Nod occasionally, smile at the person, and make sure your posture is open and inviting. Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like "yes" or "uh huh."

### **Activity 1: Active Listening: A Self-Test**

*Adapted from [Leadership 101: Developing Leadership Skills for Resilient Youth, Facilitator's Guide](#) by Mariam MacGregor, Youthleadership.com, 2000.*

**Directions:** Rate yourself with "always" "never" or "sometimes" for each statement below.

1. I first try to understand what the other person is saying before I decide how I will respond. \_\_\_\_\_
2. I listen for the feelings behind the words someone is saying as much as I listen to the words. \_\_\_\_\_
3. I try not to over-react to emotionally charged words.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. I try to send non-verbal communication that will match my verbal communication. \_\_\_\_\_
5. When I disagree with something, I make a special attempt to listen carefully.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. I try to listen to what is NOT being said. \_\_\_\_\_
7. I try to see situations from other peoples' points of view. \_\_\_\_\_

## Effective Communication Skills #2: Nonverbal communication

When we communicate things that we care about, we do so mainly using nonverbal signals. Non-verbal signals are wordless communication, or body language, includes facial expressions, body movement and gestures, eye contact, posture, the tone of your voice, and even your muscle tension and breathing. The way you look, listen, move, and react to another person tells them more about how you're feeling than words alone ever can.

Developing the ability to understand and use nonverbal communication can help you connect with others, express what you really mean, navigate challenging situations, and build better relationships at home and work.

You can enhance effective communication by using open body language—arms uncrossed, standing with an open stance or sitting on the edge of your seat, and maintaining eye contact with the person you're talking to.

You can also use body language to emphasize or enhance your verbal message—patting a friend on the back while complimenting him on his success, for example, or pounding your fists to underline your message.

### Activity 2

How do you use non-verbal communication in your day-to-day interactions?

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### Tips for improving how you read non-verbal communication

Practice observing people in public places, such as a shopping mall, bus, airplane, café, restaurant, or even on a television talk show with the sound muted. Observing how others use body language can teach you how to better receive and use nonverbal signals when conversing with others. Notice how people act and react to each other. Try to guess what their relationship is, what they're talking about, and how each feels about what is being said.

Be aware of individual differences. People from different countries and cultures tend to use different nonverbal communication gestures, so it's important to take age, culture, religion, gender, and emotional state into account when reading body language signals. An American

teen, a grieving widow, and an Asian businessman, for example, are likely to use nonverbal signals differently.

Look at nonverbal communication signals as a group. Don't read too much into a single gesture or nonverbal cue. Consider all of the nonverbal signals you receive, from eye contact to tone of voice to body language. Anyone can slip up occasionally and let eye contact slip, for example, or briefly cross their arms without meaning to. Consider the signals as a whole to get a better "read" on a person.

### **Activity 3**

Write about a time you misunderstood someone's non-verbal communication.

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### **Tips for improving how to deliver non-verbal communication**

Use nonverbal signals that match up with your words. Nonverbal communication should reinforce what is being said, not contradict it. If you say one thing, but your body language says something else, your listener will likely feel you're being dishonest. For example, you can't say "yes" while shaking your head no.

Adjust your nonverbal signals according to the context. The tone of your voice, for example, should be different when you're addressing a child than when you're addressing a group of adults. Similarly, take into account the emotional state and cultural background of the person you're interacting with.

Use body language to convey positive feelings even when you're not actually experiencing them. If you're nervous about a situation—a job interview, important presentation, or first date, for example—you can use positive body language to signal confidence, even though you're not feeling it. Instead of tentatively entering a room with your head down, eyes averted, and sliding into a chair, try standing tall with your shoulders back, smiling and maintaining eye contact, and delivering a firm handshake. It will make you feel more self-confident and help to put the other person at ease.

## Effective Communication Skills #3: Managing stress

### Learn to recognize & reduce hidden stress

In small doses, stress can help you perform under pressure. However, when stress becomes constant and overwhelming, it can hamper effective communication by disrupting your capacity to think clearly and creatively, and act appropriately. When you're stressed, you're more likely to misread other people, send confusing or off-putting nonverbal signals, and lapse into unhealthy knee-jerk patterns of behavior.

How many times have you felt stressed during a disagreement with your spouse, kids, boss, friends, or co-workers and then said or done something you later regretted? If you can quickly relieve stress and return to a calm state, you'll not only avoid such regrets, but in many cases you'll also help to calm the other person as well. It's only when you're in a calm, relaxed state that you'll be able to know whether the situation requires a response, or whether the other person's signals indicate it would be better to remain silent.

#### Activity 4

How good are you at recognizing when you are communicating under stress?

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### Quick stress relief for effective communication

When stress strikes, you can't always temper it by taking time out to meditate or go for a run, especially if you're in the middle of a meeting with your boss or an argument with your spouse, for example. By learning to quickly reduce stress in the moment, though, you can safely face any strong emotions you're experiencing, regulate your feelings, and behave appropriately. When you know how to maintain a relaxed, energized state of awareness—even when something upsetting happens—you can remain emotionally available and engaged.

To deal with stress during communication:

Recognize when you're becoming stressed. Your body will let you know if you're stressed as you communicate. Are your muscles or your stomach tight and/or sore? Are your hands clenched? Is your breath shallow? Are you "forgetting" to breathe?

Take a moment to calm down before deciding to continue a conversation or postpone it.



Bring your senses to the rescue and quickly manage stress by taking a few deep breaths, clenching and relaxing muscles, or recalling a soothing, sensory-rich image, for example. The best way to rapidly and reliably relieve stress is through the senses: sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. But each person responds differently to sensory input, so you need to find things that are soothing to you.

Look for humor in the situation. When used appropriately, humor is a great way to relieve stress when communicating. When you or those around you start taking things too seriously, find a way to lighten the mood by sharing a joke or amusing story.

Be willing to compromise. Sometimes, if you can both bend a little, you'll be able to find a happy middle ground that reduces the stress levels for everyone concerned. If you realize that the other person cares much more about something than you do, compromise may be easier for you and a good investment in the future of the relationship.

Agree to disagree, if necessary, and take time away from the situation so everyone can calm down. Take a quick break and move away from the situation. Go for a stroll outside if possible, or spend a few minutes meditating. Physical movement or finding a quiet place to regain your balance can quickly reduce stress.

## **Effective Communication Skills #4: Emotional awareness**

### **Learn to recognize & accept your emotions**

Watch 3-min. YouTube video: Developing emotional awareness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZI4gbsTFIKg>

Emotions play an important role in the way we communicate at home and work. It's the way you feel, more than the way you think, that motivates you to communicate or to make decisions. The way you react to emotionally driven, nonverbal cues affects both how you understand other people and how they understand you. If you are out of touch with your feelings, and don't understand how you feel or why you feel that way, you'll have a hard time communicating your feelings and needs to others. This can result in frustration, misunderstandings, and conflict. When you don't address what's really bothering you, you often become embroiled in petty squabbles instead—arguing with your spouse about how the towels should be hung, for example, or with a coworker about whose turn it is to restock the copier.

Emotional awareness provides you the tools needed for understanding both yourself and other people, and the real messages they are communicating to you. Although knowing your own feelings may seem simple, many people ignore or try to sedate strong emotions like anger, sadness, and fear. But your ability to communicate depends on being connected to these feelings. If you're afraid of strong emotions or if you insist on communicating only on a rational level, it will impair your ability to fully understand others, creatively problem solve, resolve conflicts, or build an affectionate connection with someone.

### **How emotional awareness can improve effective communication**

Emotional awareness—the consciousness of your moment-to-moment emotional experience—and the ability to manage all of your feelings appropriately is the basis for effective communication.

Emotional awareness helps you:

- Understand and empathize with what is really troubling other people
- Understand yourself, including what's really troubling you and what you really want
- Stay motivated to understand and empathize with the person you're interacting with, even if you don't like them or their message
- Communicate clearly and effectively, even when delivering negative messages
- Build strong, trusting, and rewarding relationships, think creatively, solve problems, and resolve conflicts

### **Effective communication requires both thinking and feeling.**

When emotional awareness is strongly developed, you'll know what you're feeling without having to think about it—and you'll be able to use these emotional cues to understand what someone is really communicating to you and act accordingly. The goal of effective communication is to find a healthy balance between your intellect and your emotions, between thinking and feeling.

#### ***Activity 5***

Think about an instance where you were able to use both thinking and feeling to effectively communicate.

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## LESSON TWO

### Better Public Speaking and Presentation

#### Ensure Your Words are always Understood

Think of the last memorable talk or presentation that you attended. Was that easy to do, or did you really have to rack your brains to remember one? Sadly, too many presentations are easy to forget. And that's a big problem because the only reason the presenter gave the talk was to communicate something to you!

There are four basic things that you can do to ensure that your verbal messages are understood – and remembered – time and time again. Although somewhat obvious and deceptively simple, these are:

- Understand the purpose of the presentation
- Keep the message clear and concise
- Be prepared
- Be vivid when delivering the message

#### Understand what you want to achieve

Before you start working on your talk or presentation, it's vital that you really understand what you want to say, who you want to tell and why they might want to hear it. To do this, ask yourself:

*Who? What? How? When? Where? Why?*

Who are you speaking to? What are their interests, presuppositions and values? What do they share in common with others; how are they unique?

What do you wish to communicate? One way of answering this question is to ask yourself about the 'success criteria'. How do you know if and when you have successfully communicated what you have in mind?

How can you best convey your message? Language is important here, as are the non-verbal cues discussed earlier. Choose your words and your non-verbal cues with your audience in mind. Plan a beginning, middle and end. If time and place allow, consider and prepare audio-visual aids.

When? Timing is important here. Develop a sense of timing, so that your contributions are seen and heard as relevant to the issue or matter at hand. There is a time to speak and a time to be silent. 'It's better to be silent than sing a bad tune.'

**Where?** What is the physical context of the communication in mind? You may have time to visit the room, for example, and rearrange the furniture. Check for availability and visibility if you are using audio or visual aids.

**Why?** In order to convert hearers into listeners, you need to know why they should listen to you – and tell them if necessary. What disposes them to listen? That implies that you know yourself why you are seeking to communicate – the value or worth or interest of what you are going to say.

### **Keep it simple**

When it comes to wording your message, less is more. You're giving your audience headlines. They don't need to and are usually not expecting to become experts on the subject as a result of hearing your talk. If you're using slides, limit the content of each one to a few bullet points, or one statement or a very simple diagram.

### **Be prepared**

Preparation is one of the most important factors in determining your communication successes. When possible, set meeting times and speaking and presentation times well in advance, thus allowing yourself the time you need to prepare your communications. Of course, not all communications can be scheduled. In this case, preparation may mean having a good, thorough understanding of the office goings-on, enabling you to communicate with the knowledge you need to be effective, both through verbal and written communications.

### **Unforgettable delivery**

Some useful tips for keeping your presentation vivid include:

- Use examples to bring your points to life
- Keep your body language visible – don't stay stuck behind a podium
- Don't talk too fast. Less is more here too. Pauses are effective.
- Use a variety of tones of voice.
- Use visual aids.

## **Presentation Planning Checklist**

**Source:** <http://www.mindtools.com>

### **Presentation:**

- Does your introduction grab participant's attention and explain your objectives?
- Do you follow this by clearly defining the points of the presentation?
- Are these main points in logical sequence?
- Do these flow well?
- Do the main points need support from visual aids?
- Does your closing summarize the presentation clearly and concisely?
- Is the conclusion strong?
- Have you tied the conclusion to the introduction?

### **Delivery:**

- Are you knowledgeable about the topic covered in your presentation?
- Do you have your notes in order?
- Where and how will you present (indoors, outdoors, standing, sitting, etc.)?
- Have you visited the presentation site?
- Have you checked your visual aids to ensure they are working and you know how to use them?

### **Appearance:**

- Make sure you are dressed and groomed appropriately and in keeping with the audience's expectations.
- Practice your speech standing (or sitting, if applicable), paying close attention to your body language, even your posture, both of which will be assessed by the audience.

### **Visual Aids:**

- Are the visual aids easy to read and easy to understand?
- Are they tied into the points you are trying to communicate?
- Can they be easily seen from all areas of the room?

### Activity 6

Remember that presentation that you found very boring. Think of the speaker, the audience, the time and place and list some possible things you would change to make the presentation more appealing.

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## LESSON THREE

### Report Writing

In looking after community projects, knowing how to write and prepare different kinds of reports are 'must' skills as different stakeholders want to know about the project in its different aspects. The **purpose** of a report and **who the report is being written for** often determine the structure and length of a report.

#### Monitoring and Reporting

In any workable project design, there are specific steps. You should have learned about these steps in the Module Designing a Research-based program. These steps are:

- Define the problem (e.g. Children in community are not passing school exams)
- Generate goal/outcomes (e.g. Students' academic performance improves)
- Specify objectives/indicators (e.g. Increase exam marks for all children in community to a passing mark)
- Identify resources (e.g., teachers in community, mentors, etc.)
- Choose a strategy (i.e. how will you go about improving academic performance for these children? E.g. After-school tutoring)
- Implement (i.e. begin the program)
- Monitor (i.e. determine if your program is doing what it set out to do)
- Redesign (i.e. make changes as necessary if certain aspects of the program are not working)

Just as we cannot drive a car unless we can see where the car is going, so also we cannot stay on track with a community project unless we "see" where the project is going. That "seeing" is monitoring the project, and communicating it to the contributors and decision makers. The monitoring of progress of any project or activity must therefore be integrated with its planning and implementation.

Monitoring should be done by the program members themselves, but can also include members of the wider community, donors, government agencies or anyone who participated in the community program.

Once a program has gone through the specific steps, a report should be written. Here are a list of reasons received from other community leaders on why they write reports:

- to enable us to keep records;
- to inform all interested Bahamians;
- to tell about failures and successes;
- for ourselves, to keep on knowing what we are doing;
- to communicate to donors and funders (how the project progresses);

- so donors could be encouraged knowing what happened with their donations;
- to let other people know about the developments of a project;
- so other people can be encouraged to do their own projects;
- so community members would be encouraged and informed;
- so other people can learn what we did;
- to help researchers to do their work;
- to determine further actions;
- to use for evaluation; and
- for the Government.

Before writing a report you must be clear on what you are being asked to report on. You must ensure that you have all or most of the relevant information.

The leader of your youth organization may request that a report be written about an organization's event. For example, if you had a fundraising event, you may be asked to provide a detailed report on its success. This is a way that a youth organization can hold itself accountable and keep track of success and failures.

For many youth organizations, writing a report can be a way to show your organization's purpose and accomplishments. A well-written report can entice donors to contribute to your organization's goals.

### How to Write a Report

Having clarified the topic on which you are to write a report on, and the information necessary for your report, make sure your report is **focused on what is being asked and conveys the key messages throughout**.

Structure of a report:

A report usually has a number of sections. It has a:

- **title page** (has the name or topic, the author and date when report is written),
- a **table of contents** which lists the different headings of the report and the page numbers where they occur
- the **body** which starts off with
  - the introduction which introduces the subject or topic of the report, and some background information
  - the description of methods, findings, conclusion which can be in several paragraphs and subheadings



## Steps

1. Begin with a brief summary of the main points of your report. Enable the person who asked you to write the report, at a glance, to see the gist of it. In the first paragraph briefly indicate what the report is going to be about, and the methods used to get and analyze information. In doing this, keep the details logical, clear and simple to read.
2. If you are writing a technical report, don't clutter it with statistical data, tables and graphs. This can make your report difficult to read. Instead, attach them as enclosures or appendices, and refer to them as you progress through your report.
3. Do not use jargon in report writing. When writing a report be direct and specific so that it is easy to comprehend.
4. End your report with a brief summary of the main points. Tell your reader, briefly, what you have told them in detail.
5. When you write a report ensure that each enclosure is clearly labeled. Attach the enclosure in the order referred to in the report.
6. After you write a report, add an index or a 'contents' page. Do so after word-processing the report with page numbers.



## PARTS OF A REPORT

- Title Page
  - Table of Contents
  - Executive Summary
  - Introduction
  - Findings
  - Conclusions
  - Recommendations
  - Bibliography/References
  - Appendices
- } Body of report

## Summary

This unit has explored effective communication and its importance to community workers. To be an effective communicator, you must have great listening skills, understand non-verbal signals, know how to manage stress within intense conversations, and be emotionally aware of your thoughts and feelings. You learned that part of being a better public speaker is ensuring your words are always understood, understanding what it is you want to achieve and making your presentation more vivid. Lastly, you learned how to write a report.

## Glossary

**Sender:** The person who is speaking

**Receiver:** The person who is listening to the speaker

**The message:** The information exchanged between the sender and receiver

**Feedback:** The response the listener gives to the message

**Non-verbal signals:** Wordless communication involving body language, facial expressions, body movement and gestures, eye contact, posture, tone of voice, muscle tension and breathing

**Emotional Awareness:** An understanding of self and others that allows you to understand the real messages people are communicating to you

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## NOTES

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# **Module 6:**

# **Introduction to**

# **Counselling for**

# **Caregivers**

## Counselling for Caregivers

Welcome to this module which has been designed especially for you – a caregiver working with and caring for vulnerable children and youth.

As a caregiver for vulnerable children, you are helping to make their environment more secure and compassionate. By sharing your skills and time, you are helping charges to develop into happier and healthier human beings, equipped to cope with life's problems and challenges.

The term “caregiver” may be new, but “giving care” as a practice has always been a part of our culture. Since time immemorial, human beings have lived together. Sharing emotions, including happiness as well as sorrow, has always been a common practice. Giving assistance in times of need, such as sickness and natural disasters, is an act that comes naturally to most human beings. In traditional societies, giving care to those that need it was a basic function of the family. The needs-whether emotional or physical-of all family members were met within the extended family. The older members counseled the younger ones and the younger ones sought advice from the elders. Sharing thoughts and activities with a large family was the accepted norm.

Wherever they might call home – the streets, institutions, or relatives' homes – all youth and children need somebody to care for their emotional, physical, and spiritual needs.

### Goal

This module is part of a series designed to help you, the caregiver, acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to effectively support the healthy development of the children and youth in your care.

You may find it helpful to study the learning materials with a group of your peers, discussing the issues and case studies raised and comparing these with real-life cases that you and your colleagues have encountered in your careers. You can learn from one another and from the experiences that you have had in working with children at risk.

The knowledge and skills that you learn through this module will NOT replace those that professionally qualified counsellors have. The skills and knowledge in these materials are meant to help you in everyday situations and there may be instances when the best help you can give a child or youth is to refer them to a professional counsellor.

### Target Audience

The module is intended for caregivers who have attained a minimum level of schooling of Grade 8. It is anticipated that the persons studying this module are working in institutions designed for child and youth care such as children's homes, orphanages, youth organizations, churches, etc. Other caregivers could be engaged in community- or church-based or family support groups. In most cases, it is assumed that the caregiver has little in the way of formal training in counselling.

# Introduction to Counselling for Caregivers

## Introduction

People have many different problems that cause them pain, discomfort, and sorrow. Counselling is one of the tools used to help people solve their problems. Counselling has been in existence for a long time. In traditional communities, there have always been elders to offer counselling and guidance to young people.

This introductory unit has seven lessons. The first two lessons explain what counselling is and why it is important to you, as a caregiver working with disadvantaged children and youth. The third lesson discusses the different kinds of communication involved in counselling situations. The fourth talks about techniques to ensure that you have a clear understanding of what those you are counselling are attempting to communicate to you. The fifth lesson is about skills you can use to ensure that you are communicating effectively when you are counselling, and the sixth explains nice different types of counselling. Using a case study, the last lesson takes you through a sample counselling session.

## Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Define counselling
2. Explain the importance of counselling
3. Define communication
4. Explain communication and its role in counselling
5. Use counselling skills
6. Demonstrate understanding of the different forms of counselling
7. Conduct a counselling session

## LESSON ONE

### What Is Counselling?

#### *Activity 1*

Think about the word counselling and answer these questions. What does the word counselling mean?

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List some of the problems for which people would require counselling.

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Counselling is a way of helping people deal with their problems. These problems could have many causes such as Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), death in the family, divorce, loss of employment, poverty, poor parental care, or lack of support to go to school (Gichinga, 1999). Some of the signs that will show you that a person has a problem include isolation, lack of sleep, fear, sadness, crying, substance abuse, poor nutritional status or, in the case of youth, running away from home.

Counselling may be offered at various levels: to an individual, to a family, to a group, or to an entire community. As a caregiver you will find yourself counselling children, youths and their families in both informal and formal settings.

SAT (2001) urges counsellor to note that counselling is not the same as giving advice. Rather, counselling involves helping the clients understand their problem and take the necessary action to correct it. In giving advice, the client is not involved in finding the solution to the problem, because the person providing the advice is seen as the expert who has the answer to the problem.

The two examples below will help you understand the difference between counselling and giving good advice.



### *Example 1: Giving Advice*

**Keisha's Aunt:** Keisha, I'm concerned that you aren't finishing your homework. I'd like you to write down all of your assignments in this book when your teacher gives them to you. Then when you come home from school each evening, sit down right away and finish them before you do anything else.

**Keisha:** Okay, aunty.

### *Example 2: Counselling*

**Keisha's Aunt:** Keisha, I'm concerned that you aren't finishing your homework. I'm wondering how you feel about the situation?

**Keisha:** Sometimes I think I've finished but then I find out that I haven't.

**Keisha's Aunt:** So you think that you're up-to-date but then you find out there's still something you haven't finish?

**Keisha:** Yes.

**Keisha's Aunt:** How do you feel when that happens?

**Keisha:** Kind of embarrassed. My classmates laugh.

**Keisha's Aunt:** It sounds like you'd like to be keeping up with your homework but sometimes you don't know that you have an assignment. Is that right?

**Keisha:** Yes. I guess the teacher tells us but I don't remember.

**Keisha's Aunt:** I wonder what you could do so that you would remember. Do you have any ideas?

**Keisha:** Maybe I could write it down every time she tells us about our homework.

**Keisha's Aunt:** That sounds like a good idea. I have a little book that you could use for that. Would you like to try?

**Keisha:** Okay.

**Keisha's Aunt:** Let's talk about it again at the end of the week and see how it's worked for you.

### Activity 2

What do you think is the difference between the two examples?

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Compare your answer with the suggested answer below.

In the first example, the caregiver gives advice to Keisha without allowing Keisha to explain the reason for not finishing her homework. In the second example, the caregiver helps Keisha see what is making her not finish the homework. Keisha is further helped to explore possible solutions and implement a solution.

If you were Keisha, what thoughts and feelings might you have about the advice-giving situation? You may think that your aunt does not understand why you are not completing your homework.

How might you respond? If you were Keisha in this situation, you probably would not like your aunt. Possibly you would walk away and leave her talking.

If you were Keisha, what thoughts and feelings might you have about the counselling situation? You may think that your aunt cares and listens to you.

How might you respond? You may begin to trust your aunt and begin to share difficulties that you face.

The counselling approach empowers children to draw on their own resources and teaches them how to find solutions and make decisions.

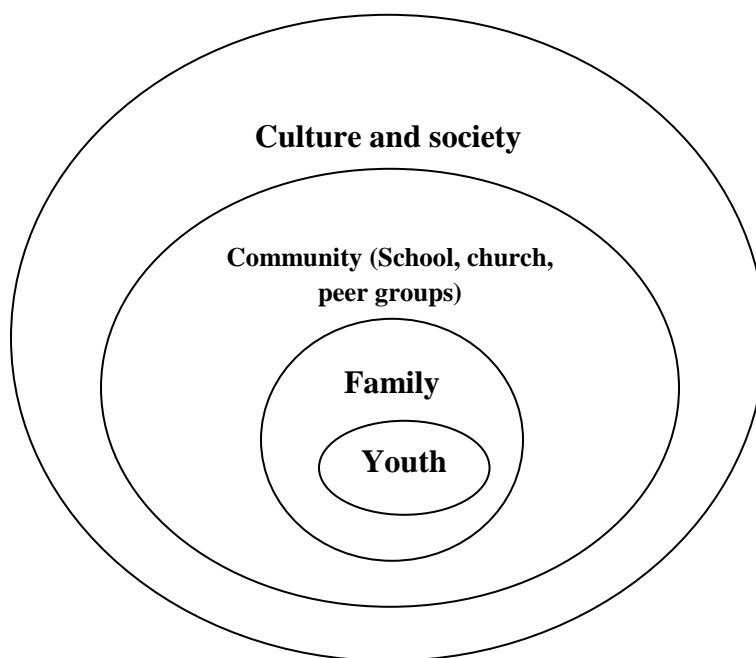
There is a place for giving advice, but in many situations giving advice can get in the way of open communication. Suggesting solution communicates to other people that you are superior and they are inferior. It also tells them that you don't have confidence in their ability to work things out for themselves, encourages dependency, and can make them feel inadequate.

**Counselling is a way of helping people deal with their problems.**

## LESSON TWO

### The Importance Of Counselling

To understand the importance of counselling youth we need to consider the young person in relation to other members of the community. In the diagram below, you see where the youth stands in relation to others.



#### *Activity 3*

What do you think the diagram shows?

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You may have realized that the diagram above shows that the problem is not with the youth but with the changing environment in which the youth finds himself or herself. The following issues in a youth's environment may put him or her at risk:

- Broken homes
- Poverty
- Lack of education
- Unemployment
- Chronic illnesses such as HIV/AIDS
- Death of loved ones
- Peer pressure
- Substance abuse and many others

As the diagram shows, when a child is born, the family is the first point of contact. It is the duty of the parents and/or guardians to ensure the basic needs of the child are met. These basic needs include food, shelter, clothing, security, health, love and care. The extent to which each of these needs are met shapes the way the child grows. Failure to provide for any or all of these needs affects the child in a negative way.

For example, a child who lives with an uncle who mistreats him may grow up to feel hatred and act aggressively. A child who is denied food may suffer from nutritional problems that could lead to poor performance in school.

The community also helps to shape the growth of the child. The community consists of institutions like churches, and schools, and also different groups of people like the child's peers and school teachers. All these influence how the child grows. If the various institutions teach and model support and caring for people facing difficulties, children are more likely to grow with an attitude of love for others.



## LESSON THREE

### Characteristics of a Good Counsellor

#### *Activity 4*

Think of someone you know who is good at counselling – at helping people to help themselves. What are some of the attitudes and abilities that person has that make him or her effective in this role?

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The chart on the next page lists attitudes and abilities that are considered to be important for counsellors to have. Do you see some of the characteristics of the person you describe in the list?

Use the chart to help you assess your own abilities and identify areas where you would like to learn and grow. Which of the characteristics do you have? Which would you like to develop? Remember, you are just beginning to learn about counselling, so you aren't expected to have all these characteristics. By the time you have finished the course, you will have new skills and additional knowledge.

## Key Characteristics of Effective Counsellors

	<i>I am strong in this area</i>	<i>I would like to work on this area</i>
Awareness of my own values, beliefs and needs		
Awareness of how my beliefs, values and needs may affect my relationship with clients		
Able to recognize and accept my feelings		
Desire to truly understand myself and others		
Desire to help others		
Belief that clients have the right to determine the course of their own lives		
Openness to ways of thinking and being that are different from my own		
Belief that every person has value		
Desire to continue learning		
Understand ways that cultural variations can affect the counsellor		
Knowledge of issues that clients face		
Knowledge of resources available to clients		
Ability to build warm and deep relationships with others		
Ability to share information clearly		
Ability to use communication strategies to achieve shared meaning		
Ability to use counselling strategies to help clients understand themselves and their situation and make decision for their lives		
Ability to adapt my approach to meet the needs of different clients		

## LESSON FOUR

### The Role of Communication In Counselling

*Communication* is the process of sharing information between two or more people. The information shared may include ideas, emotions, knowledge or skills. There are two main types of communication. These are verbal communication and *non-verbal communication*.

#### Verbal Communication

Verbal Communication occurs when both the caregiver and the client shared information through spoken words. This happens, for example, when a caregiver asks the clients to talk about their problems and when the clients tell their story.

As a caregiver you should encourage the clients to talk more about themselves by responding to them verbally and non-verbally.

#### Non-Verbal Communication

In this type of communication the counsellor or the clients conveys information through body movements or sounds. This does not involve the use of words but rather:

- Gestures
- Eye contact
- Sitting position
- Dress
- Head movements
- Tone of voice

For example, the trembling hands of the person with whom you are speaking may indicate that the person is afraid or anxious. On the other hand, a high tone of voice could indicate anger or over-excitement.

#### The Role of Communication in Counselling

In counselling, both the caregiver and the client are involved in interpersonal communication. The purpose of this communication is to:

- Get information from the client.
- Give information to the client.
- Help the client learn and apply coping skills to deal with a problem.
- Persuade the client to adopt positive ways of doing things.
- Help the client make a decision.
- Help the client express emotions, feelings, and thoughts.

As you discuss with a client, you should observe body movements and tone of voice and compare them with what the client is saying. It is said that there is more information in non-verbal communication than in verbal communication. Sometimes words hide the real situation. You should be able to recognize non-verbal responses to help you gain more insight into the client's problem.

The non-verbal messages that the counsellor sends are also important. For example, the counsellor who sits in a chair facing the client and leans toward the client will seem more approachable than one who leans back behind a desk.

*Activity 5*

What is verbal communication? Give three examples of verbal responses you can use.

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What is non-verbal communication? Give examples of non-verbal responses.

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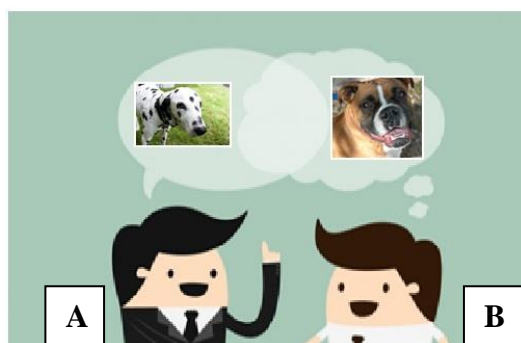
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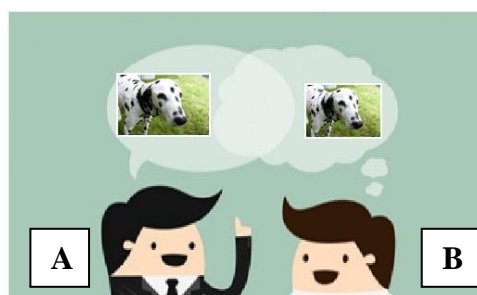
## LESSON FIVE

### Arriving at Shared Meaning

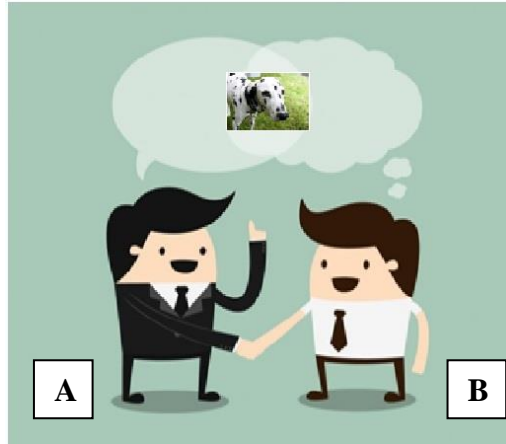
In effective communication there is an exchange of meanings. The listener is able to understand the speaker's message in the way the speaker intended. When the listener and speaker get to the point where they understand what is being said in the same way, we say they have achieved "shared meaning." The example below shows that while we will never understand each other perfectly, we can, if we care enough to work as it, come close.



In the diagram above, we see that it is difficult to perfectly communicate our meaning to another person because each one of us comes into a communication event with ideas that come from our past experiences. While Speaker A is talking about a Dalmatian dog, Listener B is envisioning a brown house pet like he has at home. The more clearly the speaker describes the dog, the more accurate the picture in the listener's head will become.



The above diagram shows that both the speaker and the listeners want to have the same understanding of the situation. The goal is for them to, as nearly as possible, achieve the same meaning. In order to do that, the speaker needs to describe the dog clearly, and the listener needs to ask questions.



These diagrams have shown that in any given communication there is always a speaker and a listener. However, for communication to be effective there must be a responsible speaker and responsible listener.

A responsible speaker is someone who includes the detail that is needed to help the listener understand his or her meanings. On the other hand, a responsible listener is someone who asks the questions that help the speaker clarify his/her meaning. In a counselling situation, the counsellor is almost always the listener, so needs to have skills to help speakers express their ideas fully. We call this attentive listening. The goals of attentive listening in a counselling situation are:

- To understand the speaker's message from his or her point of view.
- To let the speaker know that you care about them and their experience.
- To let the speaker know that you hear and understand the message.

To emphasize the importance of listening, please complete the following activity.

### **Activity 6**

Think about a situation you have been in where you haven't felt listened to. What were your thoughts, feelings and reactions during that experience?

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Typically, when we aren't feeling listened to we feel like what we have to say isn't important or interesting. We may become frustrated or angry. We may try to find ways to attract the person's attention (as children do when they pull on their parent's sleeves and make a big fuss while the parent is on the phone) or we may just give up and not bother trying to communicate.

### *Activity 7*

Think about how you know when someone is really listening to you. What things do they say and do that let you know they are listening?

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Watch TED Talks: Five Ways to Listen Better by Julian Treasure (Duration 7:43)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/julian\\_treasure\\_5\\_ways\\_to\\_listen\\_better](https://www.ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_5_ways_to_listen_better)

### Activity 8

You are trying to get some desk work done but a young child keeps climbing on your lap and trying to draw on your paper. What might the child be trying to say to you?

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A child who is new to the home hides behind the closet door when you come into the room. What are some possible meanings of this non-verbal behaviour?

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You are called to talk to a 16-year-old who misses school and goes off with friends. When you ask him questions, he does not answer and avoids eye contact. How can you help him express himself?

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A young girl is brought to your office for counselling. You, a male counsellor, begin to interview her but she is not responding. What can you do?

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A youth is brought to your office by his mother for help. You welcome them and extend a handshake. His mother shakes your hand but the youth withdraws his hand. What can this mean to you? How can you create trust?

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These exercises show that for you to help your clients you must observe their behavior and listen attentively to what they are saying. Note, too, that children and youth do not easily express themselves verbally. Therefore there is a need for you as a counsellor to use creative methods to help young people express themselves. The use of play, drawing, drama and storytelling can help children and youths express their feelings, thoughts and ideas.

There are some things that stand in the way of effective listening. Two examples are:

- Paying partial attention because you are thinking about what you want to say.
- Evaluating what the other person is saying even as you listen.

Paying attention can be harder than it would seem, and is an important skill for counsellors!

### Strategies for Attentive Listening

Strategies that you as a listener can use include: paraphrasing, behavior description, feelings checks and questions.

#### Paraphrasing

When you are paraphrasing, you are making guesses about what the message is:

“Do you mean...”

“Are you saying that...?”

“Sounds like you...Am I right?”

The following illustration shows an example of paraphrasing.

#### *Example 1: Paraphrasing*

**Child:** My teacher said I need to read this book tonight.

**Caregiver:** Do you mean that reading the book is your homework for tonight?

**Child:** No, it's not really homework. I was asking a question about horses and the teacher said I'd find an answer in this book.

## Behavior Description and Feelings Check

When you describe the behavior you see you are doing a behavior description. When you guess about the feelings, thoughts or intentions that go with the behavior you are doing a “feelings check”:

“I notice that you are., I’m guessing that you feel...?”

“When you...I’m wondering if you feel?”

The dialogue below illustrates behavior and feelings check:

### *Example 2: Behaviour and Feelings Check*

**Caregiver:** I noticed that you were quiet tonight at dinner. Are you feeling tired?

**Child:** No, my tummy hurts.

## Questions

Asking questions effectively can be a real art. Here are some guidelines:

- “What” and “How” questions are usually preferable to “Why” questions.
- Closed questions force a specific answer; for example, “Do you like dogs?”
- Open-ended questions encourage a person to explore their thoughts and feelings by leaving the person free to answer in many ways. Example of open-ended questions are:
  - What does that feel like?
  - Can you tell me more about...?
  - What have you thought of?
  - I’m wondering what would happen if ...?
  - What’s most important for you now?
  - How would you like things to be?
  - Would you like to talk about...?
  - Where would you like to begin?

### *Example 3: Questions*

**Caregiver:** I'm wondering what would happen if you told Charles how you feel about what he said.

**Child:** I think she'd be angry.

In order for attentive listening to be effective, the counsellor needs to:

- Be genuinely interested in knowing about the child's experience from his/her perspective.
- Ask questions, rather than make assumptions.

In a counselling session both the caregiver and the client communicate their feelings, thoughts and actions with each other. Good communication is necessary for counselling to take place.

### *Activity 9*

As a caregiver who is involved in counselling, write your understanding of the word "communication".

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Did your answer include some of the following points?

Communication is the process of sharing information between two or more people. The information shared may include ideas, emotions, knowledge or skills. In counselling, communication may take the form of explaining a point, expressing a feeling, or asking questions.

Communication may either be one-way or two-way. One-way communication involves sending a message without receiving an answer. On the other hand, two-way communication involves sending a message and receiving a response. In counselling, two-ways communication is recommended where you and the client share information.

As a caregiver you should be aware of the factors that may affect communication between you and your client. Think about these factors:

- **The place where communication takes place.** When do you think communication is likely to be most effective-when you are alone with a client in a calm, quiet area, or when you are in a noisy, crowded room?
- **The time when communication takes place.** Do you think you will be a more effective communicator when you are well-rested and fed or when you are hungry and tired?
- **The way you or the client talk and listen to each other.** Would you prefer to talk with someone who is paying attention and seems to care about your experience or someone who is mostly interested in telling you what to do?
- **The language used in the communication.** Would you find it easier to communicate with someone who uses the same kind of language you do, or someone who speaks quite differently (perhaps very formally)?
- **The emotions underlying the communication.** Have you ever tried to speak with someone who was very angry or sad? Powerful emotions get in the way of communication. The best way to deal with these emotions is to acknowledge them. You might say, “It seems like you’re feeling a bit sad. Am I right?” or “It sounds like you’re pretty angry!” Once the person sees that you understand how they feel, they are often ready to communicate more calmly.

## Referring

Knowing when to refer a client to a colleague or to a professional counsellor is an important counselling skill. Some situations where you should refer clients to someone else are:

- When the client needs the kinds of services that you aren’t able to provide.
- When your relationship with the client stands in the way of being able to work effectively with them.
- When you feel like you aren’t making any progress with the client.
- When the client asks for a referral.

**Watch YouTube Video: Five Approaches to Counselling Adolescents**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFS6KAu6EQA>



## LESSON SIX

### Counselling Skills

The communication skills that we have discussed will help you in any of your communications but will be especially useful in your work as a counsellor. In this section we will look at how you use these communication skills in a counselling situation.

#### Questioning

Good questioning will help you obtain correct and adequate information from the client. Use simple, short and straightforward questions. Open-ended questions are better than closed questions because they encourage the client to talk. Closed questions limit answers from the client. Give your client time to think and reply.

#### *Activity 10*

Think of a possible counselling situation and write examples of questions you might use that are:

##### **Open-ended**

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##### **Closed**

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Compare with the following examples.

#### **Examples:**

An open-ended question: How is your relationship with you stepmother?

A closed question: Does your stepmother like you?

## **Listening**

This means that you must hear and understand what the client is saying to you. As a caregiver you must learn to be a good listener. Good listening encourages the client to provide all the information about their problem.

It also helps you to understand the problems better and deeper in order to enable you to help the client. You can improve your listening skills by:

- Not thinking about things while the client is talking to you.
- Being emotionally neutral when attending to a client. For example, you should not start shedding tears when a client is explaining a bad experience.
- Not doing other activities such as answering the phone.
- Practicing the attentive listening skills detailed in the last lesson.

## **Observation Skills**

Concentration is very important when you are attending to your client. It will enable you to notice non-verbal communication behaviors. For example, check the body language (posture, hand movement, face expressions) to see whether it agrees with the story the client is telling you.

## **Establishing a Relationship**

It is very important that you and your client first know each other. Some of the ways to build this relationship are:

- By offering a warm welcome.
- By greeting the clients and offering them a chair.
- By introducing yourself and providing information on what you do and where you work.
- By allowing the clients to also introduce themselves.
- By talking about other general issues, such as the rainy weather.
- By assuring the clients that your conversation with them is confidential.

## **Empathy**

Empathy refers to showing the clients that you understand their situation and that you are willing to help. You should show the clients that you are also a person with emotions and understand what they are going through. However, your emotions as a caregiver should be appropriate so that you do not lose sight of your role of helping the clients find solutions themselves.

## **Building on Your Client's Strength**

You must remember that clients have the ability to solve their problems. Help the clients to identify such abilities. To achieve this you ask the following questions:

- What have you done about the problem?
- Whom have you shared the problem with?
- Is there anything you could have done to solve the problem earlier?

## **Summarizing**

When you summarize, you pick the main points from what your client has said. Summarizing is important when:

- Ending the session
- Taking a break
- Starting a new session so that you connect it to the previous one.
- You have not clearly understood a point the client explained (see paraphrasing, above).

## **Acceptance**

You should receive and accept the client the way they are, whether pleasant or unpleasant, clean or dirty, nicely dressed or in rags. You must respect clients as persons and show that you like and care for them. Do not judge them.

## **Probing**

Probing means asking the clients a series of questions to obtain more information about a situation. In doing this you develop the questions from what the client is explaining. The purpose of probing is to help clients explore issues more fully.

## **Clarifying**

Clarifying is when you ask the clients to explain their point in more detail by rewording what they have said. Clarifying is also used when you have not clearly understood the client.

## **Reassurance**

Reassurance is when you communicate support, acceptance and encouragement to the client. This will help the clients to relax and be confident that they will find help in your care.

## **Challenging**

In challenging, you question the behavior of the clients so that they are made to analyze their own actions. For example, you would ask a teenage girl who wants to marry before completing school whether she thinks that marriage is the right thing to do now rather than school. The goals of challenging are to help develop new ways of thinking and acting.

## **Partialization**

Partialization is where you help a client who has many problems to focus on one problem at a time. This helps the client to focus all their energies on that one particular problem and achieve positive results instead of trying to solve too many problems at the same time without any meaningful results.

## **LESSON SEVEN**

### **Types of Counselling**

There are many types of counselling that may be used in providing care to clients. Your choice of which type to use will depend on the problems presented by the client.

Some common types of counselling are:

- Preventive counselling
- Behavioral counselling
- Individual counselling
- Group counselling
- Peer counselling
- Crisis counselling
- Support counselling
- Spiritual counselling
- Grief counselling

### **Preventive Counselling**

Preventive counselling is structured and based on a specific program with specific goals. For example, the aim of counselling may be AIDS prevention. Preventive counselling involves providing information on an individual or group basis. In a group situation one or more caregivers can carry it out.

### **Behavioral Counselling**

The main aim of behavioral counselling is to support the child's personal growth through the process of self-understanding and self-acceptance. Personal awareness and acceptance helps the child to know what they can achieve and how to utilize their potential fully. The child through education and learning is helped to change to a more acceptable behavior.

### **Individual Counselling**

This is a one-to-one counselling process involving only the counsellor and client. In this type of counselling your aim as a caregiver is to empower the client. The caregiver guides the client into understanding their problem and enabling them to see the choices available to solve the problem and enabling them to see the choice available to solve the problem.

The following is an example that will help you understand individual counselling.

### ***Example 1: Individual Counselling***

Ali is a 17-year-old boy. He is in grade eleven. Ali is the first-born child in a family of 4. He lost his mother from HIV/AIDS in 2001 when he was in grade ten and he also lost his father to the same disease some years earlier. Now Ali does not know where to go to get money for school. He fears that he will have to drop out of school before he can complete grade twelve.

Ali is advised to see the community counsellor. The counsellor takes time to get to know Ali and help Ali trust him. He listens to the details of Ali's situation and to his fears. He asks Ali if he has any relatives or if his late father has left any assets that could help to pay his school fees.

Ali answers that he has no relatives and his father did not leave any money. The counsellor informs him of some individuals and organizations that may be able to provide some assistance.

The relationship that develops between Ali and the counsellor is an example of individual counselling.

### **Group Counselling**

This is a type of counselling where the counsellor involves other people associated with the client's problem. This approach is based on the belief that there are factors in the environment, culture and relationships that affect the client. Group counselling is used to change such factors in order to bring a desirable change in the behavior of the client. An example of group counselling is the involvement of family members in counselling a client suffering from AIDS.

The following example illustrates a situation in which the counsellor uses group counselling.

### ***Example 2: Group Counselling***

Kent is a 20-year-old man who was tested for HIV and found to be positive.

When relatives learnt that Kent was HIV positive they stopped talking, eating and shaking hands with him. Family members thought that they could contract AIDS by being close to him.

Kent visited the counsellor and complained of isolation and neglect by family members. He felt that killing himself would solve this problem. In helping the client, the counsellor also talked to family members. The counsellor helped them to understand that talking, eating and shaking hands do not spread AIDS. This helped Kent's relative change their attitude towards him.

### ***Peer Counselling***

In peer counselling, the counsellor involves other people who have similar experiences and characteristics as the client. Some common characteristics could include interests, age, gender, OVC status, chronically sick parents, sexual abuse, and substance abuse. The persons who share these characteristics, the client's peers, would be appropriate to include in a peer counselling session.

For example, a caregiver is faced with a youth who has a habit of taking drugs as a way of dealing with unemployment. The caregiver could involve other youths who also had this similar problem but managed to overcome it. The role of the caregiver is to provide an environment in which the peers are able to share experiences and support one another.

The case study below illustrates further how peer counselling can be used.

### ***Example 3: Peer Counselling***

Janice visits a clinic for voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) and she tests positive for HIV. However, she has not yet developed AIDS. She is worried that that she could soon develop fully blown AIDS. She visits the counsellor for help. In order for the counsellor to help her live positively, she links her to a group of people living with HIV/AIDS. These people begin to help Janice by sharing their own experience and their ways of coping with the problem.

## Crisis Counselling

Crisis counselling is a type of counselling given to a client who is in acute distress and feels he/she can no longer cope. Crisis counselling is short term and provided to clients who need immediate help. A client in a crisis may appear panicky, restless, confused, afraid, and so on.

Some examples of situations which may require crisis counselling include suicide, bereavement, substance abuse, rape, a run-away teenager, broken love affair, battered spouse or awareness of a terminal illness like cancer.

There are many types of crises that can be experienced by children. For example:

- Loss of parent(s) or sibling(s)
- Unwanted pregnancy
- Financial difficulties

### Activity 11

List ways you could help a young person deal with a crisis.

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Did your list include any of the following?

- Remain calm.
- Help the child to tell his/her story.
- Allow the child to express his/her feelings.
- Be supportive.
- Show empathy.
- Deal with the present problem in a practical way to help the child.
- Refer to other professionals when necessary.

## Supportive Counselling

Supportive counselling occurs after the initial crisis counselling and helps clients develop the hope to live on. This type of counselling may be institution-based or home-based. It gives the caregiver the chance to understand the client's social and home situation, which could help the counselling of the client.

Some examples of supportive counselling activities are:

- Setting tasks and goals, which are followed up on the next visit.
- Working with the family to improve the client's social support and help create more openness within the family.
- Helping the client to improve his or her communication skills.

### *Activity 12*

A teenage girl who has attempted suicide has been brought to you for counselling. As a caregiver, what could you do to help her?

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## **Spiritual Counselling**

Spiritual counselling is provided by priest, pastors, nuns, youth leaders and others. In spiritual counselling, belief in a supernatural being is used to help clients deal with their problems. For example, belief in God is used for a client who is a Christian. It is important to note that religious workers are always willing and ready to provide spiritual counselling. You should refer children who need spiritual counselling to religious workers.

## **Grief Counselling**

Grief counselling is helpful to clients who have lost their loved ones and need support in dealing with their grief. It is also called bereavement counselling because it aims to help clients experience normal mourning.

Losing loved ones like parents, children, or spouses make the surviving relatives experience stress, depression, failure to make correct decisions, and other uncomfortable feelings.

Therefore, the goals of grief counselling include:

- Giving information to the clients to help them make good decisions.
- Helping the clients to plan for their life without the person.
- Helping the clients to deal with the stress.
- Helping the clients to understand that the environment they are in is safe.

The processes of grief counselling may begin when the loss is anticipated. However, it is not advisable to start grief counselling too soon after a loss (for example, at the funeral), because the clients may still be in state of shock. Instead, start to make contact with the clients during the funeral time to give support and to start establishing a relationship with them. Then they will feel comfortable coming to you later if they feel they need help dealing with their loss.

## LESSON EIGHT

### Conducting a Counselling Session

While counselling is carried out in different situations, both informally and formally, you will find that the counselling process is the same. The case study in this lesson will help you understand how a counselling session is conducted.

#### *Case Study 1: Sheena*

Sheena is a 17-year-old girl and doing her last grade in high school. She lives with her poor and unemployed parents. They struggle to raise money and send her to school. Sheena has experienced sleepless nights because of worry. She is worried that she could be HIV positive because she recently had unprotected sex with a man who promised her some money. She then visited Greg the counsellor at the Voluntary and Counselling Center (VCC).

The dialogue below shows how the session was conducted:

#### *The session*

**Greg:** You are welcome to the center. Please sit down.

Sheena sits down.

**Greg:** My name is Greg. I am one of the counsellors here at the center. You don't need to tell me your name for we use code numbers as names for our clients. This is because we believe in confidentiality. Whatever is discussed here is confidential.

Sheena nods her head.

**Greg:** Here at the VCC we offer counselling and HIV testing services.

Sheena nods her head again.

**Greg:** Our session will take about 45 minutes or more depending on the problem you have. If you decide to take a test, this will take another 15 minutes. Are you prepared for this length of time?

**Sheena:** Yes I am.

**Greg:** What is your reason for visiting this center today?

**Sheena:** I am worried that I could be HIV positive. I want to know my HIV status.

**Greg:** Can you tell me why you think you might be HIV positive?

### *Case Study 1: Sheena cont'd*

**Sheena:** I had sex with a man a few months ago.

**Greg:** Was it unprotected sex?

Sheena nods.

**Greg:** You were wise to come here. We can help you. You are worried that you might be HIV positive. Let's talk for a minute about HIV and AIDS. Do you know the difference between HIV and AIDS?

**Sheena:** HIV and AIDS are the same thing. There is no difference.

**Greg:** HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. AIDS is the disease. If you have the virus it does not mean that you have AIDS. One may be living with the virus but not show signs and symptoms of the disease. Is the explanation clear?

**Sheena:** Yes, it is clear.

**Greg:** How is HIV/AIDS transmitted?

**Sheena:** It is transmitted through unprotected sex, blood transfusion and use of needles or razor blades.

**Greg:** In addition to what you said, it is also transmitted through mother-to-child transmission. Mother-to-child transmission is when an infected mother passes the virus to the child at birth or through breast milk. Do you have any questions?

**Sheena:** No.

**Greg:** How can you prevent HIV/AIDS?

**Sheena:** Abstinence and the use of condoms will prevent HIV/AIDS.

**Greg:** Avoiding the use of contaminated needles and razor blades also prevents HIV/AIDS.

Sheena nods her heads.

**Greg:** You have talked about condoms. Do you know how to use them?

**Sheena:** Yes I do.

**Greg:** You said your reason for coming to this Center is to be tested for HIV.

**Sheena:** Yes.

**Greg:** Did you discuss HIV testing with anybody?

**Sheena:** Yes, I discussed it with my friend who encouraged me to come and take a test.

### *Case Study 1: Sheena cont'd*

**Greg:** Do you know anything about the HIV testing?

**Sheena:** No, I don't.

**Greg:** When the test is done, there are two possible results, either negative or positive. A negative result shows that you do not have the virus in your body. However, there is also a window period which is the period between your last sexual contact with an infected person and the period when the virus can be detected. The window period is about three months. So you could be negative now and be positive if you were tested after three months. Do you have any questions?

**Sheena:** No, I do not.

**Greg:** If the results came out HIV negative, what would you do?

**Sheena:** I would be very happy and avoid unprotected sex.

**Greg:** What would you do if you tested HIV positive?

**Sheena:** I will accept the results and inform my parents.

**Greg:** After the test is done and the results are out, we will again sit together and discuss them. Now that you have the information about HIV/Aids and the HIV test, do you still want to be tested?

**Sheena:** Yes, I do.

**Greg:** (Gives the client the consent sheet) Can you read that sheet and say whether you agree or not.

**Sheena:** (Client receives the sheets and read it) I agree and consent.

**Greg:** (Fills in the lab forms) I will meet you again after 15 minutes to discuss the results. Is that alright?

**Sheena:** It is fine.

**Greg:** Let us go to the laboratory waiting room. See you after 15 minutes.

### **Activity 13**

In this case study, how did Greg provide help to Sheena?

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You may have noticed that the counselling session basically has three phases. Gichinga (1999) identifies the Beginning (warming) stage, Middle (working) stage, and the Ending (terminating) stage.

#### **Beginning (Warming) Phase**

This is the beginning stage where you get to know the client and ensure that the client is comfortable. It is important to make the client feel like they can trust you with what they want to tell you. As a caregiver, your aim at this phase is to establish a counselling relationship.

#### **Middle (Action) Phase**

The working phase is also called the middle or action phase. Here you begin to ask the clients why they have visited you and you help them tell their story. During the stage, you obtain as much information from the clients as possible. You also help the clients to understand their problem and explore alternative courses of action. In the previous case study, Greg helped Sheena to tell her story. Greg also provided Sheena with information on HIV/AIDS and the VCC services.

This is the stage where you help the client to identify solutions, and develop and implement an action plan. The action plan should include support systems that can be used, such as family, church, employer, etc.

#### **Ending (Terminating) Phase**

In the terminating phase you are ending the relationship with the client. As a caregiver, you help the clients to do things on their own. It is important that you do not make the client dependent on you in the counselling relationship. For example, Greg gives Sheena information about HIV/AIDS and the test, and asks if Sheena is still interested in undergoing the test.

It is also at this phase where you should agree with the client as to whether they will need more counselling. If there is a need for more counselling, you agree on the date and time that you will meet. In the case study, Greg makes an appointment to meet with Sheena after the results are given to her.

### Summary

This unit has introduced you to basic counselling, which is a necessary foundation for the other units in this course. “Counselling” has been explained as a way of helping people in difficult situations solve their own problems. You have been given a list of characteristics of effective counsellors and have used it to identify your strengths and the areas you would like to work on.

Communication and its role in counselling have been discussed. You have been introduced to strategies for effective listening and for asking questions. These are particularly valuable when working with children and youth because they often have problems expressing themselves. A number of counselling strategies and techniques have been described. Finally, you have been shown how to conduct a basic counselling session through all three stages.

Counselling is a complex process. There is a great deal of information in this unit and a number of skills for you to work on. Therefore, it will take time for you to understand the counselling process and develop these skills. The key is to refer back to this unit as you need to and to keep practicing. Change may come slowly, but it will come.

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## Glossary

**Acceptance:** An attitude of effective counselling in which the counsellor accepts the client the way he or she is.

**Attentive listening:** Attitude and strategies that allow communicators to achieve shared meaning.

**Behavioral counselling:** Counselling intended to support a child's personal growth by helping the child achieve self-understanding and self-acceptance.

**Caregiver:** A parent or guardian who cares for a child or an elderly or ill person.

**Closed question:** A question that invites a "yes"/"no" or one-word response.

**Challenging:** A counselling technique in which the counsellor questions the behavior of the clients so they are made to analyze their own action.

**Clients:** The children or adults whom a counsellor is trying to help.

**Communication:** The process of sharing information between two or more people. The information shared may include ideas, emotions, knowledge, or skills.

**Counselling:** A way of helping people in difficult situations solve their own problems.

**Crisis Counselling:** Short-term counselling given to clients who are in acute distress and feel they can no longer cope.

**Empathy:** An attitude of effective counselling which the counsellor shows the clients that you understand the client's situation and that you are willing to help.

**Giving Advice:** Telling people what they should do. This approach to counselling is ineffective because people aren't encouraged to find their own solution to problems.

**Grief Counselling:** Counselling provided for clients who have lost their love ones and need support in dealing with their grief, it is also called bereavement counselling.

**Group counselling:** Counselling which involves other people associated with the client's problem (e.g. family member)

**Individual Counselling:** a one-to-one counselling process involving only the counsellor and client.

**Non-verbal communication:** Communication through such means as body movements, facial expression, and touch.

**Open-ended questions:** Question that invites the other to elaborate and explain.

**Partilization:** A counselling techniques in which the counsellor help a client who has many problems to focus on one problem at a time.

**Peer Counselling:** Counselling which involves other people who have been experiences and characteristics to the client.

**Preventive Counselling:** counselling which involves other people who have similar experience and characteristics to the clients.

**Probing:** A counselling technique in which the counsellor asks the clients a series of questions in order to obtain more information about a situation.

**Responsible listener:** Someone who ask question that help the speaker clarify his/her meanings.

**Responsible speaker:** Someone who includes the details that is needed to help the listener understand his/her meanings.

**Shared Meaning:** Occurs when a communication partner fully understands the message the other is trying to convey.



**Spiritual Counselling:** Counselling in which belief in a supernatural being is used to help clients deal with their problems. It is usually provided by spiritual leaders such as priest, pastor, nuns, imams, and others.

**Substance abuse:** The misuse of substances that may have legitimate use but can cause harm when misused; for example, drugs, alcohol, or glue.

**Summarizing:** A counselling technique in which the counsellor restates the main points from what the client has said.

**Supportive Counselling:** Counselling provided after an initial crisis counselling to help clients develop the hope to live on.

**Verbal Communication:** The use of spoken or written language to convey meaning.

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# **Module 7: Ethical & Cultural Issues in Counselling**

# Ethical and Cultural Issues in Counselling

## Introduction

Working with children and youth is a privilege and a responsibility. It is a privilege because we have the opportunity to make a great difference in someone's life, and a responsibility because we are entrusted with the task of promoting every aspect of the child or youth's development. All young persons are vulnerable. They have little power over their lives and few skills for protecting and caring for themselves. Caregivers who work with youth have a special and important role—one in which they have the power to do great good or, in some unfortunate cases, great harm.

The particular status of children as human beings who need special protection and nurturing is recognized in documents such as the Bahamas Child Protection Act and the ethical codes of relevant professional organizations.

Ethical codes and the values which they reflect can guide the work of caregivers and help them when they are making difficult decisions. Considerations such as culture and gender are part of the context within which those decisions are made.

Caregivers working with children and youth have an ethical responsibility to work in ways that put the children and youth's interests first. In order to do this, caregivers must have a high level of self-awareness so they can recognize their own needs, values, and beliefs and see how they can affect the relationship with the child or youth.

This unit contains six lessons. The first discusses the needs and rights of children, including the Child Protection Act. Lesson Two deals with the ethics of counselling. Lessons Three and Four talk about the roles of culture and gender in counselling. Lessons Five and Six are about increasing your self-awareness and resolving ethical dilemmas.

## Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

Explain why children hold a special position in society and discuss their particular rights and needs.

List ethical values associated with counselling children.

Discuss the impact of culture and gender in counselling.

Explain the role of the caregiver's values and attitudes in counselling.

Identify some of your own deeply held beliefs and values and describe how they might influence a counselling situation

## LESSON ONE

### The Needs and Rights of Children

The experiences youth have in their early years determine to a very great extent the persons they will grow up to be. These are the years when they are developing physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually. Therefore, it is very important that they have the proper nutrition, stimulation, and emotional support. These are the years when they are the most vulnerable; they are unable to provide for themselves and need the care of adults and the protection of society. As human beings, we all have a moral obligation to children. As well, the special needs and rights of children are outlined in documents such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and Child Protection Act.

#### *Activity 1*

Which laws in the Bahamas address the rights and protection of children?

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For the purposes of this course, we will look more closely at the Bahamas' Child Protection Act.

The articles in the Child Protection Act are summarized below. As you read through the following, think about what each article means for the children and youth in your care.

#### **Who Is a Child?**

The word “child” refers to human beings below the age of 18, both boys and girls.

#### **No Discrimination**

All children have the same rights. Children should be protected from discrimination, violence, abuse and neglect.

## Care and Protection

Children have a right to be cared for by their parents. Everyone should protect children against danger. Some children do not have parents. They too should be cared for and protected.

## Health

All children should be healthy. Parents should also take care of the health of their children. They have a right to adequate food, shelter, clothing, medical care or education.

## Drugs

Children should be protected from drugs and other harmful substances like alcohol and cigarettes. Drugs and alcohol can interfere with growth and education.

## Education

Children have the right to be educated. The best education takes place in school, at home, and in the community. Children also learn when they play or help adults with work. Governments must ensure children are given a chance to go to school, both boys and girls.

## Freedom of Thought

Children have the right to exercise their own freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.

## Separated Children

Children should not be separated from their parents and families, if at all possible. Children who have been separated from their parents have rights like other children. They need special help and protection. They should be helped to rejoin their families, or if that is not possible, they should be helped to join another family.

## Child Labour

No child shall be employed or engaged in any activity that may be detrimental to his health, education or mental, physical or moral development.

## Child Abuse and Torture

Children have a right not to be abused or tortured.

## Handicapped Children

Children with disabilities should be afforded equal opportunities to education.

## Privacy

Privacy is an important right of children which directly affects the counselling relationship.

**Watch YouTube Video: Working with Young People Part 2: Privacy and Confidentiality (5:55 Minutes)** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqJ\\_yyKm12k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqJ_yyKm12k)

### *Activity 2*

Think about a child or youth in your care. What does each of these items in the Child Protection Act mean for the way you will work with that particular young person?

No discrimination:

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Care and Protection:

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Health:

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Drugs:

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Education:

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Child and labour:

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Protection of Privacy:

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As a responsible caregiver, you are obligated to ensure that children and youth are treated equally with other children and youth, protected from harm, allowed to express his or her thoughts and ideas, and given educational opportunities. You must also protect the youth's right to privacy; for example, by not allowing other youth or adults to make disparaging remarks about the youth and his or her family.

The Child Protection Act outlines your legal responsibilities to the children or youth in your care. As a caregiver, however, you also have an ethical responsibility to work with children in particular ways. Lesson 2 explores the concept of professional ethics and shows how you can use ethical guidelines in your work.

## **LESSON TWO**

### **The Ethics of Counselling With Children & Youth**

This lesson will consider the meaning of ethics, look at key values involved in counselling ethics, and discuss characteristics of ethical practice with children and youth.

#### **Professional Ethics**

Professional ethics are guidelines that help people in a particular profession decide what is right and wrong in their professional practice. These guides are intended to protect clients and the professionals themselves. In the helping professions, clients usually come to counsellors because they are in some kind of distress which makes them especially vulnerable and in need of protection. Persons caring for children are in particular need of ethical guidelines because of the vulnerability and powerlessness of children and the complexity of the caregiver role. Ethical guidelines often are spelled out in what are known as “codes of conduct” or “codes of ethics.”

Ethics are based on values; that is, on principles or qualities that are considered by the professional group to be worthwhile and important. While personal values reflect what individuals consider to be important and what they believe to be wrong or right, professional values describe the beliefs the profession holds about people and how the profession ought to conduct its work.

#### **Ethical Practice in Counselling**

Key values that are associated with ethical counselling include:

- Belief in the dignity and worth of all people.
- Meeting the needs of clients while respecting their individuality and rights.
- Promoting the clients' right to freedom of choice.
- Commitment to continued learning. (Shebib, 2003)

### **Belief in the Dignity and Worth of All People**

This value means that counsellors/caregivers will pay attention to the rights of children. They will value children as unique individuals and respect their confidentiality. They will treat them fairly, regardless of personal feelings about them. They will not label or stereotype them.

#### ***Activity 3***

What are some ways that a belief in the dignity and worth of all people is reflected in the Child Protection Act?

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### **Meeting the Needs of Clients while Respecting Their Individuality and Rights**

This key value means that caregivers and counsellors must not use their relationship with the child/youth for the adult's personal interest or gain. This protects children/youth from sexual and other exploitation by the adult. Meeting the needs of children/youth includes providing for their physical well-being, their education, and for other opportunities.

#### ***Activity 4***

What are some ways that children/youth might be exploited by adults? Do you know of situations where children/youth have been exploited by their caregivers? What was the effect on the children?

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### Promoting the Client's Right to Freedom of Thought

Young children may not have the ability to make good choices. However, the caregiver/counsellor can help children learn to make choices in ways that are appropriate to their development. Very young children can choose between two items of clothing or decide whether to walk or be carried. Older youth can be helped to talk through problems in order to come to a decision about the best course of action. Making good decisions is an important skill for children to learn and they need lots of practice and support in doing so.

#### *Activity 5*

What are some ways that you have helped children or youth learn to make their own decisions?

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### Commitment to Continued Learning

There is always more to learn about working with human beings. Your commitment to learning is evident in the fact that you are taking this course. Once you have finished the course you can continue your learning by seeking out other opportunities to learn about working with children/youth. You can also learn by observing youth carefully and by reflecting on experiences that you have with them; for example, thinking about what happened in a situation and what you might have done differently.

#### *Activity 6*

Think about a difficult situation that you have experienced in your work with youth. What happened? What did you learn from that situation?

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## Ethical Practice with Children

In addition to the principles that are important in counselling, the codes of ethics for persons working with young children reflect the fact that children are still learning and growing and that they do so through their interactions with other persons and their environment. They recognize:

- That early childhood is a unique and valuable stage of life and that every stage of childhood is important in and of itself.
- Children's right to play, since play has an important role in children's development.
- The need to support children's strengths, competence, and sense of self-worth.
- The need to provide safety and security for children and to ensure that they are not harmed, exploited, or intimidated in any way.

Now let's look more closely at some of the ways that you demonstrate ethical values in your work with children.

## Building and Maintaining Relationships

As a caregiver, you have an ethical responsibility to give the children and youth under your care an opportunity to know themselves and the special talents each may have and to help them develop into responsible adults in their social and career lives.

Some of them will be passing through experiences that interfere with their growth. They may have suffered the loss of a loved one. Some may have been involved in substance abuse and other anti-social behaviour

To be able to help them, you must create a relationship with each youth such that he or she trusts you. Do children or youth say the following about you?

- He/she believes what I say
- He/she is listening to me
- He/she is not taking sides
- He/she appreciates me
- He/she will not tell others about my problem
- He/she will help me
- He/she respects me
- He/she believes I am not bad and I can change
- He/she is friendly

## Maintaining Confidentiality

As a caregiver, you should respect the integrity and protect the welfare of all persons with whom you are working. You have an obligation to safeguard information about them that has been obtained in the course of the counselling process.

- All records kept on a child are stored or disposed of in a manner that assures security and confidentiality.
- Treat all communications from clients with professional confidence.
- Do not disclose client confidences to anyone, except as mandated by law, to prevent a clear and immediate danger to someone, or by previously obtained written permission. In cases involving more than one person (as clients), written permission must be obtained from all persons who have been present during the counselling before any disclosure can be made.
- Obtain informed written consent of clients before audio and/or video-taping or permitting third-party observation of the sessions.
- Do not use these standards of confidentiality to avoid intervention when it is necessary; for example, when there is evidence of abuse of minors, the elderly, the disabled, or the physically or mentally incompetent.

In any form of counselling it is expected that you do not discuss with others what has been said in the counselling session. The only exception to this is when you believe that the health or life of the child or youth is in danger, or he/she is a danger to others.

The issue of confidentiality is central to the whole process of building trust. You may be hearing for the first time what someone has done or gone through, so the person expects that you will keep the information to yourself. Breaking trust destroys your relationship with the child and it may also lead to a complete loss of trust in counselling.

Should you feel that you need the help of others in dealing with issues that come up in counselling, discuss this with the child and get permission to disclose to others.

Situations where a caregiver may break confidence:

- The child may want certain information passed on to a third party; for example, a parent, guardian, or teacher.
- Where the caregiver feels the child is a danger to her/himself or others.
- When the good of the child requires it.

### Activity 7

Banda is sixteen years old and for the last year has been coming for assistance at your drop-in centre. Before you tracked down his family and he returned home, he was living on the streets for two years. While on the street he was engaged in glue sniffing, petty theft, begging, and homosexuality. After two sessions with him, and listening to the health problems he is concerned with, you are convinced he could be HIV positive. He strongly rejects your suggestion that he go for voluntary counselling and testing (VCT). He has warned that you should not tell his parents about it. What would you do as Banda's caregiver, and why?

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Did you answer that in this case, breaking confidentiality is for Banda's own good? He needs to be tested so that he can receive the appropriate health care.

### Keeping Records

You may need to keep a record of your counselling sessions with children or youth that you see for more than one or two sessions for continuity. These should include:

- Personal details (code name/number preferably).
- The nature of the problem.
- Record of and progress during each session.

You should keep this information under lock and key. When no longer needed, these records should be destroyed.

### Avoiding Dual Relationships

Dual relationships refer to a situation where you as a counsellor have other relationships with the child/youth that you are counselling. This may be a teacher/pupil, relative/counsellor, pastor/counsellor, or other relationship.

Considering the nature of counselling, where confidentiality and trust between the caregiver and the child/youth form the basis of the helping relationship, this may create a problem. The child/youth may either fear opening up to you fully or may worry about confidentiality.

You as the helper may be influenced by your previous knowledge and attitudes toward the child. You must, however, appreciate that you must not reject the child in situations where there is no alternative source of help.

You should avoid other relationships with a person you are counselling. Avoid counselling children/youth that you are related to. In such cases the child might not be able to open up to you. If they do, you may find issues coming up about which you feel obliged to tell the child's parents or guardian. Never engage in a sexual relationship with any person you are counselling. This is totally unethical. You should consider what is culturally acceptable to the child you are counselling.

**Activity 8**

Efi comes to you for help at the teenage pregnant girls crisis centre. She is your cousin's daughter and the first thing she requests of you is not to tell her mother. Efi is four months pregnant and is not sure who the father is. Her father died four years ago and the mother has been struggling to educate Efi and her three brothers. Efi is in grade eight and it is expected that she will perform very well and be admitted to the best private schools in the country on scholarship. As Efi's aunt, how would you deal with this case?

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This is a difficult case for Efi's aunt. It would appear that either Efi trusts her or that there may be no one else she can approach for help.

The aunt could use the existing trust to help Efi look at the situation from many angles during the period between now and when the baby is born. They could consider how probable it is that Efi will go back to school after the baby is born.

They may also work together to decide on an action plan. This might include visiting the ante-natal clinic, learning about nutrition during pregnancy, and telling Efi's mother. Through this process, Efi will be encouraged to take responsibility and gain hope for the future.

Depending on how the counselling proceeds, the aunt may feel unable to help Efi and may need to refer her to other professionals.

### **Building Your Competence**

As a caregiver, you must aim at maintaining high standards of work so that you can offer help to children. Therefore, you should take every opportunity available to learn more, for example:

- Read this manual thoroughly.
- Attend seminars that may be organized in your area.
- Be conversant with the Child Protection Act in the Bahamas.
- Consult with other caregivers or counsellors on counselling issues, ensuring that you do not break confidentiality.
- Keep yourself informed by reading available materials.
- Be in touch with organizations and individuals such as counselling centers, drug rehabilitation centers, police, hospitals, etc. that you feel you can call upon for help.

Remember that you cannot be an expert in all situations that require counselling. Therefore, if you are dealing with an issue where you feel unable to offer help, please refer the child to a person or institution that will be able to help.

#### **Activity 9**

List individuals and organizations in your area where you feel you can receive help for the children under your care.

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## Making Referrals

Do not abandon or neglect the child or youth under your care. If you are unable—or unwilling for whatever reason—to provide professional help or continue a professional relationship, every reasonable effort should be made to arrange for continuation of counselling with another professional. Examples of situations where you need to arrange for counselling by someone else:

- A child needs the kinds of services that you aren't able to provide.
- Your relationship with the child stands in the way of being able to work effectively with him or her.
- You feel like you aren't making any progress with the child.
- When the child asks for a referral.

## Role Modelling

Your status as caregiver has already raised you to the status of role model for the children under your care. This role is further strengthened if you are the counsellor in the centre. Be aware of what is acceptable behaviour to the community around you and to the children in particular. Remember that your personal behaviour will influence how these children behave. It is your job to set a good example for them.

## LESSON THREE

### The Role of Culture In A Counselling Relationship

As a caregiver and counsellor, you will be working with children and families from various cultures. In order to work effectively with culturally diverse individuals and groups, it is important to know what culture means in people's lives and to recognize differences that might be culturally-based. This lesson will help you begin to explore the fascinating subject of culture.

The idea of culture is interesting and important, but can be very hard to define and understand. *Culture is a set of meanings that provides a sort of blueprint for how we should think, feel, and behave in order to be a part of a group.* It includes patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, expectations, and symbols; in fact, every aspect of who we are that isn't biological in origin. Often people are part of more than one culture; for example, we may belong to a professional group, a religious group, and social groups each of which has its own way of speaking, dressing, and behaving.

Often we don't recognize aspects of our culture until we encounter cultural ideas or practices that are different from ours. Knowing our own culture is an important aspect of self-awareness, however, because we need to be able to recognize culturally-based differences.

### **Increasing Your Cultural Awareness**

Here are some questions to help you explore your own cultural heritage. Think of the group with which you tend to identify most closely while you are answering the questions or answer them for each of the groups to which you belong:

- What style of speaking is valued in this group?
- Is there a particular type of dress that characterizes this group?
- What role (if any) do names play in the group? Are there rules or rituals governing the assignment of names?
- What occupational roles are valued and devalued by the group?
- What is the relationship between age and values in the group?
- How is family defined in the group?
- How does this group view outsiders in general?
- What prejudices or stereotypes does this group have about itself?
- What prejudices or stereotypes do other groups have about this group?
- What prejudices or stereotypes does this group have about other groups?
- What issues divide members within the same group?
- What were/are the group's experiences with oppression?
- How is social class defined in the group?
- What is/are the dominant religion(s) within the group? What role does religion and spirituality play in the everyday lives of members of the group?
- What significance do race, skin colour, and hair have within the group?
- What roles do regionality and geography play in the group?
- How are gender roles defined within the group? How is sexual orientation regarded?
- If more than one group makes up your culture of origin, how are the differences negotiated in your family? What are the intergenerational consequences? How has this impacted you personally and professionally? (Adapted from Diller and Moule, 2005)

These questions show you some aspects of identity that are related to culture. Cultural differences that affect counselling relationships include:

1. Communication styles, for example the way words and phrases are used, the degree of importance given to non-verbal communication, and the appropriate degree of assertiveness in communicating.
2. Different attitudes toward conflict, for example whether conflict is positive or should be avoided, whether conflict should be resolved in face-to-face meetings.

3. Different approaches to completing tasks, for example whether or not it is important to build a relationship with another person in order to work with him or her on completing a task.
4. Different styles of decision-making, for example majority rule or consensus.
5. Different attitudes about open emotion and personal matters.
6. Different approaches to knowing, for example through symbolic imagery and rhythm, library research, visiting people who have had similar challenges. (Adapted from the Community Tool Box, 2005)

Cultural differences can result in very different interpretations of actions, as the example below shows.

### *Example 1*

Paul is on his way home from school. As he is walking along he sees a tree with enticing ripe yellow mangoes. It is a hot afternoon, he is hungry, and he is still 10 kilometers from home. He walks over to the tree, climbs it, and picks two large juicy mangoes. Just as he steps down from the tree the owner of the garden approaches him angrily. Is Paul a thief?

In some communities it is acceptable for one who is hungry to pick farm produce (mangoes, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, tomatoes, guava etc.) for immediate consumption. This ensures that nobody dies of hunger. In other communities, private ownership is highly regarded and taking anything without the owner's permission is considered to be stealing. The attitudes that people would have toward Paul's actions would depend on their cultural views about whether or not it is acceptable for a person to take farm produce because he or she is hungry.

As a counsellor, you will be working with children and families from various cultural backgrounds. One of the most important things to remember is not to assume that another person has the same values, beliefs, and practices that you do. Use your observation, listening, and questioning skills to learn what is important to the other person and how they see the world. Be open to learning about other ways of seeing and living in the world.

## LESSON FOUR

### Gender in Counselling

#### Case Study 1: Tom and Raquel

Tom walked into the kitchen while his wife was busy cooking the evening meal and their three daughters were dozing by the fireside. It was an hour past their bedtime.

“What can a man do?” shouted Tom. “I made you resign from your job, so you can take proper care of my children. They should have slept an hour ago to be properly rested for school tomorrow.”

Raquel recoiled in fear since lately Kamua has hit or slapped her a few times in anger. Up to last year Raquel taught at the nursery school in the village. She was able to hire a house-helper and was happy, as she had a bit of her own money and the house was clean and the children cared for until she came home in the late afternoon.

Tom thought differently. As he put it, “A man is supposed to provide for his family and I do not want my wife to WORK.” Raquel reflected on her day; she woke up at 5.00 a.m. to heat bathing water for her husband and children. She made breakfast and saw them off by 8.00 a.m. Then she fetched water, went to the food store and washed clothes before making lunch for the children. Her second child came home with a fever and she took her to the clinic five kilometers away, where they had to queue up until 4.30 p.m. to see the doctor. She was very tired after all this and was looking forward to making dinner and going to bed early after feeding the family and cleaning the dishes.

Her thoughts were interrupted by Tom, “You stay at home the whole day and cannot cook supper in good time. It is time you gave me a son to care for me in old age and inherit my property. You would also have something to keep you busy.”

#### Activity 10

Look back at your family and the way you all related to each other as you grew up. As you read about Tom and Raquel and the way they treat each other, is any of it familiar to you? If not, what are the different ways in which men and women relate in your family and community?

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The way men and women relate socially in a given community is referred to as gender. These relationships include:

- The kind of work performed by men and women and its importance, for example women cook and take care of the household while men go to work and earn a living.
- Women should be soft-spoken and submissive and men should show power.
- Men should take care of household repairs and pay for everything; women should allow them to do these things

Gender is learned through interactions with our family, community, and other institutions such as church, mosques, schools, etc. Each community has its own idea of how it wants to prepare its boys and girls to become the men and women of tomorrow. Therefore, gender relations will vary from community to community.

Gender relations will also change over time. For example, in many communities in the past, it has been taboo for a man to cook. However, due to social and economic changes many men now cook for themselves. As a result it is no longer strange to find a man preparing a meal for his family.

### *Activity 11*

Can you think of changes you have noticed in your lifetime in how men and women relate in your community?

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When you are counselling children and youth, keep in mind that it is in their best interest to have as many skills and options as possible, regardless of their gender. When boys learn to cook, they know that they can look after themselves. When girls learn a trade or profession, they are better prepared to cope with the uncertainties of life.

## LESSON FIVE

### Increasing Your Self-Awareness

As we have seen, it is important for caregivers/counsellors to recognize and accept ways of thinking and being that are different from their own. This allows them to meet the needs of children rather than acting upon their own needs. The following example, which shows the house mother responding in two different ways to Awina's request for help, demonstrates why this is important.

#### *Example 1*

Awina is a 15-year-old school girl. She is an orphan living in a children's home. Awina has missed her monthly period for two months and is scared she might be pregnant. She decides to go and talk to her house mother to seek help and advice.

The house mother strongly disapproves of the tight jeans that Awina is wearing and frowns. She feels only girls with loose morals dress that way. Further, she is scandalized that Awina has had sex outside marriage. Awina can see that the house mother is shocked by her revelation. Immediately she withdraws her statement and closes the conversation.

#### *Example 2*

Awina is a 15-year-old school girl. She is an orphan living in a children's home. Awina has missed her monthly period for two months and is scared she might be pregnant. She decides to go and talk to her house mother to seek help and advice.

The house mother strongly disapproves of the tight jeans that Awina is wearing and she would not let her daughter dress like that. However, she smiles warmly at Awina and asks her "Do you have a boyfriend?" Awina: I have many boyfriends although I like this one boy Banda but he is interested in other girls and not me. He says I am a baby. House mother: What makes you think you may be pregnant? Awina: Well, the other girls told me that when you miss your monthly period it means you are pregnant. House mother: Have you had sex recently? Awina: Banda tried to kiss me but I pushed him away—that is when he said I am a baby. House mother: Have you had sexual intercourse with him?

Awina: NO! House mother: You don't need to worry then, Awina. If you have not had sexual intercourse you are not pregnant. When you miss your monthly period it doesn't necessarily mean that you're pregnant. There can be other reasons for women to miss their period.

### Activity 12

Think about the differences between scenarios 1 and 2. Write your ideas here:

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In the first case the housemother was quick to show her feelings and attitudes about Awina. Awina noticed very quickly and closed the conversation, so the house parent lost an opportunity to help a child under her care.

In the second case, despite the fact that the house-mother had her opinion and attitudes she kept them to herself and did not let them become part of the discussion. Hence, Awina opened up to her and the housemother was able to guide and help her.

As a caregiver, you have a responsibility to respect children as fellow human beings and to act in their best interests. This means that you cannot let your personal attitudes, beliefs and needs stand in the way of providing the best possible care for them. The attitudes, values, and behaviours that you must adopt because of your responsibility to the children in your care reflect your professional ethics.

It is easy to say that we will put aside our own attitudes, values, and needs to respond to children's needs, but it can be hard to do. These characteristics are so much a part of us that we often don't recognize that they are there. That is why it is so important for caregivers/counsellors to understand themselves well.

Counsellors need to recognize their own needs, feelings, thoughts, and behaviours so they can see their clients as unique persons who are different from themselves. Without self-awareness, counsellors are likely to respond to their clients in ways that are based on their own needs and attitudes, as the housemother did in the first example with Awina. The table that follows shows some of the differences between counsellors who have self-awareness and those who lack it.

<i>Counsellors with Self-Awareness</i>	<i>Counsellors without Self-Awareness</i>
Recognize and name their personal feelings.	Avoid or are unaware of their feelings.
Can distinguish between their own thoughts and those of clients.	May attribute their own feelings to their clients.
Recognize areas where they are vulnerable or have unresolved feelings.	Respond inappropriately because their own unresolved problems interfere with their ability to be objective.
Understand their personal values and their influence on the counselling relationship.	React emotionally to their clients but don't understand why they are reacting that way.
Realize how their behaviour influences clients.	Are unaware of how their behaviour influences clients.
Change their behaviour based on the reactions of clients.	Behave according to their personal needs and style rather than the needs and reactions of clients.
Understand their own strengths and limitations and can set goals for improvement.	Avoid setting goals for themselves because they are unaware of their own personal and professional needs.

(Adapted from Shebib, 2003, p. 53)

How can you become more self-aware? You can develop your self-awareness through self-examination, something you will be doing in the exercises below. You can also ask trusted colleagues and friends to give you feedback about your behaviours and attitudes. You will need to let them know that you are genuinely trying to improve and won't become defensive or hurt if they tell you something you would rather not hear about yourself!

The following activity helps you learn to “notice” your perceptions, feelings, thoughts, intentions, and behaviour. This is a useful exercise to try whenever you are in a puzzling or problematic situation because it gives you new insights about your own motivations and behaviours.



### Activity 13

Think about an experience you have had recently and what it was like for you at the time. Then answer these questions:

What were your senses telling you at the time (What did you see, hear, smell, taste, touch)?

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What were your feelings (emotions)?

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What thoughts did you have?

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What did you wish or hope would happen?

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How did you behave (If someone had been watching you, how would they have described your actions)?

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## Becoming Aware of Your Own Values and Attitudes

We all have ideas about what is right and wrong or good and bad. Sometimes we aren't really aware of the ideas we have until a situation comes up that makes us think about what we believe. Often that is a situation where we meet someone who has quite different ideas. This is what happens with Monica when she talks with Awina's mother in the following example.

### *Example 3*

Monica, a teacher, is concerned because her student, Awina, has been away from school for almost a month. She knows that Awina is on a scholarship at school, so she wonders if perhaps someone in the family is ill. She goes to talk with Awina's mother. When Monica finds that everyone in the family is fine, she is even more puzzled by Awina's poor attendance. Finally she asks Awina's mother why Awina hasn't been coming to school. "She's a girl," her mother answers. "She'll just be getting married and having babies. Why does she need an education for that?"

This story shows the different values that Monica and Awina's mother hold about the education of girls. Monica believes that everyone should get all the education they can. Awina's mother believes that education isn't necessary for a woman because of the life she will be leading.

Monica is surprised, at first, by Awina's mother's reply. Then she reminds herself that not everyone values education as she does. She considers that Awina's mother has had a different life than she, Monica, has had, and it is understandable that she would have different values. This realization helps her to respond calmly and sympathetically and, in the end, to convince Awina's mother to send her to school.

There are several reasons why it is important for us to be aware of our values. One is that being aware of our values helps us to make choices in our lives that fit with our values. When we do that, we can respect ourselves for the way we live our lives. Another reason is that being aware of our values helps us to understand that not everyone feels the same, and it helps us to respect others even if the values they hold are different from ours.

### Activity 14

This activity will help you to think about your own values. First list five things that are important to you in life:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Now list them according to their importance, with the most important one first:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Does the way you are living your life right now fit with your values?

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Now ask someone else to answer the first question. What differences do you notice between that person's answer and yours? Discuss this with your partner.

Each person will answer these questions a bit differently, although there will probably be similarities as well. For example, you may have said that you value your family, or that you value kindness, or that you value financial security.

When we talk about values we often talk, as well, about attitudes. What are the differences between the two? As we have seen in the activity above, when we talk about values we are talking about what we believe is important in life. Our attitudes, on the other hand, are our opinions or ways of thinking about things and are often reflected in our behaviour. For example, if I value education then my attitude toward people who are well-educated may be one of admiration and respect.

Our values and attitudes come from many sources including the experiences we have had in our lives, the values that have been passed on from our families, and our culture. Let’s look at some examples of ways that each of these factors can influence our values and attitudes.

**Personal Experiences**

Let’s say, for example, that one of your important values is kindness. That value could come from many sources, but one of them might be that you have been treated with kindness yourself through the years. You value the kindness you have experienced and want to pass it on to others.

If one of your values is financial security, it could be because you have struggled against great financial hardship in your life and you don’t want your family to experience the same thing.

In each of these examples, the experiences you have had in your life would influence your beliefs about what is important in life; that is, your values.

**Family Influences**

What you see and hear in the family as you are growing up influences the values and attitudes you have as an adult. Think about some of the messages you got from your parents, guardians, or other family members about how you should live. These may have been things they told you or things you learned from watching how they did things and what they expected of others and themselves. For example, your family may have taught you that women were equal to men and should be respected, or they may have taught you that men are the bosses of the household and everyone should do what they say.

**Activity 15**

Think about the messages you have received from your family about everyday events.

**Food and Mealtime**

Here are some questions to help you start thinking about this topic: What did you learn about food and mealtime? Did everyone eat together? Did everyone talk, or were you expected to be quiet? If there was not enough food, who got to eat first? What opinions did people have about different foods and about how they should be cooked? Were mealtimes a time of pain, pleasure, or both?

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### **Activity 15 cont'd**

How do you see past mealtime experiences reflected in your feelings and expectations about food and mealtimes now?

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### **Dress and Appearance**

What messages did you receive about how you should dress when you were growing up?

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How are these messages reflected in your expectations of yourself and others now?

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### **Morality**

What did your family teach you about right and wrong? How did they teach you these things? Were the views you were taught related to a religious background? Did your family have definite attitudes toward people of different religious beliefs?

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How are these teachings reflected in the way you live now?

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### **Other**

Can you think of other ways that values you have now were influenced by your family's attitudes as you were growing up?

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## Culture

As we have discussed, we learn the attitudes and values that are expected of us when we live within a particular culture. For example, we may learn particular attitudes about good and bad behaviour or ideas about different groups of people.

### Activity 16

Earlier you explored some ways that your family experiences have influenced your values and attitudes. Now think about other things that have affected your ideas about what is important in life and how people should live. Write your thoughts here:

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Now think about a time when you met or worked with someone whose values and attitudes were quite different from yours. How did you feel and think about that person?

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If you were a counsellor working with that person, what difficulties might you have encountered?

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Each of us is unique. You have your own ideas about what is important in life and your own attitudes about the situations and people you encounter in your life. These values and attitudes come from the experiences you have had in your life including the influences of your family and your culture. You express your values and attitudes in your behaviour.

The clients with whom you work also have unique perspectives on life which may be different from yours. The first step in being able to work effectively with clients whose values and attitudes are different from yours is to recognize your own perspectives. This will help you to

keep your own ideas separate when you are working with clients and not let them “spill over” into the work you are doing with them.

#### *Example 4*

Lilian has arranged to meet with Karima’s father to discuss Karima’s future schooling. Karima is doing well at school and Lilian would like to see her go on to the next level. She is not sure if Karima’s father will approve.

Lilian believes strongly in monogamy. She and her husband have lived happily together for almost 20 years. Karima’s father has four baby mothers and is unable to care for all his children.

Lilian knows that it will be best for Karima if she can establish a good working relationship with the father. In order to do this, she will need to put aside her beliefs about monogamy and parental responsibility and attempt to understand how the father sees the situation. Then she will need to work with him to find a solution that is agreeable to everyone concerned.

## **LESSON SIX**

### **Resolving Ethical Dilemmas**

So far in this unit we have discussed children’s rights, the ethical responsibilities of persons working with children, how culture and gender influence work with children, and the importance of self-awareness in working with children. In this final section of the unit we will put many of these pieces together as we look at a process for making difficult ethical decisions.

In your work with children, you may sometimes find that you have to deal with problems that involve competing values; for example, where no matter what decision you make someone will be unhappy or hurt. These situations are called ethical dilemmas.

For example, suppose three girls that you know confide in you that they are making secret plans to have an abortion. If you tell their parents, you will be betraying their trust. If you don’t tell anyone and they go ahead with the abortion, there may be serious health concerns and, if the parents found out that you knew and didn’t tell them, they would be very angry with you. You are in a very difficult situation.

The Ethical Decision-Making Process below outlines a process to follow in making difficult decisions like this.

## Ethical Decision-Making Process

This model is intended as a guide to your reflection on the ethical dilemmas you find in your work with children and families.

### Identify the Situation Requiring a Decision

- What is the issue and who is affected by it (child, family, community)?

### Identify Components of the Situation

- Practice issues—What would be the most practical, efficient thing to do?
- Ethical issues—What would be the “right” (ethical) thing to do?
- Legal issues—What does the law demand you do?

### Reflect on the Person You Are

- How would you describe the best ethical self that you bring to this work?
- How would you describe the values you have learned in your life?
- What values do you bring because of your cultural traditions, spiritual beliefs, gender, and age?
- Do you find that you identify more easily with the child, the family, or the community?
- Do you prefer to have rules to follow, or would you more often say “It all depends”?

### Identify Values at Stake

- What do you understand the child’s values to be?
- How would you describe the community’s values, cultural and spiritual beliefs? What other values are brought to the community by television, music, etc?
- What are the values and standards of others doing the kind of care-giving work you do?
- What are the values of the society you live in?

### Identify Ethical Obligations

- How do you understand your ethical obligations to the child, family, community?

### Explore Possible Alternatives

- What are the implications of each decision you could make on children, families, community?
- What are the costs and advantages of each possible decision?
- What are the implications of not doing anything?

### Assess Priorities and Claims

- What are the priorities of different ethical decisions?
- How could alternative decisions be justified?
- How could each decision be implemented?



## Resolve the Dilemma

- What is your final decision? Is it a clear one, or a compromise?
- If your decision must be communicated to the child or to someone else, how will you do so?
- What personal consequences will you have to live with?

## Prepare for Next Time

- What have you learned that will help you with your next ethical dilemma?

D. Massing (2002).

Try out this ethical decision-making process in the activity on the following pages.

### Activity 17

A girl that you know has confided in you she is planning to have an abortion. You try to persuade her not to, but she won't be convinced. You are worried about their mental and physical health and about how her parents will feel about this.

Work through this process to help you decide what to do. What are some of the things you need to consider in deciding what to do?

For example:

- What do you know about this girl and her ability to make good decisions?
- What kind of relationship do you have with her? Does she trust you?
- Health issues.
- Spiritual issues/cultural values and traditions.
- Children's rights.

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Is there any further information you need in order to make a decision about what to do?

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What are all of the possible actions you could take? What would be the outcomes of each of these actions? (Not acting is one of these alternatives)

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### *Activity 17 Cont'd*

Which is the best solution? How would you go about acting on this solution? What outcomes of this solution might you need to be prepared for?

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What have you learned from this situation that would help you deal with a similar one in the future?

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There is no right answer to an ethical dilemma, only one that does the least harm given all of the circumstances. Do you feel that the solution you chose in the dilemma above is one that is ethically sound? Please explain why.

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## Summary

This unit has explored the obligations and responsibilities you have as a caregiver/counsellor to children. You have considered rights of children and the ethical responsibilities of caregivers/counsellors. You have considered ways that culture and gender enter into your work with children. This unit has encouraged you to become aware of your own attitudes and values so that they won't interfere with your work with children. Finally, the unit provides you with a process for making the difficult ethical decisions that can arise in working with children.

## Glossary

**Code of ethics:** A set of statements about appropriate and expected behaviour by members of a professional group. The code of ethics reflects the values of the group.

**Ethical dilemma:** A situation that requires a choice between competing values.

**Labelling:** Consistently using a particular name or phrase to describe a person.

**Personal values:** What individuals consider to be desirable and what they believe to be wrong or right.

**Professional ethics:** Principles and rules of acceptable conduct that guide the work done by people in a particular profession.

**Stereotyping:** Seeing people in a preconceived, oversimplified way; for example, believing that those belonging to a certain group of people will have particular characteristics.

**Values:** Principles or qualities that are considered to be worthwhile and important.

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## This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# **Module 8:**

# **Dealing with**

# **Child Abuse**

# **Issues**

## Introduction

Many children grow up in happy, loving homes, but others are harmed in various ways. Some children are mistreated, or left with no one to look after them. Some adults take advantage of children to have sex with them. Child abuse is especially common among family members. In fact, children are most often abused by adults close to them and who have power and authority over them. This problem is made worse by some cultural and social practices which believe children should be seen and not heard. This makes it difficult to tell someone about the abuse, so it often remains hidden within the family and the community.

Lesson 1 introduces five different kinds of child abuse from which a child may suffer. Lesson 2 discusses how cultural issues may influence and be reflected in how children are treated (or mistreated and abused), and Lesson 3 examines various ways that children may react when subjected to abuse. Lesson 4 and 5 focus on resilient children and helping to build and strengthen resilience. Lesson 6 and 7 talk about ways to help abused children cope and signs that an abused child is not coping well with his or her situation. Lesson 8 discusses ways that you can prevent child abuse in your community. Finally, Lesson 9 lists referral services that can provide help to children in abusive situations.

## Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Identify and describe various forms of child abuse.
2. Identify signs and characteristics of an abused child.
3. Explain the various coping strategies employed by survivors of abuse.
4. Develop effective intervention programmes for abused children.
5. Outline the referral system available for abused children in your community.

## LESSON ONE

### Forms of Child Abuse

#### *Activity 1*

Janae is a 13 year-old girl whose parents died three years ago. She lives with her aunt in Nassau Village. She has two brothers aged 15 and 10 and one 6-year-old sister. The 15-year-old brother and aunt go out all day while the younger brother goes to school, leaving Janae to look after her younger sister. One day, her aunt comes back and finds out that Janae has eaten the only food she has left for dinner. The aunt is so angry that she dips Janae's right hand in boiling water. This is not the first time Janae has suffered at the hands of her aunt. She has had beatings before that ended in her being admitted to the hospital. Furthermore, the aunts often shouts at Janae and blames her for everything wrong in the home – even for mistakes that she has not made.

What are some of the ways that Janae is being mistreated (abused) in her aunt's home?

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What are some of the thoughts and feelings that Janae might have about her situation? How might she be feeling about herself, for example?

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What are some of the thoughts and feelings that you had as you read Janae's story?

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There are many forms of child abuse. Janae suffers physically due to burning and beating. She also suffers emotionally. Her aunt's treatment makes her think that she is worthless and unloved. The abuse she endures in her childhood may affect her whole life.

It is difficult for us to read or think about children being harmed in this way but, as adults, we have a responsibility to help in whatever way we can.

Some of the many forms of child abuse that can take place are shown in Janae's story. Children may be abused sexually, emotionally, physically, or they may be neglected.

### **Activity 2**

What are some ways that children are abused in your community?

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Let us now look at different types of abuse and how each one affects children. We will also explore ways that you can help children like Janae cope.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Of all forms of abuse, child sexual abuse is perhaps the most difficult one for people to face. There are a number of reasons for this, some of which are shown in the following story of Chanda.

### Activity 3

Chanda is a married woman. She has a 13-year old daughter, Anita, from a previous marriage. One day Chandra left home and went to visit a friend. While she was away, her husband raped Anita, who became pregnant. Anita told Chanda that she was pregnant and Chandra was so annoyed she beat Anita in the presence of her husband until Anita told her that her husband had done it. The husband accepted responsibility and asked forgiveness and Chanda forgave him. Later on, Chanda left her ten-year old daughter asleep while she went to see a doctor. Her husband, this time, raped the younger daughter. Chanda came back, found her having a bath, and asked her why she was bathing so early in the morning. Her daughter told her what had happened and said that her husband said, “If you tell anybody I will beat you.”

In Chanda’s story what type of abuse did her children suffer?

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Child sexual abuse occurs when adults or older persons use a child for their sexual pleasure.

Adults often do not want to talk or think about child sexual abuse because sex is considered to be something secret and taboo, not to be talked about. This view of not talking about sex has left children unprotected and adults feeling helpless. Unfortunately, children may be sexually abused by anyone – because someone is a father, uncle, aunt, cousin, niece, priest, or teacher does not mean they are incapable of sexually abusing children. There are several things that make children especially vulnerable to sexual abuse. Traditionally, children are taught to respect and obey elders and other adults. This is one reason why children do not say “no” to an adult. In addition, children are dependent on adults for many things including love, affection, food and other basic needs.

In Chanda’s story, we learn how in some cultures, traditions tend to encourage child sexual abuse. Women are supposed to obey their husband in all things. Children are not allowed to answer back or express opposing views to elders, which would be seen as a challenge and could lead to punishment. A woman depending on her husband for financial support of a woman who has no way of supporting herself may find it difficult to oppose her husband or boyfriend.

In the story, Chanda was more concerned about her husband and saving her marriage than she was about her children’s pain and suffering. She chose to forgive him instead of taking action

against him. Chanda was also afraid of what the community would say. The situation would be seen as shameful. She also did not want to be seen as going against everyone's expectations. Her culture demands that she remain committed to the marriage. If she spoke up against her husband, some members of the community would think of her as a bad wife who cannot keep "family issues" private.

#### *Activity 4*

Child sexual abuse has many forms. Can you think of any?

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Sexual abuse can be:

- Sexual intercourse or rape.
- Incest or sex within families (father with daughter, mother with son, sister with brother, uncle, cousin, or niece, etc.)
- Touching a child's private parts.
- Showing pictures of a sexual nature to a child that he/she does not want to see.
- The adult showing his/her private parts to the child.
- Letting the child watch or hear an act of sexual intercourse.
- Forced early marriage.
- Child prostitution (where children are paid to have sex).

#### *Activity 5*

How will you know that a child has been sexually abused?

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A caregiver may suspect that a child has been sexually abused from observing the following signs and types of behaviour.

### Curiosity behaviour

- Child asks almost endless questions on topics related to sex.
- Knows too much about sex for age and stage of development.

### Self-exploration

- Self-stimulates herself/himself publicly.
- Sexually stimulates other people
- Causes harm to own genitals, rectum.
- Has an adult arousal quality in response to self-stimulating behaviour.

### Behaviour to others

- Forces or bullies other children to engage in sexual behaviour.
- Demands to see the genitals of other children or adults.
- Forces other children to touch genitals
- Dramatic play consists mainly of sad, angry, or aggressive behaviour.

### Bathroom/toilet behaviour

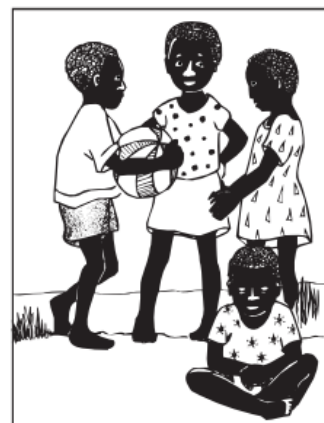
- Continuously smears feces on genitals.
- Continuously urinates in inappropriate places.
- Does not allow others privacy in the bathroom or bedroom.

### Relationships

- Imitates adults sexual behaviour.
- Physical contact with others causes anxiety.
- Talks about sex with adults, including strangers.

### Other signs include the following

- Generalized fear and mistrust of adults.
- Child feels sad.
- Child usually refuses to be touched by adults.
- Child shows destructive behaviour such as pulling out her own hair or biting himself or herself.
- Child starts avoiding the company of others.
- Child develops eating problems such as refusing to eat or eating more than usual.
- Child may have difficulties in getting sleep, sleep too much, or have bad dreams and wake up in the middle of the night crying.



- Child may change behaviour; for example, a normally confident and outgoing child may become shy and withdrawn or a normally shy, quiet child becomes aggressive and goes out looking for trouble.
- Child might tend to return to earlier childish behaviour such as wetting the bed at night or sucking a thumb.
- Child develops a habit of running away from home, school, or place of care.
- Child may want to kill herself (common among teenage girls).
- Child may hurt or avoid certain types of individuals, for example, men with certain characteristics such as facial hair.
- Child may hate own genitals and/or demand privacy in an aggressive manner.
- Child may sexualize all relationships (think of all relationships in a sexual manner).
- Child might hate being his/her own gender.
- Child may continuously use inappropriate language or socially unacceptable slang.

It is important for you to note that these signs are only a guide. You cannot assume that one or several of these types of behaviour always mean that a child is being sexually abused.

Furthermore, it is important to realize that some types of sexual behaviour are normal for children at certain ages. For example, toddlers and preschoolers often explore their own bodies or touch their own genitals to soothe themselves. They are curious about other people's bodies and may show their genitals to others. However, if children of this age show more extreme behaviour such as continuously self-stimulating, simulating sexual activity with their clothes off, or if they seem to know too much about sexuality for their age and stage of development, sexual abuse is a possibility.

### *Activity 6*

What are some of the results of child sexual abuse?

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Child sexual abuse has serious consequences. A child who has been sexually abused may:

- Contract sexually-transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS.
- Have an unwanted pregnancy.
- Be afraid of the opposite sex.
- Have too much interest in sex or become prostitutes.
- Have poor sexual relationships when they grow up.
- Become sexual abusers themselves.
- Develop low self-esteem.
- Become overprotective of their own children or fail to show enough love.

### *Activity 7*

Think of a child in your community that has been sexually abused. What did the child go through? How was the child affected?

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Child sexual abuse may remain hidden due to the following:

- The child could have been threatened, bribed, or tricked to keep quiet.
- The child may be too young to talk.
- The child feels so guilty that she is ashamed to tell anyone.
- The child might have tried to tell someone but the person would not listen or believe her (unfortunately this is very common).
- The child may have blocked the sexual abuse out of her mind as a way of dealing with the problem.
- Some cultural and traditional practices make women and children vulnerable to abuse.

## Physical Abuse

Physical abuse occurs when children are hurt or injured, usually intentionally, by caregivers or other people entrusted to take care of them. It can also occur when a child is given substances such as alcohol or an overdose of medicine to make the child sleep while a couple goes out with friends.

### Activity 8

How will you know if a child has been physically abused?

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You may have mentioned any of the following:

#### Bruises

- Bruises on children who are not old enough to hurt themselves while trying to walk.
- Bruises on the backs of legs, the upper arms and chest, neck, head, or genitals.
- Bruises in area covered by clothing and showing, by their pattern, that a child has been hit with a belt buckle, rope or cord.
- Choke marks, pinch marks, grab marks, or fingernail scratches.

#### Fractures

- Fractures in children under the age of one are often caused by abuse.
- Improperly healed fractures and/or many old or new fractures can indicate repeated abuse, especially if the parents or guardians say they didn't know about the injuries.

#### Head and internal injuries

- Head injuries often indicate abuse, especially in infants.
- Abused children may have injuries to their internal organs, such as their spleen, intestines, kidneys, bladder, or pancreas.

#### Burns

- Burns are difficult to assess because they can occur when a child falls against a stove or is accidentally put into bath water that is too hot. However, intentional burning also

occurs. Pay attention to the explanation that the parent or guardian gives and see if it makes sense given the location and shape of the burn.

- Cigarette burns that occur on the abdomen, genitals, and bottoms of feet are often intentional.

## Child Labour

In the Bahamas, children are traditionally supposed to help do some work for the family such as washing dishes, throwing out garbage, filling jugs at the water pump or helping to look after younger brothers or sisters.

The United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (**UNICEF**) says that child labour happens when the work given to a child is more than what that child can do considering his/her age and can cause harm to the child. Child labour happens when the child is treated unfairly so as to make money out of him/her. Child labour includes:

- Forcing an underage child to work full time.
- Paying less than an adult gets paid for the same work.
- Putting too much responsibility on a child.
- Forcing a child to work/live on the streets.

Child labour usually causes serious harm to children's physical, psychological, and mental health.

In Janae's story, we see Janae doing jobs that require too much responsibility for her age. This would be considered child labour.

## Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse occurs when children are denied the love, security, and company of friends and caring relatives. This happens when children are constantly criticized, belittled, and ignored. They do not receive praise and affection from caregivers or other people entrusted to take care of them. Their possessions or pets may be destroyed. Emotional abuse is different from physical abuse, as there are no physical injuries or bodily harm. Therefore, caregivers often do not realize or recognize this type of abuse.

### Activity 9

How will you know that a child has been emotionally abused?

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Your answer may have included different kinds of behaviour. Children that suffer from emotional abuse lack self-confidence. They have feelings of being unworthy, unwanted, and unloved. They may respond to this in one or two ways: They may become aggressive and hostile, with many behavioural problems, or they might turn their anger inward and become depressed, withdrawn, and even consider suicide. They may develop health problems such as headaches, asthma, nervous habits, and sleep disturbances. Children who are emotionally abused usually do not feel free to be in the company of others and may perform poorly at school.

Besides Janae being physically abused, she is also emotionally abused, as her aunt continues to insult and rebuke her. By keeping her away from school, the aunt prevents her from having normal experiences with children her age.

**Watch Video: Emotional and Verbal Child Abuse (4:14 Minutes):**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEwnGqMlbg>

## Neglect

### Activity 10

How will you know if a child has been neglected?

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Neglect occurs when children are not provided with the basic needs of life. For example, not taking a sick child to a clinic when you are able to do so and the clinic is free of charge is considered to be neglect. Denying children meals, shelter, or clothing or leaving them alone for a long time are also forms of neglect.

Parents may neglect children because they:

- Lack knowledge of how to look after children.
- Are not able to plan properly for the family's needs.
- Have low self-esteem.
- Were neglected or abused as children.
- Suffer from a mental handicap or illness.
- Drink too much alcohol or are involved with drugs.
- Lack support from their family and community.



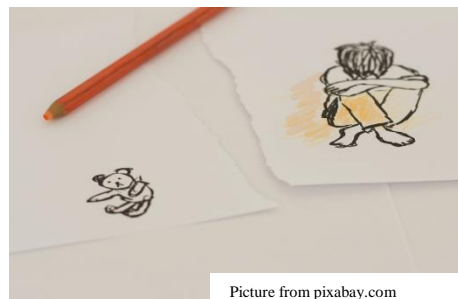
Picture from pixabay.com

Neglect is different from other forms of abuse. Where in other forms of abuse a caregiver does something he/she is not supposed to do, in neglect the caregiver fails to do what he/she is supposed to do.

### Signs and Characteristics of Child Neglect

A child who is neglected may:

- Be untidy or dirty.
- Be sickly.
- Look sad and unusually withdrawn from others.
- Perform badly at school.
- Feel out of place among friends and other people.



Picture from pixabay.com

Usually if one child in a home is being neglected, the others will be too.

### Activity 11

Now that you have learned about the various forms of abuse, let us reflect and think through this issue of child abuse. Have you ever known a child who was abused – whether physically, emotionally, or by neglect? How was the child affected?

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Have you ever done something to a child that could have been considered abusive? When you think about that now, why do you think you did that? What might you have done differently?

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### *Activity 11 Cont'd*

How might your personal experiences affect the way you deal with a child who is abused?

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How might your personal experiences affect the way you would deal with an adult who is abusive to a child?

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## **LESSON TWO**

### **Child Abuse and Community Standards**

Each community has different customs and ways of raising children, so what is considered maltreatment in one place might not be in another. For example, in many countries any physical punishment of children at any age is abusive and against the law. On the other hand, in some African and Caribbean countries it is regarded as neglect if one does not ever beat or hit a child. So it is important that we consider the practices of a particular community before we conclude that a particular behaviour/practice represents maltreatment or child abuse.

However, it is also important to understand that even though some practices are culturally acceptable, they may still be harmful to children. For example, in the Bahamas beating a child for misbehaving is common and is taken as showing parents' concern for the child. But for these children, as well as for children elsewhere, frequent and severe physical beatings will result in injury, as well as feelings of rejection and worthlessness.

In some cultures girl-children are supposed to stay home and do house work rather than go to school. For this reason they do not get an education.

Most children are abused because of poverty, unemployment, and other social problems. In addition, diseases such as HIV/AIDS have worsened the burden of care for families.

There are many children who look after their younger brothers and sisters as a result of deaths of their parents or become caregivers themselves for ill parents before the parents die. The problem of HIV/AIDS has made children particularly vulnerable to all forms of abuse, with the problem made worse by the burden on the extended family support system, which can no longer cope with the burden of care (as seen in Janae's story).

In addition, day-to-day care-giving is influenced a lot by broad cultural values. Some common values are as follows:

1. Children are highly valued as a joy to the family and fulfillment as well as economic assets.
2. Childcare is considered the responsibility of the community. If parents are unwilling or unable to care for the child, other relatives or neighbours can take over.
3. Young children are not expected to be responsible for their actions. In some cultures almost any punishment of children younger than three, four, or even seven is considered abusive and unnecessary.
4. Violence of any kind between adults, between children, and between caregivers and children is not approved.

In some countries it has been found that children are considered a financial and personal burden, so it is not a surprise that *child abuse occurs more often as family incomes fall*. This is particularly true for neglect and physical abuse and especially for children below the age of six.

### Activity 12

Think of the way children are raised in your community. Explain any practices that might be unacceptable in another community.

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## LESSON THREE

### Coping Strategies

Children are deeply affected by abuse and find various ways to deal with their feelings of unworthiness, inadequacy, and hopelessness.

Some of these are:

- Child mistrusts adults.
- Child refuses to be touched by adults.
- Child shows destructive behaviour.
- Child avoids the company of others.
- Child becomes aggressive and goes out looking for trouble.
- Child develops a habit of running away from home, school, or place of care.
- Child wants to kill herself (common among teenage girls).

Any situation or problem can affect the child in more than one area of the child's life. The effect in one area can also spread to other areas.

As caregivers, we need to know how to help children cope as well as possible with the abuse that has happened to them. When we think of helping children or how they are coping we need to know in which area or areas they need help.

To remember the various potential areas of need, we can use the acronym HELPING:

- H Health, diet/food, sickness.
- E Emotions, feeling, expression, coping.
- L Learning, study, education.
- P Personal relationship – how they relate at home and school, socialization.
- I Interests, imagination, hobbies, recreation, self-image, how they feel about themselves.
- N Need to know, thinking capacity, intellectual level.
- G Guidance in behaviour: Is the behaviour age-appropriate, does the behaviour get the children into trouble?

Each letter in the word HELPING reminds us of a different area where children may have needs and we might be able to help.

### Activity 13

Myah is an 8year-old girl who lost her mother 6 months ago. She is living with an aunt. When she goes to visit her grandmother, the grandmother is concerned that she looks very depressed, refuses to eat, looks thin, and does not talk much. She is not interested in doing anything. She sits quietly most of the time. When her grandmother asks her about her recent grades in school, she learns that Myah's performance at school has dropped.

As a caregiver how will you assess Myah's needs using the term HELPING? What could be done to help her?

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Did your assessment include these terms?

**Health:** Does not eat, looks thin, and needs food.

**Emotion:** Depressed – needs to be encouraged to talk and share her problems.

**Learning:** Grades in school dropping – needs encouragement and extra help to study.

**Personal:** Does not talk much – relationships need to be encouraged with others, including the caregiver.

**Interest:** the child does not look interested in anything. The caregiver could interest her in expressing her feelings through drawing or stories.

**Need to know:** Does not talk much, looks depressed – needs to explore her thinking through play and drawing. If necessary, refer for specialized care.

**Guidance in behaviour:** If the child remains withdrawn after your support, you can refer her to a counsellor.

This HELPING model of needs assessment helps us look at the different areas of need of the child. However, it is important to remember that all these needs are interrelated and we must see the child as a whole person. This model helps us to focus our helping efforts on immediate needs to help the child cope well.

## LESSON FOUR

### Resilient Children

A child's ability to cope seems to have much to do with resilience. To be resilient means being able to recover quickly from the adversities of life, even to be strengthened or transformed by them. Researchers believe that all children have the capacity for resiliency and that certain life conditions strengthen that capacity. This means that one of the jobs of caregivers is to provide children with conditions that help them develop resiliency.

How does a child become resilient?

Children cope better with problems, including abuse, when they have three capabilities:

- The ability to understand the adverse effects of a given situation (such as abuse or the death of a parent) on themselves.
- The ability to believe that they can cope with a given crisis because they know they have some control over what happens.
- The ability to give a deeper meaning to what has happened in their lives.

These capabilities do not just happen. They depend on the child's outer and inner resources and they have to be encouraged by the caregiver.

#### *Activity 14*

Can you think of three outside resources or things that could help build resilience in a child?

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Did you think of the following?

1. A close and secure relationship with the same caregiver.
2. If the child has lost parents, having a close relationship with the remaining family members.
3. Enough food, shelter, clothing, and health services.
4. Access to education.
5. A stable income and financial base for the household.
6. Links to his or her cultural community and beliefs.
7. A stable and safe home/living environment.

Research has found that feeling close to one dependable adult – whether a caregiver or family member – is the most important factor in a child’s resilience.

Children that have been abused, especially orphans, need to have access to resources to build their resilience. Their inner strength helps them understand, deal with, and resolve the traumatic events that have happened in their lives.

### **Activity 15**

Could you think of some possible characteristics or resources that might help build a child’s inner strength?

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Your answer could include the following:

#### **Understanding and expressing emotions.**

Resilient children usually understand their emotions and are free to express their emotions in words or actions (for example, a child will say, “I am sad”).

#### **A good autobiographical memory.**

The autobiography memory is the memory in which we save personal memories about life and our life histories. A resilient child can easily remember the good relationships, times of kindness, and his/ her role models, for example teachers or parents. The child is even able to remember some of the achievements of the past that made the child feel good about him or herself.



### **Feeling a sense of belonging.**

Resilient children know where they belong. Such children are rooted at home and in the community and have a sense of their own culture, whether past or present. These children are able to fit in with a family, small group, or community. Resilient children are able to look for and find emotional support from other people. They are self-confident and also confident of other people's support; for example, from peers and the caregiver. The support required changes with time and need.

### **Interest in others.**

A resilient child feels the need to help others. The child has feelings for others and offers help.

### **A strong value and cultural belief system.**

Resilient children know what is right and wrong and they sense what is unacceptable and acceptable behaviour. They also may have a strong spiritual belief which may include faith in God. This belief system is usually influenced by the child's upbringing and culture. Some children will develop and identify themselves with belief in a certain culture or political leader. This is common with older children.

### **Self confidence.**

A resilient child has confidence in his/her own abilities and identities and has a good sense of humour. She will say "I can" instead of "I can't".

### **Creativity and curiosity.**

Children that are resilient are curious and eager to learn. They are creative and use their imagination. They are able to use available materials in their environment to ensure their survival. Resilient children are able to imagine the future and this gives them hope for something to live for.

As caregivers, we must understand that resilient children get their strength from their inner being and our role is to encourage and promote the development of this inner being.



## LESSON FIVE

### Developing Resilience in Children

Resilience should be encouraged and developed in all children. All children are born with the ability to be resilient, but resilience has to be developed, just like any other capabilities.

As caregivers we need to promote and encourage resilience in the children we care for. Resilience also helps children cope with hardships and suffering that they may come across in the future when they are adults.

#### Activity 16

Can you think of any ways in which you can help a child in your care develop resilience?

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Here are some points you might have included in your answer:

- *Provide a safe, nurturing environment in which the child's needs are met.*  
A child should have an environment in which basic needs are met, like access to health care, education, and other social services. It is important for the child to feel a sense of safety and belonging at home.
- *Spend time with children, listen to them instead of talking about them, and show interest in them and what they do, think and feel.*  
Play is a good way of communicating with children and is important for child development. By showing interest in them and answering questions we encourage children to discover their own potential, creativity, and interests.
- *Teach children how to communicate with other people.*  
Children usually learn from adults. By showing children how to express feelings and solve problems, we encourage them to become responsible for what they do and say. We are also helping them to understand other people's feelings and learn respect for others.

- *Allow children to be children and to make mistakes.*  
Children learn from mistakes just as adults do. Help children to recognize and understand their mistakes. Encourage them to correct what they did wrong. Children will often repeat the same mistakes, but continue to encourage them to correct their mistakes. Support them as they deal with negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviour.
- *Involve children in day-to-day activities.* We need to involve children in all day-to-day activities including family plans, religious matters. We also need to involve them in decision-making about matters involving them.
- *Teach the child family routines.*  
It helps the child if the caregiver provides a routine for the day and expects the child to stick to that. If the child moves from one home to another the child's routine needs to follow.
- Support children's spiritual lives.  
Children who have a strong spiritual life are said to become more resilient than those who do not. Encourage and support children in the spiritual or religious beliefs of the family.
- *Acknowledge children for what they are, not for what they do.*  
Give praise to the child and express acknowledgement of the child as a wonderful person.
- *Trust the child.*  
Show that you trust the child as they confide in you, especially about child sexual abuse. You can make statements such as "I believe you".

A resilient child is better able to cope well with child abuse and other problems they may experience.

## LESSON SIX

### Helping Abused Children Cope

There are many ways that a caregiver can help children cope with the abuse they have suffered.

#### Counselling

Good counselling can help a child who has been abused feel better again. A child who has been abused – especially sexually – needs you to help him/her regain self-control, rebuild self-esteem, and live a more satisfying life. In a case where a child has been sexually abused, saying the following can help:

- I believe you.
- I am sorry that this happened to you.
- I am going to try to help you. Thank you for telling me.
- I want you to know that it is not your fault. The person who did this to you is the one who is wrong and needs to be punished.

In addition, you can:

- Encourage the child to talk about it. Talking about what has happened is very important for the child's recovery. The child can express this in various ways. Young children like drawing to express what has happened to them.
- Treat the child gently and answer the child questions honestly.
- If the child is physically hurt, help him/her to get medical attention.
- Support and encourage the child to express his /her feelings.
- If you feel angry about the situation, make it clear to the child that you are not angry with him/her.
- Encourage the child to make his/her own decisions as far as possible and respect those decisions.
- Support her/him but do not take over her/his life.



#### Support Groups

A support group is made up of people who were abused as children and others interested in helping abused children. The members of a support group meet regularly to talk about their experiences and what it means to live with them.

Support groups can play an important role in helping children cope with the effects of abuse.

The caregiver must know that support groups require sensitive and careful handling to help people feel free to talk about their personal issues.

### ***Activity 17***

What support systems are there in your community to help abused children?

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### **Specialized Care**

As a caregiver you may not be able to deal with an abused child's problem. In that case it will be necessary to refer to someone else with specialized training in helping such children. Refer to the list of organizations offering services to abused children at the back of this unit. Do some research yourself, so you will have the information and contact details close at hand when / if needed.

### ***Activity 18***

Now that you have learned about helping a child cope, how will you know if the child is coping well?

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Children who are coping well will:

- Feel good about themselves.
- View themselves and their work in a positive light.
- Have healthy relationships or make friendships.
- Tolerate frustrations.
- Ask for help when needed.
- Communicate properly with others.
- Think of life positively and have hope for the future.

If the child is coping well then the child is becoming resilient (refer to the notes on resilience).

## LESSON SEVEN

### Recognizing Danger Signs that a Child Is Not Coping

A child who is not coping may show signs or types of behaviour that are very different from “normal” reaction.

#### *Activity 19*

Can you think of any signs and types of behaviour that would show the child is not coping well?

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As we have learned, some children are more resilient than others. Sometimes children experience severe reactions to abuse. These are reactions that are deep or intense and are prolonged.

The following are some serious danger signs:

1. The reaction to abuse is very intense or very strong.
2. The reaction lasts for a long time and does not change in its intensity.
3. The child’s behaviour changes dramatically.
4. The child does not seem to have any inner strength or resource to protect her/or himself.
5. The child might become depressed – feels sad all the time and cries a lot, may refuse to eat altogether. May talk a lot about wanting to die, having suicidal tendencies.
6. The child may also act in an anti-social manner: sexual promiscuity (sex with many partners), exhibiting adult sexual tendencies, or abusing substances like drugs and alcohol.
7. The child becomes ill. The child’s sickness might be unexplainable or have no medical reason.

### Activity 20

If you notice these dangers signs what can you do to help?

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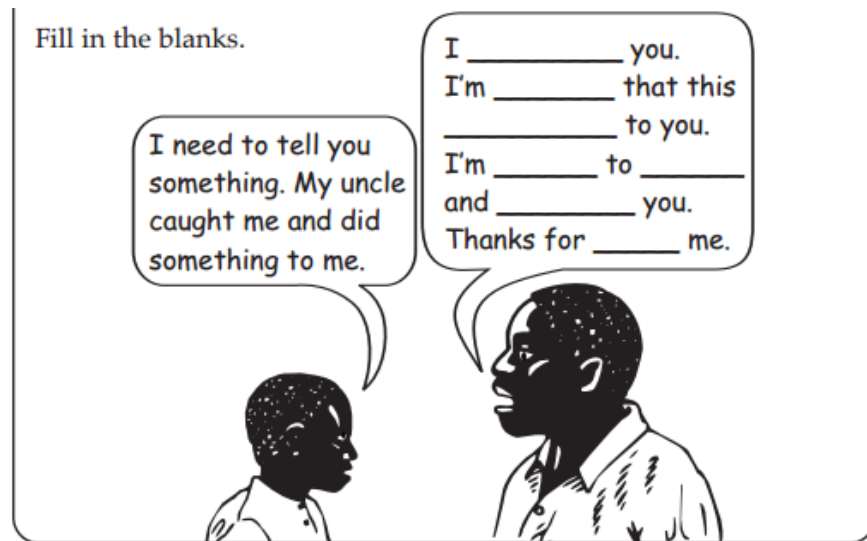
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Did your answer include these ideas?

- Talk to the child and offer help.
- Suggest that the child needs specialized care.
- Refer the child to a trained counsellor.

It is important as a caregiver to identify the danger signs so that you are able to help the child cope well. Children need a lot of meaningful support from people around them in order to cope well. These people include family and community and they should be sensitive to children's needs.



Your answer might be something like this: “I believe you. I’m sorry that this happened to you. I’m here to help and support you. Thanks for telling me.”



## LESSON EIGHT

### Interventions on Child Abuse

#### How to Prevent Child Abuse

How can you prevent child abuse in your community?

Below are some of the activities that you can do to help prevent child abuse:

- Form community groups to find means of protecting children from abuse.
- Watch over children when their parents have gone out.
- If you know that your neighbours and their children are out, ask the children to let you know if they return home earlier than their parents.
- Talk to children about where they can go for help.
- Form links (come together) with and reach out to families in difficult situations.
- Organize activities to improve good neighbourliness and look at issues that contribute to child abuse, such as unemployment, alcohol abuse, etc.
- Find out about other services with which you and the community can work.
- Organize community awareness campaigns against child abuse.
- Establish community support groups for abused children and their families.
- Look for good ways to bring up children.
- Ask the government to provide essential services such as housing, water, and playgrounds for children.
- Establish safe homes – safe places for children to go in case of abuse.
- Work with schools, churches and other individuals and groups in the community to build awareness about child abuse.

#### *Activity 22*

Name two specific actions that you will take to help keep children safe.

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## What to Do When a Child Has Been Abused

### Activity 23

We saw in Chanda's story how her husband sexually abused both her children. What steps would you take as caregiver to help Chanda and her children?

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A caregiver should be well informed about child abuse issues. This information or knowledge can be obtained through training, meetings, and other sources. There are a number of things that a caregiver can do when a child has been abused. A caregiver can:

- Call the police or social worker. In this case, the caregiver should record the particulars of the case such as case number, name of the officer taking up the case, and other relevant details.
- Report the case to and work in conjunction with relevant authorities such as social welfare and other agencies interested in child welfare issues.
- Secure any evidence in cases where a child has been sexually abused or raped.
- Become an activist or change agent for child safety.
- Call for help from the neighbourhood whenever necessary.
- Offer psychosocial support to people who have been abused.
- Avoid asking difficult questions, as this might make the victim feel guilty and make the situations worse.
- Give practical help to your neighbour in time of emergency.
- Give information to people affected by child abuse on child support grants, medical examinations, and treatment; for example, HIV prevention or pregnancy tests.
- Offer care and support in time of sickness to your neighbours and watch over their children.
- Offer our services honestly and with the respect due to all.

### Activity 24

Develop a programme to help abused children in your community, using some of the interventions mentioned above.

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## LESSON NINE

### Referral System

#### *Activity 25*

Where do you and other caregivers refer children who have been abused and need help?  
List a few organizations below:

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There are agencies and organizations that offer help of different kinds in the area of child welfare. Did you think of some of these?

- **Child Protection Unit**  
Alexander House, Robinson Road  
Nassau, New Providence  
Tel. (242) 397-2550  
Opening Hours - 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday - Friday
- **Department of Social services**  
Clarence Bain Building, Thompson Boulevard  
Nassau, New Providence  
Tel. (242) 326-0526, 326-0451  
Opening Hours - 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday - Friday
- **School Welfare Division**  
Alexander House, Robinson Road  
Nassau, New Providence  
The Bahamas  
Tel. (242) 397-2524  
Opening Hours - 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday
- **The National Hotline for Child Abuse** was established to provide service beyond office hours to children who may be at risk for abuse, abandonment or neglect. Persons wishing to report cases of actual or suspected child abuse can call this 24-hour hotline daily including weekends and holidays: (242) 322-2763.

## Summary

- Child abuse is common and can have many types of forms. They include physical, neglect, emotional, child labour, and sexual abuse.
- There are many signs and characteristics that can help you to identify child abuse according to the type or form that happened.
- Children who are abused will cope in different ways. However, some children may cope well and be resilient, while others may not. For children to cope well they will need help and support from you, the caregiver.
- A caregiver can take action against child abuse in the community. For some actions you will need help from others in the community.
- You cannot deal with the problem of child abuse alone. You will need to work with different people, organizations, the government, community and other service providers.

## Glossary

**Child abuse:** Occurs when an actions or failure to act by a parent or caregiver results in death, serious physical / emotional harm, sexual abuse / exploitations, or presents a risk of serious imminent harm.

**Child labour:** Employment of children under the age of physical maturity in jobs requiring long hours of work.

**Emotional abuse:** Happens when a parent or other person responsible for a child's well-being uses words and feeling to strike out, embarrass, shame, insult, or reject the child.

**Neglect:** occurs when a child's basic needs for love, food, warmth, safety, education, and medical attention are not met by parents or caregivers.

**Physical abuse:** Happens when a parent or someone else responsible for a child willfully or negligently injures the child.

**Resiliency:** The ability to recover quickly from adversity and even to be strengthened or transformed by it.

**Sexual abuse:** Occurs when a parent or other person responsible for a child involves the child in any kind of sexual activity.

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# **Module 9:**

# **Dealing with**

# **Substance**

# **Abuse**

## Introduction

Substance abuse is a problem in our society today. Many adults abuse alcohol, cocaine, heroin, prescription, drugs, and other substances. People abuse substances for a variety of reasons; for example, to forget and escape from problems such as unemployment. Such abuse is especially common in situations where there is little chance of improving one's lot in life.

You are probably aware that helping children avoid substance abuse is vitally important to ensure they do not get addicted to drugs, alcohol, or other substances in the future. You may encounter children/ youth that have already abused or are currently abusing substances. This unit will help you work with them, giving you some ideas about preventing further abuse and helping them overcome current habits.

The first lesson explains what substance abuse is, and the second outlines the ill effects that substance abuse has on the abuser and on society in general. Lesson 3 looks at reasons that people abuse substances, Lesson 4 at ways to tell if a person is abusing substances, and Lesson 5 at how to help people avoid getting involved in substance abuse and talking about it in a constructive and positive manner. The last lesson gives ideas to prevent substance abuse by children/ youth before they get involved in an unhealthy, destructive lifestyle dominated by addictive substances.

## Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Describe substance abuse and identify substances that are abused.
2. Describe signs/symptoms in children who abuse substances.
3. Explain the consequences of substance abuse.
4. Identify strategies that assist children who abuse substances.
5. Organize a program for the prevention of substance abuse.
6. Identify available referral networks for substance abuse.

## LESSON ONE

### What Is Substance Abuse?

#### *Activity 1*

Tandi has been caring for her niece, Stacey, since Stacey's mother died when she was 6 years old. Stacey is now 13. She was very upset after her mother died, but soon settled into Tandi's household where she was pleasant and helpful. She was a very good student and had several good friends from school. At the beginning of the term, Stacey moved to a different school where she didn't know the other students. Tandi noticed that Stacey was unhappy but she knew it would take time for her to adjust. Instead, Stacey has started skipping school and her grades have dropped. She has become moody and often lashes out at Tandi and others in the family. Tandi wonders what has caused this change.

What do you think might be the cause(s) of Stacey's changed behavior? Think of as many possibilities as you can.

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There are several possible explanations for Stacey's behavior, and one of these is substance abuse. Use of substance- drugs, alcohol, or inhalants- can produce many of the changes that Tandi has noticed in her niece's behavior. To understand what substance abuse means, let us look at the meaning of the words use, misuse, and abuse.

“Use” is the application of a substance correctly or for its intended purpose.

“Misuse” is the application or utilization of an item or objects wrongly or for a purpose for which it is not intended, where such use has a tendency to cause harm.

Substance “abuse” can be described as the misuse of substances which have legitimate uses, but which can cause harm when misused. For example, certain drugs are useful as medicine, but may be harmful when taken for non-medical purposes. Adults often have a drink of alcohol on social occasions, but it is harmful and may be addictive when used habitually or excessively. Glue is useful to fasten things together, but very harmful when it is inhaled. Substance abuse

can also refer to the use of illegal substances, including “hard” drugs such as cocaine and heroin.

Substances which are commonly abused include:

- Glue
- Petrol
- Paint thinner
- Alcohol
- Marijuana (bhang, weed, hashish)
- Cocaine
- Heroin
- Valium- Diazepam
- Psychoactive drugs-depressants and stimulants

The kinds of harm that can result from substance abuse include:

- Family problems
- Problems in the community
- Problems in the school
- Legal problems- arrested for possession and use
- Financial problems- stealing to get money to purchase the abuse substance
- Health problems- chest problems, mental instability, unprotected sex which may lead to unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS.

### *Activity 2*

What is the difference between substance use and substance abuse?

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What substances are commonly abused by youth in your community?

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What substances are commonly abused by adults in your community?

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## LESSON TWO

### Why Should We Be Concerned About Substance Abuse?

There are two main reasons why we should be concerned about substance abuse. One is the effect that abuse of substances has upon the individual. Substance abuse by youth can alter their lives permanently, destroying their health, productivity, and relationships with others. The other reason is the effect that widespread use of substances has on people around the abuser, and on the society in which they live.

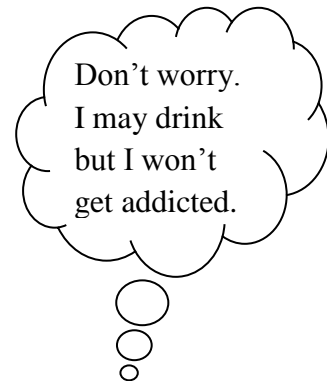
#### The Effects of Substance Abuse on Physical and Emotional Health

The abuse of substances can cause many physical and emotional problems. Inhalants such as glue, paint thinners and petrol, when used even once, can cause suffocation, visual hallucinations, and severe mood swings. When used over a period of time, the results can include hepatitis, nausea, nosebleeds, irreversible brain damage, nervous system damage, and death.

The long-term effects of alcohol abuse may include stomach ailments, skin problems, liver damage, memory loss, and heart and central nervous system damage. Over time, marijuana use can increase the risk of cancer and diminish sexual capacity. Appendix A, at the end of this unit, includes a more complete list of short and long-term effects of inhalants, marijuana, and alcohol.

The use of these substances is often addictive. This means that people who use the substances develop a greater need for them, and it becomes very difficult for them to break their habit. Unfortunately, children and youth seem to become dependent on substances more quickly than adults do. They are at risk to develop serious dependency problems if:

- There is a family history of substance abuse. Children may inherit a biological predisposition toward substance dependency. Apart from that, children who grow up in an environment where there is substance abuse have poor role modeling and are more likely to be exposed to violence, abuse, etc.
- They are depressed.
- They have low self-esteem.
- They feel like they don't fit in.



Recent research on brain development has shown us that the human brain is not completely developed until the late teens or early twenties. Because of this, youth may be less able to see the long-term consequences of their actions and to make decisions accordingly. Youth also lack life experience on which to base their decision-making.

Substance abuse eventually causes problems for individuals in their dealings with their family, community, and school. They may have difficulties with the law when they resort to illegal actions to get money to feed their addiction. Under the influence of substances, they may have unprotected sex, which may lead to unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and/or babies being born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) or Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE).

**Watch YouTube Video: The Teenage Brain is Primed for Addiction (2:21 Minutes)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UNAbf3J3IR0>

### **The Effects of Substance Abuse on Our Community and Society**

Young people who drink alcohol and/or use and sell drugs create an atmosphere that is dangerous and unsafe for other members of society. Also, they can be disruptive and violent when they are under the influence. They are less likely to become productive members of society because they are at risk of dropping out of school and often lack motivation and self-discipline. Dealing with the consequences of substance abuse, such as health problems and children born to parents who are unable to care for them, places stress on the resources of the community.

#### **Activity 3**

Think of an adult you know who abuses substances such as drugs or alcohol. What effect has substance abuse had on that person's life?

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Why do you think this person has not stopped abusing substances?

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## What Causes Substance Abuse?

### *Activity 4*

Why do you think youth abuse alcohol or drugs? List several reasons.

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- To reduce stress and forget about problems.
- To feel good.
- Because they are curious.
- To feel more grown up.
- To fit in.

### *Activity 5*

Look again at the story of Stacey, at the beginning of this unit. What are some of the reasons that Stacey might be particularly vulnerable to substance abuse?

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Substance abuse is more likely when a child lives with the stress of an unstable home or social environment, or where there are limited employment and recreational opportunities.

## How to Tell if Children or Youth Are Abusing Substances

### *Activity 6*

How can you tell if the youth you are working with is abusing substances? Write as many signs and symptoms as possible.

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Below is a checklist of some warning signs and symptoms of substance abuse that you should look out for. Does your list contain any of these items?

1. Smell of alcohol, smoke, or other chemicals (for example, glue) on the child's breath or clothing.
2. Obvious drunkenness, dizziness, or strange behavior.
3. Change in dress, appearance, and grooming.
4. Radical change in choice of friends.
5. Frequent arguments, sudden mood changes, and unexplained violent actions.
6. Change in eating and sleeping patterns.
7. Skipping school.
8. Failing grades.
9. Runaway and delinquent behavior.
10. Suicide attempts.
11. Abrupt changes- lower levels of self-discipline.
12. Unusual flare-ups or outbreaks of temper.
13. Withdrawal from responsibility.
14. General changes in overall attitude.
15. Deterioration of physical appearance and grooming.
16. Wearing of sunglasses at inappropriate times.
17. Continual wearing of long-sleeved garments (particularly in hot weather) or reluctance to wear short-sleeved attire when appropriate.
18. Associated with known substance abusers.
19. Unusual borrowing of money from friends.
20. Stealing small items from home or school.
21. Secretive behavior regarding actions and possessions. Poorly concealed attempts to avoid attention and suspicion such as frequent trips to storage rooms, restrooms, basements, etc.



22. Difficulty focusing, glazed appearance of the eyes.
23. Loss of memory (blackouts).
24. Availability and consumption of abused substance becomes the focus.
25. Changes in peer-group associations and friendships.
26. Impaired interpersonal relationships (unexplained termination of deep relationships and/or alienation from close family members).

It is important to remember that just because a young person you know is displaying one or two of the signs or symptoms in the checklist it does not necessarily mean that they are abusing substances – they could have other problems. The checklist only helps you to become more keenly aware about the young people in your care so that you can notice any drastic changes in their behavior patterns early.

Note: Appendix B contains a quiz to help teenagers decide if they have an alcohol problem. You may wish to use this quiz with children/youth that you suspect of having a drinking problem. It may help them to become aware of the problem.

## **Guiding Children's Attitudes towards Substance Abuse**

As a caregiver, you are probably asking yourself what you can do to help children under your care not be tempted to abuse substances. The following are some ways to guide children's thoughts and attitudes about substance abuse.

### **Be a Good Role Model**

Caregivers, like parents, are the most important role models in children's lives. What they say and do about substance abuse has a significant impact on the choices children make.

Your own habits and attitudes about tobacco, alcohol, and other substances speak louder than words. Take a few minutes to answer the following questions about your feelings and attitudes towards tobacco, alcohol, and other substances (circle YES/NO as appropriate).

1. Do you usually offer alcoholic drinks to friends and family when they come to your home? YES/NO
2. Do you frequently take medicine for minor aches and pains or if you are feeling sad or nervous? YES/NO
3. Do you take sleeping pills to fall asleep? YES/NO
4. Do you use alcohol or any other substance in a way you would not want your child to when he/she is an adult? YES/NO
5. Do you smoke cigarettes? YES/NO
6. Are you proud of how much you can drink? YES/NO
7. Do you make jokes about getting drunk or using drugs? YES/NO
8. Do you go to parties that involve a lot of drinking? YES/NO
9. Has your child ever seen you drunk? YES/NO
10. Do you let minors drink alcohol in your home? YES/NO

**Really Listen to Each Child**

Really listen to what each child has to say. Stop what you are doing and make eye contact. Encourage the child to share questions and concerns about tobacco, alcohol, and other substances. Do not do all the talking or give long lectures.

**Talk with Children Honestly**

In today's complex and busy world, it is interesting how few chances there are for parents or guardians to have conversations about substance abuse with children/youth. One way to talk to young people about substances is to take advantage of everyday "teachable moments." For example, if you and a child see a group of youth smoking marijuana and hanging out, talk about the possible negative effects of their actions.

**Watch TV with Children and Ask Them What They Think**

Whenever you see an anti-substance abuse commercial on TV, use it as an opening to talk with the children about substance abuse. Ask them what they think about the commercial.

Discuss a newspaper article or local event (perhaps an accident) in which substance abuse was a factor.

**Make Discussions about Tobacco, Alcohol, and Other Substances Part of Your Daily Conversation**

Young people who don't know the facts about tobacco, alcohol, and other substances are at a greater risk of trying them. Be sure that you know the facts about substance abuse and how it can harm people. Clear up any wrong information, such as "everybody drinks" or "marijuana won't hurt you." Talk to them about the dangers of substance use and abuse! It is important to let children know that substance abuse will damage their bodies. Emphasize the health problems associated with substance abuse, such as: malnutrition, stomach ailments, increased risk of cancer, heart attacks, brain damage, nausea and vomiting, hepatitis or HIV/AIDS transmitted through shared needles.

Discuss how the need for peer-group acceptance can lead to substance abuse.

**Help Children Develop Strong Values**

Children who decide not to use alcohol or other substances often make this decision because they have strong convictions against the use of these substances – convictions based on a value system. Be clear about your own values and explain to the children why you choose a particular course of action and how that choice reflects your values.

**Be Clear about Rules**

Children want you to talk to them about substances. State your position clearly. If you're not clear, they may be tempted to use them. Tell children that you don't want them to use alcohol, tobacco, and other substances because you love them. Make it clear that this rule holds true even at other people's houses.

Also discuss the consequences of breaking the rules- what the punishment will be and how it will be carried out. Consequences must go hand-in-hand with limits so that children understand that there are predictable outcomes to their choosing a particular course of action. The consequences you select should be reasonable and related to the violation. For example, if you catch children smoking, you might “ground” them, restricting their social activities for two weeks. You could then use this time to show them how concerned you are about the serious health consequences of smoking, and about the possibility of becoming addicted.

### **Teach Them How to Say “No”**

Help to prepare all youth and children for an occasion when peers or adults offer them drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, or other substances by helping them practice what they might say when confronted by this situation. For example, they might:

- Ask questions: “What is it?” “Where did you get it?”
- Say no firmly.
- Give reasons: “No thanks, I’m not into that.”
- Suggest other things to do (play a game).
- Leave (go home, go to class, join other friends).

Help the youth develop a strong sense of self-worth. Look for all the good things in a youth—and then tell the youth how proud you are. Praise the child’s efforts as well as successes. Emphasize the things children do right, instead of focusing on what’s wrong. Making a few mistakes is a normal part of growing up, so try not to be too critical when a child or youth makes a mistake. Gradually allow youth to make more decisions on their own. Ask for their opinions sometimes.

Discuss the importance of being an individual and the meaning of real friendships. Help youth to understand that they do not have to do something wrong just to feel accepted. A strong sense of self-worth will help youth to say no to tobacco, alcohol, and other substances.

### **Teach Coping Skills**

Respect a youth’s feelings. Pay attention, and be helpful during periods of loneliness or doubt. Offer advice about handling strong emotions and feelings. Help youth cope with emotions by letting them know that feelings will change. Explain that mood swings are not really bad, and they won’t last forever. Model how to control mental pain or tension without the use of tobacco, alcohol, or other substances.

### **Get to Know Them**

Get to know children and youth. Find out how their day was, what happened in school, or with their friends. Know where they are at all times. Go to their events; for example, sports games, plays, school shows. Play games with them. Know who their friends are.

Youth won’t always be ready to talk just because you are ready to listen. To provide opportunities for youth to open up to you, you need to spend time with them. When they have concerns, you need to really listen and try to understand what things are like for them.

Look for ways to get children and youth involved in athletics, hobbies, school clubs, and other activities that reduce boredom and excess free time. Encourage positive friendships and interests. Look for activities that you and the youth can do together.

### **Team up with Parents/ Guardians**

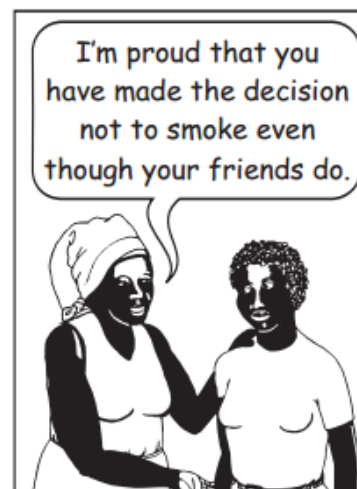
Work with youth's parents/ guardians to build an anti-substance abuse environment for them. When parents/ guardians join together against substance abuse, they are much more effective than when they act alone. One way is to form a parent group with the parents of a youth or child's friends. The best way to stop a child from abusing substances is to stop his/her friends from using them too.

### **Encourage Peer Support**

Children and youth can encourage one another to lead substance-free lives. Encourage them to talk with one another about the danger of substance abuse and to help one another find healthy ways to deal with the pressures in their lives.

### **Know What to Do if Children Abuse Substances**

Realize that children may abuse substances. Learn the signs of substance abuse. Take seriously any concerns you hear from friends, teachers, or other kids about a child's possible substance abuse. Trust your instincts. If you truly feel that something is wrong with a child, it probably is. If there's a problem, seek professional help.



### **Personal Exploration**

Many of the children and youth that you work with may already have experimented with various substances. Whether they come to you for help or you find out about their activities in another way, you will need to be prepared to work with them in a constructive way.

We know that one of the keys to being an effective counsellor is to know ourselves. When we understand the experiences and beliefs that we take with us into a counselling situation, we are better able to set them aside and really pay attention to the young person we are counselling.



Almost all of us either know someone who has an addiction or have struggled with one ourselves. This means we take a lot of "baggage" into a counselling situation. If we have an addiction that we haven't recognized, we might tell ourselves that a young person really doesn't have a problem. If we have managed to overcome an addiction, we may be impatient with others who are less successful. If we have a dear relative whose life was ruined by drugs or alcohol, we may overreact to a young person's substance abuse.

Answer the questions in the following activity as honestly as possible.

### Activity 6

Name someone you know quite well who abuses substances. What substances are they?

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What are some of the types of behaviour that tell you this person is abusing substances?

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What impact has the substance abuse had on this person's life?

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How has it affected his or her family or other people close to this person?

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Is this person aware that he or she has a substance abuse problem? How do you know?

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Has this person ever tried to quit abusing substances? What was that like? Was he/she successful?

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### Activity 6 cont'd

Do you use, or have you used, alcohol or drugs? If so, have you ever abused these substances? What are your reasons for saying that you have abused, rather than just used, these substances?

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What thoughts and feelings do you have about substance abusers and their lifestyle?

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**What do your own reactions tell you about the values and beliefs you have about substance abuse?**

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What are some things that, because of your own history and beliefs, you need to remember when you are counselling a young person who may have a substance abuse problem?

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## Talking with Young People about Substance Abuse

Remember Stacey, the 13 year old we met at the beginning of this unit? Stacey was a good student who was pleasant and helpful around the house. Now she is moody, skipping school, and her grades have dropped. Her aunt, Tandi, worries about this change in her niece.

Now Tandi's friend mentions that she has seen Stacey with a group of youth who are known to use alcohol and marijuana. Around the same time, Aunt Tandi notices that small amounts of money are missing out of her purse. Although she finds it hard to believe, she begins to wonder if Stacey might also be abusing substances. How could she know if it is true? What can she do if it is true?

Aunt Tandi decides that she will talk to her niece, Stacey, about her suspicion that Stacey has been smoking marijuana and drinking alcohol. She plans carefully how she will do this, as she wants to be able to talk openly with Stacey without her becoming defensive.

Aunt Tandi chooses a time when they are alone together in the kitchen after dinner. She asks Stacey if she would have a few minutes to talk about something important. Stacey makes up her face, but agrees.

Aunt Tandi invites Stacey to sit at the table with her. Aunt Tandi's manner is calm, caring, and attentive. Aunt Tandi says, "I've noticed that you have been acting different lately. You don't seem to care as much about your appearance and you've missed school 5 times this month." Stacey protests that school is boring and she's not learning anything new. Aunt Tandi continues, "We seem to be arguing a lot of the time and I wish we could enjoy being together the way we used to." Stacey looks down at the table and doesn't respond.

"I know that you were unhappy about leaving your friends from your last school."

Stacey replies, "I have new friends now."

"So you're not feeling as lonely now?" Aunt Tandi responds.

"I'm okay," Stacey says sullenly.

"I've been concerned about you," Aunt Tandi says, "Because of what's happening at school and also because I've noticed that several times there has been money missing from my purse."

Stacey looks startled and defensive. "That wasn't me," she says quickly.

"It sounds like you know who it was," Aunt Tandi replies calmly.

Stacey is agitated. "I didn't say that," she shouts. "I said I didn't do it." Then she dissolves into tears, puts her head down on the table and sobs.

Aunty Tandi moves closer to her and says gently, “You seem very sad, Stacey. Would you like to tell me what’s happening?”

Stacey sobs out her story: she was shunned as the “new girl” in her new school. Finally two girls, Millie and April, befriended her. They would miss school to spend time with some older boys and the group would drink alcohol and do drugs. Finally the group told her that she needed to contribute if she was going to drink with them, so she stole money from Aunty Tandi’s purse to buy alcohol. Aunty Tandi listens attentively. To encourage Stacey to continue talking and to ensure she is understanding, she asks questions that check on feelings: “It sounds like you were happy to have some friends. Am I right?” or clarify content, “So you would wait with Millie at the corner while April went with the boys to buy alcohol.

As Stacey talks and Aunty Tandi listens, it becomes clear that Stacey is becoming increasingly uncomfortable with the group and their activities. She would like to end her involvement with them but is afraid of repercussions from the group and of once again having no friends at school. Aunty Tandi does not hurry Stacey to a solution, but listens and asks questions like “What do you think might happen if you told Millie and April that you didn't want to be friends with them?” and “Are you worried that they might try hurt you?” She wants to gain as clear a picture as possible of the situation Stacey finds herself in and how Stacey is feeling.

Once they have discussed the situation thoroughly, Aunty Tandi summarizes the problem and asks Stacey if she has understood correctly. She asks, “Do you have any ideas about how you would like to handle this?” and “Is there something I can do to help you?” Together they come up with a plan, which includes spending time with her friends from her former school and some strategies for making other friends at her new school. She practices what she will say to Millie and April when they ask her to come out with them. Aunty Tandi and Stacey agree to keep talking about what is happening, and Aunty Tandi assures Stacey that she will help her in any way she can.

### *Activity 7*

In this counselling situation, what are some of the things that Aunty Tandi did to help Stacey talk with her about what is happening?

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Your answer might include:

- She chooses a time to talk with Stacey when they are alone and unhurried.
- She checks with Stacey that it is a good time to talk.
- She remains calm.
- She states what she has seen and heard.
- She listens attentively and caringly.
- She does not make judgments about Stacey's behavior or that of her new friends. In later conversations, she will make sure that Stacey is aware of the possible consequences of substance abuse.
- She asks questions that help her understand Stacey's feelings, such as "I wonder if you were worried when that happened?"
- She is careful to clarify what Stacey is saying: "Do you mean that....?"
- She does not rush to a solution. She first ensures that she understands the situation fully and that Stacey has had enough time to be ready for help in finding a solution.
- She understands that Stacey is the one who will need to solve the problem and her role will be to support her.

These are some ways Auntie Tandi makes it possible for Stacey to talk with her about what is happening in her life. Stacey can trust that Auntie Tandi will try to understand her and will support her.

### *Activity 8*

Can you imagine how the discussion would be different if Auntie Tandi, instead of listening and supporting, made one of these responses?

1. "If you had not gone with those girls in the first place you would not have the problem now."  
(Blaming)

What Stacey might have felt:

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Stacey might have responded:

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### *Activity 8 cont'd*

2. You need to get your act together because if you do not finish school you will not have any kind of a future.” (Lecturing)

What Stacey might have felt:

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Stacey might have responded:

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3. “How could you be so dumb as to get involved with something like this?” (Name-calling)

What Stacey might have felt:

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Stacey might have responded:

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4. “If you do that again I’m going to ask your uncle to beat you.” (Threatening)

What Stacey might have felt:

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Stacey might have responded:

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*Activity 8 cont'd*

5. "I'm sure it will all turn out just fine." (Reassuring)

What Stacey might have felt:

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Stacey might have responded:

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6. "What you need to do is..." (Advice-giving)

What Stacey might have felt:

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Stacey might have responded:

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When we are counselling young people about substance abuse or any other issue, we need to approach them from an attitude of genuine caring and listening. We want to find out what things are like for them and why they are making the decisions they are making. If they feel that we really care about them, they may be able to admit that their decisions aren't working out very well and be willing to accept our help in figuring out how to do things differently.

We want to help young people draw on their inner resources in order to change their lives, and in order to do that we need to let them know that we have confidence in them. If we approach young people by blaming, threatening, name-calling, lecturing, or giving advice we are attacking their already shaky self-esteem by giving them the message that they aren't competent enough to make their own decisions.



Reassuring young people that a bad situation will work out in the end can simply tell them that we don't really understand the nature and difficulty of the problem.

Even when young people ask for our advice, it is better to ask them, "What ideas do you have?" than to give them your ideas right away. This tells them that you have confidence in their ideas, and helps them to think about which ideas might work best.

Of course, sometimes young people will need your help to deal with their abuse or help them find treatment. Then it will be important that you understand their situation clearly and know what resources are available.

Fortunately, Tandi's intervention with Stacey occurred early on in Stacey's experience of substance abuse. As we know, her continued involvement with this group of friends could have disastrous results including addiction, pregnancy, and crime.

Many children and youth do experiment with illegal substances, and fortunately many are able to stop with the help of supportive friends, relatives, and caregivers/counsellors.

### **Planning to Prevent Substance Abuse**

There are no guarantees that youth will not abuse substances, but as a caregiver or parent, you can influence them by:

- Not abusing substances yourself
- Providing guidance and clear rules about substance abuse.
- Spending time with youth, sharing the good and the bad times.
- Encouraging youth to support one another in leading healthy lifestyles.

All of these may help youth grow up free from the problems of substance abuse.

The routines you create and the activities you plan for young people can help to provide an environment that is secure, stimulating and fun-one where children have better things to do than engage in substance abuse.

To ensure that you have regular get-togethers with youth, you might try scheduling meetings. Rituals like having meals together, playing games, or going to school, can be opportunities for establishing better communication that is essential to help not to abuse substances.

Encourage youth to have fun and do worthwhile things outside the home. Avoid turning too much of youth's leisure time into chores.

### **Planning Activities for Children**

Children who are busy with interesting activities are much less likely to be drawn into substance abuse. As a caregiver working with children and /or youth, you need to be active and very creative. Children/youth people have a lot of energy and they want to be occupied.

#### *Activity 9*

The children/youth you are working with probably abused or have been exposed to substance abuse. How can you help them stay safe while having a good time?

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Your ideas might have included:

- Sports events
- Extra-curricular activities
- Religious activities
- Athletic clubs
- Volunteer work

### Activity 10

List some activities you could organize to keep youth occupied.

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What are some of the issues you need to consider when organizing an outing with children/youth to ensure that it is free of opportunities to abuse substances?

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When organizing outings, parties, camping trips, or field trips for children/youth you should consider the following guidelines:

- **Plan in advance.** Go over party plans some organized children/youth. Encourage them to plan some organized group activities or games.
- **Visit the venue.** Make sure you go to the proposed venue for the event to become familiar with it. If you feel it is not appropriate, change venues.
- **Arrange for supervision.** Ensure there are an adequate number of adults to supervise the children/youth. At least one adult should take care of 10 to 15 children/youth. If you have both boys and girls, ensure the adults are both male and female.
- **Develop a participant's list.** Together with the children/youth, prepare a list using set criteria that have been agreed upon (for example, consider attendance, age, sex, and discipline). Only those whose names are on the list may attend the party, trip, or workshop. This will help avoid an "open party" situation.
- **Set a time limit.** Set starting and ending time for the event. If it is an all-day event, ensure it ends early enough.
- **Set event "rules".** Discuss them with the children/youth before the event. Rules should include the following:
  - No glue, cigarettes, alcohol, or other drugs.
  - No one can leave the venue of the event and then return.
  - If indoors, lights are left on at all times.
  - Certain areas of the venue may be off limits unless accompanied by an adult.

- Know your responsibilities. Remember, you are legally responsible for anything that happens to who has been served alcohol or taken drugs when in your care or under your supervision. Help the children/youth feel responsible for this as well. Children/ youth who bring cigarettes, alcohol, or other drugs to the party should be asked to leave.
- Be there. Make your presence felt – walk around and let the children/youth know you are there.



### Resources to Help Substance-Addicted Children

If a young person is addicted to a substance, the problem may be too much for you to handle alone. Don't hesitate to seek professional help, such as a pediatrician, counsellor, support group, or treatment program.

#### Activity 11

What are some individuals or organizations in your community that could be helpful in dealing with substance abuse? Think of as many as you can.

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Now look at the list below for some more ideas:

**Dynamic & Life Support Process Groups for Substance Abuse**

Health Social Services  
Community Counseling & Assessment Centre  
Market and McPherson Streets  
Nassau, New Providence  
Tel. (242) 323-3293/5  
Fax. (242) 356-6551  
Office Hours: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday to Friday.

**Substance Abuse Services**

Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre  
P. O .Box FH-14383  
Fox Hill Road  
Nassau, New Providence  
Tel: (242) 364-9630  
Fax: (242) 324-3922

**The Haven**

P.O. Box. SS-19916  
Telephone: (242) 356-4204 or (242) 565-5163

**Bahamas Association for Social Health**

Columbus Ave, Chippingham  
PO Box SS-5372  
Nassau, New Providence  
Tel: (242) 356-2274

**Summary**

- Substance abuse refers to the use of substances in ways other than the use for which they were intended and in a way that could cause harm. Substances most commonly abused include drugs, inhalants, and alcohol. Substance abuse also refers to the use of illegal drugs, such as cocaine and marijuana.
- Substance abuse can harm individuals physically and emotionally. The behavior of substance abusers is harmful to families and society.
- Children and youth may abuse substances for a number of reasons: to reduce stress, to feel good, to satisfy their curiosity, to feel they are grown up, and to fit in. Youth who live in stressful circumstances or have limited opportunities may be more vulnerable to substance abuse.
- There are a number of types of behavior that could indicate substance abuse. It is important to notice any drastic changes in behavior early.
- There are several ways that we can guide in a positive direction children's thoughts and attitudes toward substance abuse.



- One of the most important ways to help children not to abuse substances is to set a good example.
- It is important that we are aware of our own experiences, beliefs, and values regarding substance abuse if we are going to be effective in counselling children and youth. When you are planning events for them, there are steps you can take to make sure the events are free of drugs and alcohol.
- If a young person is addicted to a substance, the problem may be too much for you to handle alone. It is important to know the resources that exist in your community for help with substance abuse.

## Glossary

**Addiction:** A compulsive physiological and psychological need for a habit-forming substance.

**Hallucination:** The perception that one sees an object that is not there.

**Inhalants:** Substances that are sniffed to intoxicate the user immediately, such as petrol, glue, and paint thinner.

**Substance abuse:** The misuse of substances that may have legitimate uses but can cause harm when misused; for example, drugs, alcohol, or glue.

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- Hornby, G. (1994). Counselling in child disability: Skills for working with parents. London: Chapman and Hall.
- Wipfler, P. (1999). Listening effectively to children. Seattle: Rational Island Publishers.
- Salk, L. (1983). A guide to raising your child. New York: The New American Library of Canada Limited.

## **Straight Facts about Inhalants, Drugs, and Alcohol**

### **Straight facts about inhalants (Glue, Paint Thinner and Petrol)**

Inhalants are substances that are sniffed to intoxicate the user immediately. Commonly used inhalants include glue, and paint thinner. Inhalant use can cause a number of physical and emotional problems, and sometimes may result in death.

Using inhalants even one time can put you at risk for:

- Sudden death.
- Suffocation.
- Visual hallucinations and severe mood swings.
- Numbness and tingling of the hands and feet.

Prolonged use of inhalants may also result in:

- Careless behavior in potentially dangerous settings.
- Headaches.
- Muscle weakness.
- Abdominal pain.
- Decrease or loss of sense of smell.
- Nausea and nosebleeds.
- Hepatitis.
- Violent behavior.
- Irregular heartbeat.
- Liver, lungs, and kidney impairment.
- Irreversible brain damage.
- Nervous system damage.

### **Straight facts about Marijuana (Bhang, Weed, Hashish)**

Short-term effects may include:

- Sleepiness.
- Reduced ability to perform tasks requiring concentration and coordination.
- Lack of judgment in potentially dangerous situations.
- Bloodshot eyes.
- Dry mouth and throat.
- Decrease social inhibitions.
- Paranoia and hallucinations.

Long-term effects may include:

- Enhanced cancer risk.
- Psychological dependence.
- Diminished or extinguished sexual pleasure.

Marijuana blocks the messages to the brain and alters perceptions, emotions, vision, hearing, and coordination.

You may also notice changes in behavior of the child/youth. They may display the following symptoms:

- Restlessness.
- Drowsiness.
- Slow reflexes.
- Slow and incoherent speech.
- Violent behavior.
- Confusion.
- Decrease social inhibitions.
- Lack of coordination.

### **Straight facts about effects of Alcohol**

Short-term effects may include:

- Distorted vision, hearing, speech, and coordination.
- Altered perceptions and emotions.
- Impaired judgment and reduced inhibitions.
- Slower thought processes, impaired short-term memory, and confusion.
- Bad breath.
- Hangovers.
- Respiratory paralysis and death (if blood alcohol levels is. 60 or more).

Long-term effects may include:

- Loss of appetite.
- Vitamin deficiency.
- Stomach ailments.
- Skin problems.
- Liver damage (alcoholic hepatitis, cirrhosis of liver, liver cancer).
- Nerve and muscle damage.
- Cerebrovascular disease (stroke etc.)
- Memory loss.
- Cancer of the oral cavity and pharynx, esophagus, larynx, breast, liver, colon, and rectum.
- Heart and central nervous system damage.
- Chronic pancreatitis.

Excessive drinking of alcoholic beverages increases the risks of:

- Motor vehicle accidents.
- Falls, drowning, and other accidents.
- Suicide and homicide.

- Risky sexual behavior, unplanned or unwanted pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases.
- Fetal alcohol, syndrome if a pregnant woman drinks.
- Alcoholism or alcohol dependence.

**A simple quiz to help you decide if you need help with your drinking habits. Circle “Yes” or “No”.**

1. Do you drink because you have problems? To relax? Yes/No
2. Do you drink when you get mad at other people, your friends or parents? Yes/No
3. Do you prefer to drink alone, rather than with others? Yes/No
4. Are your grades starting to slip? Are you goofing off on your job? Yes/No
5. Did you ever try to stop drinking or drink less and fail? Yes/No
6. Have you begun to drink in the morning, before school or work? Yes/No
7. Do you gulp your drink? Yes/No
8. Do you ever have loss of memory due to your drinking? Yes/No
9. Do you lie about your drinking? Yes /No
10. Do you ever get into trouble when you’re drinking? Yes/No
11. Do you get drunk when you drink, even when you don’t mean to? Yes/No
12. Do you think it’s cool to be able to hold your liquor? Yes/No

If you answer “Yes” to any of these questions, maybe it’s time you took a serious look at what your drinking might be doing to you.

Alcoholics Anonymous. Retrieved on October 20, 2004 from: [www.soberrecovery.com/forums/showthread-27428.html](http://www.soberrecovery.com/forums/showthread-27428.html).

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# **Module 10:**

# **Mediating and**

# **Resolving**

# **Conflict**

## Introduction

Conflict can be viewed as a difference in perspectives: what is seen, thought, felt, and believed may be different from others. Conflict is thus a part of all human interaction, and if managed wisely, can be a source of vitality and opportunity for positive change. However, if ill-equipped with the skills necessary to handle conflict, the individual's social, emotional, spiritual, academic and career capabilities will be impaired. In this unit we will be looking at a holistic approach to Conflict Management to include effective communication, problem solving skills, principles of conflict resolution, and anger management – with an emphasis on personal responsibility and self-discipline.

## Objectives

By the end of this module you will:

- Apply knowledge of conflict management
- Recognize the various types of conflicts
- Utilize techniques to effectively resolve conflict



## LESSON ONE

### What Is Conflict?

Conflict is a natural disagreement resulting from individuals or groups that differ in attitudes, beliefs, values or needs. It can also originate from past rivalries and personality differences. Other causes of conflict include trying to negotiate before the timing is right or before needed information is available. Conflict Management is the process of limiting the negative aspects of conflict while increasing the positive aspects of conflict. The aim of conflict management is to enhance learning and group outcomes, including effectiveness or performance in organizational settings (Rahim, 2002, p. 208).

#### *Ingredients of Conflict*

##### **Needs**

Needs are essential to our well-being. Conflicts arise when we ignore others' needs, our own needs or the group's needs. Be careful not to confuse needs with desires (things we would like, but are not essential).

##### **Perceptions**

People interpret reality differently. They perceive differences in the severity, causes and consequences of problems. Misperceptions or differing perceptions may come from: self-perceptions, others' perceptions, differing perceptions of situations and perceptions of threat.

##### **Values**

Values are beliefs or principles we consider to be very important. Serious conflicts arise when people hold incompatible values or when values are not clear. Conflicts also arise when one party refuses to accept the fact that the other party holds something as a value rather than a preference.

##### **Feelings and emotions**

Many people let their feelings and emotions become a major influence over how they deal with conflict. Conflicts can also occur because people ignore their own or others' feelings and emotions. Other conflicts occur when feelings and emotions differ over a particular issue.

##### **Power**

How people define and use power is an important influence on the number and types of conflicts that occur. This also influences how conflict is managed. Conflicts can arise when people try to make others change their actions or to gain an unfair advantage.

##### **Values**

Values are beliefs or principles we consider to be very important. Serious conflicts arise when people hold incompatible values or when values are not clear. Conflicts also arise when one party refuses to accept the fact that the other party holds something as a value rather than a preference.

##### **Feelings and emotions**

Many people let their feelings and emotions become a major influence over how they deal with conflict. Conflicts can also occur because people ignore their own or others' feelings and emotions. Other conflicts occur when feelings and emotions differ over a particular issue.

### *Ingredients of Conflict Cont'd*

Conflict is not always negative. In fact, it can be healthy when effectively managed. Healthy conflict can lead to...

- Growth and innovation
- New ways of thinking
- Additional management options

If the conflict is understood, it can be effectively managed by reaching a consensus that meets both the individual's and society's needs. This results in mutual benefits and strengthens the relationship. The goal is for all to "win" by having at least some of their needs met.

**Remember:** You are not responsible for resolving the issue. The people involved are, even if they are children. Steer the discussion towards finding a reasonable solution on their own. Don't pick a side, even subconsciously. Focus on a resolution that makes sense to them, not only to you.

Be patient; this might not happen over one evening. If you really care, you might have to mediate several discussions over a period of time until both parties feel that the issue has been resolved to their satisfaction.

Be sure how much you care, and be clear how much commitment you can make to this. Nothing is worse than walking out in the middle of the conversation and blaming them for the entire affair.

Source: <http://www.ctic.purdue.edu/media/files/Managing%20Conflict.pdf>

### *Activity 1*

#### **Resolving Conflict**

James and his fiancé Anita are planning their wedding. Anita would like to invite three hundred guests, while James prefers a small gathering of fifty to sixty guests. How would you resolve this conflict?

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## LESSON TWO

### Types of Conflict

Before we can explore the best ways to resolve a conflict, it is necessary to identify what type of conflict it is, thereby enabling us to utilize the best option to resolve the conflict.

#### DATA CONFLICT

Caused by:

- A lack of information
- Misinformation
- Differing views on what is relevant
- Different interpretations of data
- Different assessment procedures

#### RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT

Caused by:

- Strong emotions
- Misperceptions or Stereotypes
- Poor communication
- Miscommunication
- Repetitive negative behaviour

#### VALUE CONFLICT

Caused by:

- Different criteria for evaluating ideas or behaviour
- Different valued goals
- Different ways of life, ideology and religion

#### STRUCTURAL CONFLICT

Caused by:

- Destructive patterns of behaviour or interaction
- Unequal power, control, ownership, distribution of resources
- Geographical, physical or environmental factors that hinder cooperation
- Time constraints

#### INTEREST CONFLICT

Caused by:

- Actual or perceived scarce resources such as physical assets (money or other tangible things)
- Procedural issues (how decisions should be made)
- Psychological issues (who is in the wrong emotionally)

### Activity 2

John and Jake are arguing. John bought a piece of land from Jake. When John went to the land to build a house, a neighbour claimed he owned some of the land and showed an official document to prove it. John went back to Jake to ask for money back for the part of the land that belonged to the neighbour. Jake refused, saying they had agreed on the price and the deal was closed.

What type of conflict is this?

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What do you think is the best way to resolve this issue?

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The main cause of the conflict here is misinformation, thus, it is a data conflict. When John purchased land from Jake, he believed the property extended further than it actually did. Since John has already attempted to resolve the issue with Jake and made no headway, the best course of action may be mediation or legal proceedings.

Conflict occurs all the time – no one is free from it. You yourself would have experienced many conflicts. Conflict comes about from differences – in needs, values and motivations. Sometimes through these differences we complement each other, but sometimes we will conflict. Conflict is not a problem in itself – it is what we do with it that counts.

It is important that we do something because whether we like it or not, conflicts demand our energy. In fact, an unresolved conflict can call on tremendous amounts of our attention. We all know how exhausting an unresolved conflict can be. It is not always easy to fix the problem but a great energy boost can come when we do.

### Conflict Resolution Styles

Conflict resolution is the process by which two or more parties engaged in a disagreement, dispute, or debate reach an agreement resolving it (Grimsley, 2017).

How do you deal with conflict? What style / pattern do you use when you are faced with differences in goals, needs or opinions that affect you and your relationship with others? Do you

side-step the conflict or face the problem head on, making your demands known? Or do you collaborate with the "other side," seeking to find appropriate solutions from which to choose? Here are five possible ways in which we respond when faced with conflict.

- **Avoidance** – Person withdraws and wishes conflict would disappear or go away on its own.
- **Collaboration** – Person seeks a solution through negotiation, resulting in a win-win situation.
- **Accommodation** – Person is anxious to please and places others' needs and expectations before his or her own.
- **Compromise** – Person is willing to give up something in order to arrive at a solution.
- **Force** – Person is only interested in satisfying his or her own needs and goals and seeks to dominate the discussion.

In the property issue involving John and Jake, John sought to resolve the conflict through collaboration. Jake, however, was only interested in his own needs and took a forceful approach when he dismissed John.

The best approach is usually one where all parties feel they have gained.

### *Activity 3*

Do you believe there are times when persons must use force to resolve a conflict?

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## LESSON THREE

### Conflict Resolution Skills

Conflict Resolution Skills are the skills that enable us to bypass personal differences and to open up to possibilities. The skills of conflict resolution draw us closer to other people, as we jointly search for fair solutions and balanced needs. It involves a powerful shift from adversaries to co-operative partners. In this shift each person benefits.

These skills are also the tools for building friendship and close working relationships. A whole new level of trust develops as people learn "we can work it out". Relationships become more fulfilling and supporting.

#### Keep In Mind

When resolving conflicts, there are several things we must keep in mind.

#### Personality Styles

People come in all different flavors. All kinds of personality profile studies are available that can illuminate these differences, but for our purposes, suffice it to keep in mind that no two people ever share exactly the same perspective of an issue.

#### Principles vs. Issues

Principles are people's non-quantifiable, fundamental values. They run deep and are hard to be negotiated. For example, not eating fish obtained from taboo areas or getting one's daughter to marry someone she is pregnant for – even though they do not love each other.

Issues are measurable and specific to a given situation. They are more negotiable (hopefully). For example, wanting to create a 400-square foot vegetable garden.

#### Mediation as an option

A mediator is a third party that you can use to call upon if it appears that you cannot resolve the conflict between you.

You may be called upon to be a mediator in a conflict which is not your own. It may be that you are a youth worker who has to resolve an issue between youths. It may be a friend telling you about a problem on the telephone. It may be an informal chat with both conflicting people. It may be a formally organized mediation session. Lesson Four provides additional information on mediation.

## Activity 4

### Identifying One's Conflict Management Style

Read the following scenario then choose the response that best describes your style of dealing with conflict.

You have just turned to the Sports page in the newspaper to collect information for your Sports project, when your brother (who had bought the newspaper) rushes in and demands that you hand over the sports pages so he could read about a recent football game.

Do you:

- immediately hand over the newspaper, without uttering a word;
- explain that you are using the sports section to prepare for a school project;
- continue reading the newspaper, without responding to the demand;
- explain that you are using the sports section for an important project and will be finished in twenty minutes. So he can then have it; or
- hand over the newspaper, requesting that he lend it to you whenever he is finished.

1. Having chosen your response, identify the matching conflict resolution style.

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2. Then match each remaining response with one of the conflict management styles listed.

<i>Response</i>	<i>Conflict Management Style</i>
• immediately hand over the newspaper, without uttering a word	
• explain that you are using the sports section to prepare for a school project	
• continue reading the newspaper, without responding to the demand	
• explain that you are using the sports section for an important project and will be finished in twenty minutes. So he can then have it	
• hand over the newspaper, requesting that he lend it to you whenever he is finished	

## Further Tips for Effective Conflict Resolution

Here are some additional tips to keep in mind for effective conflict resolution.

- Care about the people involved rather than the issues, yet remain completely impartial.
- Be aware of your personal biases and projections.
- Be willing to let the parties experience their own strength rather than feel like they are being "rescued". But, not be so neutral that you erase yourself.
- Facilitate, support, and defend the resolution process.
- Be willing to share personal experiences and vulnerability when appropriate.
- Trust your own intuitive knowing.
- Be objective - validate both sides, even if privately you prefer one point of view, or even when only one party is present.
- Be supportive - use caring language. Provide a non-threatening learning environment, where people will feel safe to open up.
- No judging - actively discourage judgments as to who was right and who was wrong. Don't ask "Why did you?" Ask "What happened?" and "How did you feel?"
- Steer the mediation process, not the content - use astute questioning. Encourage suggestions from the parties. Resist advising. If your suggestions are really needed, offer as options not directives.
- Win/win - work towards wins for both sides. Turn opponents into problem-solving partners.

### Activity 5

Remember James and his fiancé Anita who are planning their wedding? How would you use the tips above to help them resolve their conflict?

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## LESSON FOUR

### Mediation Process

#### Establish the rules

- Define your mediator role as there to support both people "winning".
- Get agreement from both people about a basic willingness to fix the problem.
- Let each person say what the problem is for them. Check back that the other person has actually understood them.
- Guide the conversation towards a joint problem solving approach and away from personal attack.
- Encourage them to look for answers where everybody gets what they need.
- Redirect "Fouls" (Name Calling, Put Downs, Sneering, Blaming, Threats, Bringing up the Past, Making Excuses, Not Listening, Getting Even). Where possible you reframe the negative statement into a neutral description of a legitimate present time concern.

#### Identify the best environment for the mediation

##### The environment has to be a safe place

Find a neutral place that feels safe and comfortable to both - free of stress, anxiety, interruptions, or distractions.

##### The Right Time and Enough Time

Set up a time for conflict resolution that allows conflicting parties both time to cool down and prepare (see Personal Preparation below). Also, set aside plenty of time for the resolution session. Don't rush the process.

##### Someone You Both Can Trust

If you both choose mediation, mutually agree upon a mediator you trust to be qualified and impartial.

#### Start the mediation process

These steps are followed during the course of one or more meetings when you are working out the conflict on your own or when a mediator is involved.

##### Personal Preparation

- Study the conflict in depth.
- Realize that the parties are seeking a solution. Think of an outcome that achieves satisfaction for each of them.

##### Obtain Agreements on process and rules

- Agree on the process for conflict resolution.
- Agree to treat each other with respect.
  - No blaming or name-calling.

- Openness to learn from other points of view.
- Active listening and no interruptions.

### State Initial Positions (Issues)

- Take turns, a few minutes each, to state the way parties experience the conflict.
  - Focus on specific incidents and don't drag up old unresolved issues.
  - No personal opinions from people not in the room ("Ann thinks so too . . .").
  - Describe behavior and your feelings ("When you did X, I felt Y.").
  - Don't interpret other's behavior. Simply report what happened.
  - Some helpful questions:
    - Who has the conflict? (Who doesn't?)
    - Where is the conflict located? (Where does it not exist?)
    - How long has the conflict been brewing?
    - What was the first sign of the conflict?
    - What are the key events that got the conflict to where it's at now?
    - How does the conflict currently show up?

### Restate Each Other's Initial Positions

- Take turns to restate what the other said, highlighting the main points.
- Agree that the restatements were complete and accurate. Make corrections if necessary.
- Check that both parties have been heard fully.

### Continue Bringing Up Issues and Feelings and Begin Working on Solutions

- Keep an open heart. Silently affirm the inherent goodness of the other.
- Identify the underlying assumptions, beliefs, and information sources.
- Identify underlying principles (vs. issues).
- Identify areas of agreement and disagreement.
- Each party defines their success criteria:
  - "I will know this conflict is resolved to my satisfaction when . . . ."
  - Strive for concrete, measurable criteria.
- Brainstorm as many ways as possible to meet shared principles.
  - Mediator may help with this with the consent of both parties.

### Summarize Points of Agreement and Produce a Solution

- Create a solution that meets your success criteria and is as specific as possible, and therefore less subject to varying interpretations.
- If appropriate, write it down and sign it.
- Mediator reviews solution to ensure that it is doable.
- Agree to maintain confidentiality of resolution or communicate it only via explicitly agreed upon means.
- Agree to follow up with each other at specific times.

### Follow up

- Check on whether the solution is being followed.
- Revise it if necessary.



## Summary

In this unit we examined various aspects of conflict and the skills in solving conflicts. We also looked at some procedures for resolving conflict, mediation procedures, and how to prevent conflicts from arising.

## Glossary

**Accommodation:** Person is anxious to please and places others' needs and expectations before his or her own.

**Avoidance:** Person withdraws and wishes conflict would disappear or go away on its own.

**Conflict Management:** The process of limiting the negative aspects of conflict while increasing the positive aspects of conflict.

**Conflict Resolution:** is the process by which two or more parties engaged in a disagreement, dispute, or debate reach an agreement resolving it.

**Collaboration:** Person seeks a solution through negotiation, resulting in a win-win situation.

**Compromise:** Person is willing to give up something in order to arrive at a solution.

**Mediator:** A mediator is a third party that you can use if it appears that you cannot resolve the conflict.

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## NOTES

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# **Module 11:**

# **Career &**

# **Vocational**

# **Guidance**

# Career and Vocational Guidance

## Introduction

From the earliest years of our lives, we are asked to consider what we want to be when we grow up. Parents and guardians carefully plan and manage their children's educational experiences in the hope of preparing them for successful careers.

As a caregiver, you are faced with the challenge of helping children and youth identify and achieve their career goals. Young people tend to have limited information about the types of jobs that are available to them. Lack of information leads many to make unrealistic decisions about careers. Many youth are not sure of what they want to do. Some of them are not even aware of their own talents. You can help them get the information they need to make realistic and satisfying career choices.

Another of your roles as a caregiver is to help children and youth develop the qualities they need to be successful in the job market. Certain qualities can contribute to success, such as: the willingness to work hard and do more than the bare minimum; good spoken and written communication skills; dependability; and the ability to work well with others.

Career guidance becomes more and more challenging as the realities of the workplace change. At one time the types of work available and the skills required changed very little from one generation to another. Now, times are changing so quickly that it's hard to predict what the next 20, 10, or even 5 years will bring. In these rapidly changing times, qualities such as flexibility, creativity, and the desire to be a lifelong learner have become important.

This unit will help you to explore ways that you as a caregiver can help children and youth to decide on a career plan and gain the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in the job market, now and in the future. After exploring your own knowledge and skills in Lesson 1, you will learn how to find out information about different careers and how to help youth explore careers in Lesson 2. Lessons 3, 4, and 5 will examine gender bias and stereotypes and the ability to recognize talents of the youth you are working with, as well as helping them develop employability skills. Finally, in Lessons 6 and 7, you will learn how to help youth make career plans and find employment.





**OBJECTIVES**

1. Differentiate between a career, a vocation, and life skills.
2. Identify sources of information and disseminate information on careers and life skills.
3. Discuss gender biases and stereotypes in vocational and career choices and suggest ways of eliminating them.
4. Recognize the talents of children and youth.
5. Advise youth on career programmes and help them to plan for these.

## LESSON ONE

### Personal Exploration

This section begins with an opportunity to explore what you bring to the area of career guidance as well as what you would like to know. It goes on to define what we mean by the term “career”, “ vocation guidance “ and “ life skills”.

As you begin your work on this unit, take a few moments to think about your own career experience and what you can bring from it to your work with youth who are planning their career.

#### Activity 1

When you were a youth, was there a particular occupation that appealed to you? What was it? What did you like about it?

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How do you feel about the career path you have followed? Why did you end up making the career choice(s) you did?

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What talents and personal qualities help you to be successful in your career?

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Even though the youth you counsel may have very different talents and goals than you, you still have valuable life experience to offer them. Based on your own experience, what advice would you give to youth who are planning their careers?

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We are all different people, with unique abilities and dreams. One of the biggest challenges in counselling youth about their careers is to be able to really get to know them: to see their potential and understand their hopes. As you have worked through the various units in this course, you have learned various strategies and approaches to help you get to know children.

### *Activity 2*

Think about communication strategies you have learned in other units that would help you when you are counselling youth about career plans. List them here:

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Does your list include some of the following?

- Giving youth your full attention.
- Listening, not talking or giving advice.
- Being respectful of their ideas.
- Encouraging youth to expand on their statements by asking questions and checking to see if you are understanding correctly.
- Helping youth to explore possibilities so they can come to their own conclusions.

The world of work is changing so quickly that it is difficult to keep abreast of new career possibilities. While it's useful to know about various careers, it can be more important to know where to find information about them.

**Watch YouTube Video: Academic and Career Planning Video Scribe (6:44 Minutes)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lfztGzzRyI>

### Activity 3

What occupations are you familiar with? List as many as you can.

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What are some ways to find out about new career possibilities?

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### Some Definitions

Some of the terms that you will be seeing in this unit are “career,” “vocation,” “vocational guidance,” and “life skills.” Let’s begin by defining each of these.

#### Career

The word “career” is used to refer to one’s progress through his/her working life, particularly in a certain profession or line of work. When we talk about a “career in teaching” or a “career in technology” we mean that a person will study and then work in teaching or in technology, perhaps changing jobs from time to time in the interests of advancement. The goals that one has for one’s working life are called “career goals,” and planning how we will reach them is called setting a “career path.” Carpentry, engineering, nursing, hospitality, social work, banking, and farming are just a few of the many possible careers people might choose.

#### Vocation

In its most usual use, the word “vocation” refers to a strong feeling within an individual that they are meant to do a certain job. Sometimes people feel that they are “called” to a particular kind of life or work, such as nursing or a religious life. The word “vocation” can also be used to refer to a trade or profession.

#### Vocational Guidance

Vocational guidance is the process through which an individual is helped to choose a suitable occupation, make the necessary preparations for it (such as enrolling in a training programme),

enter into it, and develop in it. This is a continuous process since an individual is likely to re-evaluate the career choice at various points in his/her life and may make changes at any point in his/her career.

**Life Skills**

The term “life skills” refers to the various psychosocial and interpersonal skills that lead people to a healthy and productive life. These skills include the ability to make informed decisions, communicate effectively, cope with life situations, and manage oneself. Life skills may include actions for oneself or towards others, as well as actions to change the surrounding environment in order to make it more conducive to good health.

Life skills competencies are necessary for the total development of children and youth. These competencies are the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and types of behaviour that children and youth need to become healthy, happy, and well-balanced individuals. Children who have these competencies will be able to meet the challenges of work and life in a complex and fast-paced world.

#### Activity 4

Look through newspaper advertisements to see if there are any careers you could add to the list you made in Activity 3.

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Do you know someone who believes he/she has a vocation; that is, that he/she is doing work that he/she is called to do? Ask when and how that person came to know what it was he/she wanted to do. Summarize the answer here:

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Take time to visit two workplaces. List the careers found in those workplaces:

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Which skills would you consider to be life skills; that is, which ones are important in order to have a happy, productive life?

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Did you think of these life skills? If not, add them to your list:

- Communication skills.
- Ability to handle conflict.
- Ability to manage personal stress and to help others manage theirs.
- Ability to work with others in decision-making activities.
- Ability to listen to others' points of view.
- Ability to work as a member of a team.
- Ability to gather and use information.
- Ability to recognize your strengths and weaknesses and to use them accordingly

## LESSON TWO

### Finding and Providing Information on Career Possibilities

Our world is full of interesting occupations. The activity that follows asks you to explore a few of them.

#### Activity 5

##### **Working in a Beauty Salon**

List 5 tools found in a salon.

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List 5 activities that take place in a salon.

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Why do people go to salons?

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What skills are useful for staff working in a salon?

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What kind of training does a beauty salon manager require?

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##### **Working with Animals**

List 5 activities that take place in animal shelters.

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The Bahamas Humane Society is one place at which stray animals are cared for. List all the activities that take place there.

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## Activity 5 Cont'd

### Working as a Welder

Write a short story about a person that welds. Mention, for example, the types of activities miners engage in, how they dress up for work and why they wear that clothing.

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### Working in a Hospital

List all of the different kinds of careers you might find in a hospital and the type of training required for each.

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[illegible]

## Working as a Musician

Write a short story about being a musician. You might mention the instruments used, the types of activities musicians engage in and how they dress for work.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Name 5 musicians you know and the type of music each one plays.

[illegible]

Were some parts of these learning activities difficult to do? Sometimes, because we are familiar with an occupation, we think we know more about it than we actually do. It is important that research new careers we may hear about, but also that we pay attention to the work that people do around us: Watching what people do and asking lots of questions.

### Sources of Information

In Lesson 1 of this unit, you listed possible sources of information about careers. How many of the following possibilities did you include?

- Local libraries.
- Media advertising (newspapers, magazines, radio, TV).
- Government labour office.
- Shopping markets with bulletin boards for advertising.
- Local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in your community.
- Churches (the priest, minister, or pastor may be able to help).
- Employment bureaus (for example, TEBA for miners).
- Friends who have careers.
- Current employees of an organization (a farmer, business person, medical doctor, teacher, builder, radio announcer, etc.).
- Past employees of an organization.
- Paying visits to an organization of your career interest (such as a hospital for a physiotherapist, radiographer, or nurse).
- From work sites in the immediate community (such as at a mosque, church, school, or farm).
- Professionals (pilot, engineer, lawyer, etc.).
- Job attachments (such as working with a construction company).
- Internet websites.

As a caregiver, you need to familiarize yourself with these sources so that you are able to direct children and youth to them when they require more information than you can give them. You can help them develop skills in reading, writing, making calls, and searching the internet to find information on job opportunities.

## Helping Youth Explore Possible Careers

Youth and children have a limited knowledge of the range of possible occupations and careers. This can contribute to unrealistic career aspirations. As a caregiver, you will need to ensure that youth have appropriate career information.

In order to make an informed choice, youth need to have a realistic picture of occupations they are considering: the working conditions, the tasks that are involved, the qualifications and education required, the salary, the job opportunities, and so on.

You can help youth gather this information by:

- Collecting and discussing written information with them.
- Going for industrial visits where they will get the information directly from the employers.
- Inviting different professionals to come and talk to them.
- Helping them find volunteer or part-time work in different industries.
- Encouraging them to volunteer their services in different organizations or work centers.
- Encouraging them to share career/vocation information with one another.
- Pointing out postings on bulletin boards found in shopping centers.
- Encouraging them to get information through the media.

## Job Shadowing

Attach a youth for a day or more to a person who has a career that the youth is interested in. For example, a youth might dress appropriately for working in an electricity station, start the day with the person he or she is attached to, help with the work the person being shadowed does and so on. A youth attached to a receptionist might work in an office taking calls, recording messages, and receiving visitors.

## Job Mentoring

Identify individuals with careers of interest. Invite them to address the youth about their own careers and to bring posters, objects, and audio/video tapes to listen to or view, as well as reading materials about the careers for display or distribution.

## Job Volunteering

Youth can assist in a company and do some tasks without expecting pay but to gain experience in doing the job. This can be done on a part-time basis.

In the countryside, there may be a limited number of career possibilities. Church and school careers might be common because almost all communities have a faith-based organization and a school to cater to children there. These institutions could also have a secretary or receptionist. Youth can find out more about these careers by talking with the people who work in them.

As a caregiver, you can help children and youth learn about careers that might be possible for them outside the community. Children may be interested in a career that would involve going to a larger community, either for training or to work. If this is the case, they will need support not only to learn more about the career but to move outside of their home community. Think about how you might help Thuli, in the story below, fulfill her dream of becoming a teacher.

**Story 1: Thuli**

Thuli lives with her aunt in a rural area. For as long as she can remember, Thuli has wanted to be a teacher. She admired her teachers and worked very hard at her school. At home, she found great satisfaction in helping her younger nieces and nephews with their lessons. Thuli did so well with her studies that she was awarded a scholarship to a teachers college in a city several hours from her home. At first Thuli was delighted, but as the time grew closer for her to leave home, she began to talk about passing up the scholarship and finding some kind of work in her community. When you talk with her about this, she finally admits that she is frightened of being alone in the city.

Can you think of some ways that you could help Thuli become comfortable with moving to the city to take advantage of her scholarship? Perhaps you have a friend in the city who would help her get acquainted or know of an organization where she could meet some friends. Maybe she just needs someone to go with her for the first few days until she is settled.

Youth may not admit that they are afraid to leave their familiar surroundings for a new career, but we need to be aware of that possibility and provide all the help we can for them in making the transition. While they are at the stage of exploring careers, introducing them to a friendly and helpful career mentor can make a big difference.

**Activity 6**

List the careers of people you know in the community and of your relatives. For each of the careers you list, identify:

- A person or organization that could be a good resource to give information about the career.
- Someone who could be a mentor for a youth interested in that career (perhaps the youth could job shadow with this person).
- An organization where the youth could volunteer in order to get some experience related to the career.

You may need to use a separate piece of paper for this activity.

Career	Resource	Mentor	Volunteer Opportunity
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## LESSON THREE

### Eliminating Gender Bias and Three Stereotypes in Career Choices

#### *Activity 5*

Brittany's career dream is to become a pilot. Her parents are uneasy about her goal and find it hard to support her in it. Give three reasons why Wanjuri's parents might discourage her.

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How do you feel about a girl or woman becoming a pilot?

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Why do you feel this way?

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Do you believe that males and females could do the same jobs if they had the opportunity to do so? Why or why not?

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When you are counselling children about their career choices, you will be faced with the problem of gender bias and stereotypes. Certain jobs are commonly believed to be for men only while others are supposed to be suited only for women. For example, it is often thought that a woman's place is in the home doing domestic chores. Men, on the other hand, are supposed to be engineers, pilots, builders, and so on. They are not expected to take an active role in domestic chores.

One of your roles as a caregiver is to educate both boys and girls that one can do any job for which one meets the requirements. They must understand that gender should not be a major determinant in career and vocation selection.

Gender is the social dimension of being male and female. There are two ways of looking at this definition:

- Gender identity is the sense of being male or female, which most children acquire by the time they are three years old.
- Gender roles refer to a set of expectations regarding how females or males should think, act, or feel.

Gender bias begins early in life when parents start dressing children differently depending on whether they are male or female, giving them different toys, treating them differently, and having different expectations for them. The differences are reinforced as children watch and imitate their parents fulfilling these traditional roles. Culture, the schools, peers, and the media reinforce what children have learned from their parents.

Gender stereotypes are the beliefs and impressions that people have about males and females. Males are believed to be dominant, aggressive, independent, and enduring go-getters. Females are widely believed to be soft, caring, more helpful, weak, and emotional. It is assumed that females are not ambitious, are unable to do certain jobs, and want to stay at home and nurture children.

### **Activity 8**

Give examples of gender bias and stereotypes that are common in your community and your place of work.

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Look back at the list of careers you created earlier. Which ones tend to be male-dominated?

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Which are female-dominated?

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## Activity 9



What gender biases and stereotypes are evident in this picture?

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Why are these gender biases and stereotypes a problem?

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The problems with gender biases and stereotypes include the following:

- Girls and women often are not encouraged to use their talents, which deprives them of satisfaction and deprives society of the contributions they could make.
- Men and boys are expected to act in certain ways and do certain kinds of work, so they also face restrictions in the careers they choose.
- Because girls and women are expected to be passive and helpless, they are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation within and outside of their homes.



Rev. Margaret is a Methodist Church priest in my community. She visits the sick in the nearby hospital accompanied by church youth who sing to the patients and do their chores while the Reverend talks to them individually. She preaches in the churches of my community. Once a month, she is allowed to preach in the prison in the nearest town and the local radio broadcasts her sermons and her verbal interactions with the prisoners. Some church members accompany her on the last Wednesday of the month when she visits elderly people in the community, giving them food, clothes and cleaning their homes. I enjoy the Bible Studies she conducts through theatre during school vacations.

### Activity 9

What contributions is Rev. Margaret making to this community?

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What challenges of discrimination may she face in her career?

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What are the advantages to having a woman priest working in a community?

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How can we work to eliminate gender stereotypes and biases? Here are some ideas:

- Ask community leaders and special groups to focus on sensitizing the community to gender biases and stereotypes, with the goal of encouraging children and youth to appreciate their own unique capabilities. This can be done in collaboration with NGOs, government initiatives on gender, and development sensitization programmes.
- Invite non-traditional role models to talk to the community and the children and youth about gender biases and stereotypes.
- As a caregiver, model gender equality and talk to children about gender bias and stereotypes at home and in the community.
- Collect magazines and newspapers that show gender bias and stereotypes. Watch for examples in radio and TV programmes. Discuss these with children to identify the elements that portray gender bias and stereotypes; for example, a picture showing a committee that is predominantly male.

### Activity 11

Brittany is one of the young girls in your community. She wants to be a pilot. Her parents have tried to discourage her by insisting that flying airplanes is a man's job. Because you are a youth leader, Brittany has come to you for advice.

Why do you think Brittany's parents are discouraging her from being a pilot and encouraging her instead to be a secretary?

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What ideas do you have to help Brittany and her parents?

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It is important to recognize that her parents may want to protect Brittany from the difficulties she will face as a woman in a profession that is traditionally male. You will want to ensure that Brittany has a realistic view of the career she wishes to enter and the additional challenges she may face as a woman in that career. Once you feel that Brittany is well-informed and serious about becoming a pilot, you might help her discuss the matter with her parents to reassure them that she is aware of the challenge she is undertaking and is prepared to work hard to be a success.



## LESSON FOUR

### Recognizing the Talents of Children and Youth

We all have talents; that is, areas where we show special abilities or aptitudes. We may be talented in music, mathematics, sports, getting along with other people, art, creative thinking, writing, or dancing, to name just a few possibilities. Often we show our talent from an early age, but the way that our talent develops depends on the environment we find ourselves in; that is, on the encouragement we receive from parents and guardians, mentors, and the educational system.

Sometimes people are inspired to develop their talents through the example of a mentor. They may see a particular skill in someone they adore, practice it constantly, and develop expertise in it.

#### Activity 12

What is one of your talents?

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How and when did you realize that you had this talent?

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What have you done to develop this talent?

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What other talents would you like to develop and be skilled in?

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What are you doing to develop these skills?

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## Helping Youth See Their Talents

As a caregiver, you should get to know your children/youth as individuals and find out what is special about each of them. It may be their artistic ability, their athletic ability, or their ability to make people laugh. Perhaps a child is a wonderful storyteller, or is good at fixing things that are broken. You have an important role in helping children recognize and develop their talents.

### Activity 13

Think of a child you know. What special talents does that child have?

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How can you encourage those talents? (Or how have you encouraged them?)

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As a caregiver, you need to observe the children/youth under your care to see what talents they have, encourage them to develop those talents, and help them see how they could use those talents in a future career. You can expose them to different relevant careers and/or vocations by:

- Inviting professional experts and business people to address them about the job opportunities available.
- Assigning activities to explore their talents. As you do this, avoid suppressing talents; encourage both sexes to do what they like to do. Avoid making judgments about what a male or female child should do.
- Noticing their personalities and considering how they would fit with particular careers. For example, a quiet, thoughtful child might not do well as a radio announcer.
- Considering the socioeconomic and ethnic values of a community and how they relate to careers. For example, a community may have a strong farming industry, which creates opportunities for careers in that area.
- Inviting female and male mentors who have careers that are not stereotypically male or female (for example, a female chef, female pilot, male nurse, female electrician, or female preacher/religious minister), to give a talk about their careers and answer

questions from the children and youth concerning their experiences with the public and any obstacles they had to overcome in pursuit of their career choices.

- Discussing peer influences and decisions people have to make when deciding on careers.
- Talking to children/youth and their parents or relatives about interests and talents the children or youth have shown.

### Special Activity

Ask the children and youth in your care to discuss their talents. Children may identify their own talents, but they can also help other children identify their special abilities.

Discuss with the children and youth ways that they can develop their skills; for example,

- Through attachment to a person who has similar skills (job shadowing).
- Projects to raise funds for community needs.
- Volunteering at school and in the home; for example, working with the cook or cleaning and beautifying the classroom.
- Being mentored by people in the community.
- Creating displays of their artwork or arranging performances to highlight their artistic skills.

## LESSON FIVE

### Helping to Develop Life and Employability Skills



Helping youth make career plans is only one aspect of the career and vocational counselling you will do as a caregiver. It will be equally important to help them develop skills they will need to be good workers.

Look at the above picture. Which of the four statements represents the type of person you would hire if you were an employer?

### Activity 14

If you were an employer, why might you prefer to hire an individual thinking thought 3? What personal qualities does this person show that would make him an effective employee?

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Make a list of some positive statements that employees might make; for example, "practice makes perfect."

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Make a list of negative comments that employees might make; for example, "I hate my boss."

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Thoughts 1, 2, and 4 show negative attitudes and thinking. How could you change each of these to make it a positive statement?

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What are some qualities of effective employees?

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You will have noticed that a person who thinks thought 3 meets challenges with confidence and positive thinking. An individual who thinks one of the other statements may be avoiding work, have poor relationships with co-workers, or lack confidence in his/her abilities.

### Teaching Life Skills

In the earlier units of this course, various ways to help children and youth learn to be responsible, express their thoughts and feelings, make decisions, and have confidence in themselves were discussed. The activity below gives you an opportunity to think about the things you do to help children learn these life skills, which will, in turn, help them to become valuable employees.

#### Activity 15

In earlier units, you learned to communicate with children in ways that show them you have confidence in their ability to solve problems and handle difficult situations. Describe a conversation or interaction you had recently with a child or youth that encouraged these skills.

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The skills that help people live successful, balanced lives and that make them valued employees are learned from an early age. We have learned how to communicate with children, but there are other ways to teach employability skills:

- Children and youth should actively participate, as appropriate to their age, in domestic chores such as taking care of siblings, working on the family farm, cooking for the family, cleaning their room and home, looking after cattle, getting water, and collecting firewood. Participating in essential household chores lets children play an important role in their home and helps them develop confidence in their ability to carry out tasks successfully.
- Children and youth should be expected to be on time for school, stay until the end of the day, and not miss classes unnecessarily. They should be told that attending school is their job and that the same behaviour will be expected in the workplace.



- Children should demonstrate good personal hygiene and a positive outlook on a day-to-day basis at home, school, and on the playground (for example, washing themselves and their clothes, not littering on the premises, avoiding vulgar language, and saying good things about people). They can be reminded that these skills and attitudes will help them be successful in later life.
- Children should respect parents, guardians, and teachers and abide by rules at home and school. This is part of being a responsible citizen.
- Participating in athletic activities can help children develop perseverance, manage stress, and work as members of a team.

### Planning a Career Programme

As a caregiver it is your role to help prepare youth for employment by introducing them to the world of work. Your career programme should aim at helping youth get started in a career of their choice. As indicated in Lesson 2, you need to be well informed about available career opportunities in the community and at large.

You should talk to youth about the employment situation in the country to help them understand that it may take a while to get employment. This should not cause them to give up. The programme should start by informing them about:

- Educational requirements of the job of their choice. Show them a sample Curriculum Vitae (résumé) and help them think about what they would put in their own résumé.
- Practical experience needed in the case of someone who has no special certification (for example, a farmer, fisher, or domestic worker). Help them to find information on employment; for example, looking at the advertisements in the local newspapers or magazines.
- The possibility of learning a trade through an apprenticeship.
- How to prepare job application letters, fill in job application forms, and prepare for a job interview. Keep samples of letters and forms to show them.

### Preparing a Job Application Letter

#### Activity 16

List what you think are the essentials of a good application letter.

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If you haven't already included these points, add them to your list:

- The letter should be typed.
- It should be neat and grammatically correct.
- The letter should be brief.
- It should contain both the address of the person writing the letter and the prospective employer's address.
- You should use an appropriate salutation (Dear Sir/Madam).
- The body of the letter should be logically presented.
- It should contain an appropriate complementary close (such as "Yours sincerely").
- It should be personally signed.

## **Preparing a Résumé**

Another document you should be able to help youth prepare is a Resume. This document should contain the following information:

### **Personal Information**

- The name of the applicant.
- Address.
- Phone number (if any).

### **Academic Qualifications**

- Highest qualification of the applicant.
- Institutions attended (i.e. schools, technical colleges, universities).
- Subject/Area studied
- Year of completion

### **Practical Work Experience**

- The candidate should list jobs in the order that they were held (the latest, or current, job listed first), including the job title, a description of duties performed, the name and address of the organization and the dates of employment.

### **Achievements**

- Professional qualifications that the applicant may have (certificates and/or diplomas).
- Medals/awards.
- Recognitions.
- Involvement in community work.
- Participation and roles played in workshops, seminars, conferences, etc.

### **Hobbies**

- The candidate should list activities of interest that he/she is involved in, such as basketball, volleyball, soccer, art, fishing, swimming, singing, baseball, etc. (extra-curricular activities).

## References

- A candidate should give names of three people who may be called by the potential employer to give additional information about the applicant. Advise candidates to give names of referees who are in a position to give information about them but not close relatives. Suitable referees include teachers, pastors, community leaders, etc.

As a caregiver, remember to advise the applicant that the CV must be sent together with a covering letter and copies of any certificates and testimonials. Remind the applicants that they must never send their original certificates or testimonials. Originals should be carried when the applicant is going for an interview.

## How to Prepare for an Interview

Another important role is that of preparing the candidate or applicant for an interview. Here are some suggestions for you:

- Encourage the applicant to get as much information as possible about the potential employer. They might talk to current employees, if available, and use information from the library. This will help them to answer any questions asked about why they want to work in that organization.
- The applicant should wait to be invited by the interviewer or panelists before sitting down.
- The applicant should be able to talk openly, convincingly, and with confidence about his or her skills, achievements, and experiences.
- The applicant should be punctual and dressed appropriately for the job (not too sweet, sophisticated, or shabby).
- Remind the applicant to carry the invitation letter, original certificates, and original testimonials as they may be asked for verification of the copies submitted previously.
- The applicant should avoid any arguments with the interview panel, remain calm, and listen so as to be able to respond appropriately. When not clear about the question, the applicant should not hesitate to ask the panelists to rephrase it.
- The applicant should come prepared to ask the panelists questions that relate to the job (for example, the salary scale and benefits, if not given in the interview or advertisement).

**Watch YouTube Video: Top 15 Tips to Pass Every Job Interview (14:27 Minutes)**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zy1oNk616\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zy1oNk616_U)

## Job Preparation Activities

With youth looking for employment, carry out some group activities, such as:

Collect various job application letters and CVs (the youth may bring some too), read them to the youth, and discuss whether the individuals that wrote them meet the requirements for specific jobs.

- Divide the youth into small groups and ask them to take turns telling others in the group about the following:
  - A job they are applying for.
  - The CV they are preparing.
  - How they will dress for the interview.
- Ask the youth to find advertisements from newspapers or magazines and bring them to class for group discussion of the following topics:
  - The job title.
  - The job requirements/qualifications.
  - A description of the work.
  - The required experience.
  - The salary package.
- Ask the youth to write applications responding to some of the advertisements the group has discussed using the information provided.
- For each of the careers the youth choose: work with them to collect relevant information about the requirements for their career; help them to prepare a CV and collect advertisements that relate to their career interests for further discussion and practice applications; help them to prepare for an interview.
- Use role playing to simulate and practice going through an interview.

## LESSON SIX

### Helping Youth Make a Career Plan



Farmer?  
Teacher?

“Now, what career path is suitable for me? My teacher has advised that we should start now thinking about our future careers.

My mother is a lawyer in a business in the city; my father is a nurse at the general hospital. I don't think I could do either of their jobs.

Maybe I can farm like Grandfather because I like cheese and would get a lot of satisfaction from raising dairy cattle. But it's hard work: sweating, rough hands, not exactly a suit-and-tie job.

Teaching seems to be easier; telling students things to do and marking their work. But, students are sometimes nasty. I would hate disciplining them.”

What do I do well? I take good care of my pets by cleaning them and their houses, feeding them, and playing with them.

What do I really like to do? I like to be around pets. I also like reading about them.



What lifestyle do I want?  
A life around animals might satisfy me.

What is important to me—independence, power, health, security, love, success, adventure, comfort, knowledge? Working alone with the family pets and caring for them. The dogs wag their tails when they see me and I'm happy for their love. I read books about the pets so that I can understand and meet their needs. Last year, I joined the team at school that chose to visit the zoo to learn about animals.

What skills do I have? I have learned what pets like and how to look after them, nurse them when they're sick, and play with them.

On the previous page, we see a youth, Jamal, in the process of exploring his career options. You can help the youth you know arrive at their career plans by asking them the kinds of questions that Musa is asking himself.

Meet with a youth you know to discuss her/his career plans, which you will assess in Activity 17. Ask the following questions:

- What are some of the talents you have? How could you use those talents to earn a living?
- What skill(s) do you have? Experience(s)? Education?
- What other skills would you like to develop? How could you do this?
- What are you presently doing to develop your skills?
- Which of these skills have you learned from parents, friends, relatives, neighbours, teachers, and members of your community or church?
- What are some of the careers that you have considered? Why are you considering those particular careers?
- Give examples of career plans that might be possible for you and reasons for your choice.

### *Activity 17*

Summarize the youth's skills, interests, and anything else that may help him/her to decide on a career.

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What are some careers that the youth has considered?

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How realistic do you think this youth's career plans are at this point?

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### *Activity 17 Cont'd*

What information or experiences could you provide to the youth to support her/his career planning?

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### **Supporting Youth in Pursuing Further Education or Training**

Anita graduated from high school last year and is preparing to go to university or college. The following list shows how she is preparing herself for further educational opportunities.

- Reading university/college (tertiary institutions) calendars.
- Talking to graduates from the institutions.
- Visiting the institutions that are within reach to look at the environment.
- Writing application letters to the institutions.
- Inquiring about scholarships and applying for them.
- Searching websites for organizations that sponsor special programmes, filling out the forms, and submitting them online.
- Contacting businesses and industries about possible volunteer opportunities relevant to her educational plans.
- Job-shadowing in relevant careers.
- Attending job markets.
- Meeting with the school career guidance counsellor.
- Collecting brochures and any other written materials about the career that interests her.

### *Activity 18*

Interview a college or university student about how he/she prepared him/herself to attend that institution. Summarize the main points here. Are there other ways that he/she had not considered?

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Share the information from your interview with the youth in your care. Encourage them to ask similar questions of other students or persons who are working in a career that they are considering.

If you are involved with several youth, suggest that they each carry out a similar interview and arrange a session during which they share the information they have gathered.



## LESSON SEVEN

### Helping Youth Find Employment

Youth that you are working with have graduated and are ready to look for work. While they are waiting for a job opening, it's a good idea for them to volunteer in an organization where they might like to work. This will give them some experience that can be included in their CVs. It also gives employers a chance to get to know them and keep them in mind when job openings occur, and helps the youth decide what to look for in a workplace. Remember that looking for work is stressful and youth can easily become discouraged by rejection. Offer lots of encouragement.

When the youth are ready to search for a job, suggest that they:

- Read and research about the job.
- Complete an application letter or fill in the required application form.
- Prepare a detailed Curriculum Vitae (CV).
- Contact not less than 3 people who know them well and ask them to be their referees.
- Make copies of their professional and birth certificates and get them endorsed by the appropriate legal personnel (police, lawyer, etc.).
- Prepare copies of relevant transcripts.

As a caregiver, you need to continue talking to the youth about the employment situations in the community and help them to understand that it sometimes takes a while to get employment. This will help them not to get discouraged if they have to wait a long time for a job or even for an interview.

#### *Activity 19*

Prepare a checklist of items to help youth remember when they are job-hunting.

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Did your list include the following?

- Know places to find information about sources of employment; for example, newspapers, magazines, radio, and television.
- Have transcripts and certificates/diplomas to show that they meet the educational requirements for the job.
- Show practical experience in the CV and/or letters of recommendation from previous employers.
- Know how to prepare job application letters and fill in job application forms.
- Get ready for a job interview in case the applicant is short-listed and invited to appear for selection.
- Keep original copies of the certificates/diplomas and transcripts in a safe place, but attach copies to the application letter.
- Follow up on the application by telephoning or personally delivering the application. This will ensure that the application arrives on time. (If it is lost in the mail, the applicant may have to submit another copy of the application.) Also, the applicant will know where to go in case of an interview or follow-up visit.

#### Job Application Activities

- Refer to Lesson 5 for more information about the preparation of the required documents. Check that documents provide the necessary information.
- Share the application letter with someone for corrections and suggestions. This person should check that the application is relevant to the advertisement and follows the correct format. A local language teacher is a good resource.
- Address an envelope that is large enough to hold all the documents that are being sent, using the information given in the advertisement. Be sure to use enough stamps for mailing. (Confirm this with post office personnel.)
- Prepare for a possible interview by researching prospective employers and similar businesses. The internet is a good source of information.

## Summary

This unit on Career and Vocational Guidance is designed to help you, the caregiver, to help youth to answer these very important questions:

- What shall I do with my life?
- What job am I best suited for?

As indicated in the lessons above, vocational guidance is a process that aims at helping the individual discover inner resources, develop them, and use them to the best of his or her ability. It is a process through which youth are given relevant information to help realize their professional goals and potential.

We are living in a time of rapid change, and this has important implications for career planning. In the past people would work at one career (and often one job) throughout their lives. Now, young people can expect to have several careers in the course of their lifetime. To be successful, they will need to be flexible, creative, self-motivated, and able to innovate. They must plan to continually learn and upgrade their skills throughout their lifetimes. As a caregiver, you will need to prepare children and youth for this reality.

It is the individual's responsibility to show concern for the well-being of fellow citizens. He/she can make beneficial contributions to society even while benefitting from it. Youth and children can contribute to the community by becoming active with community involvement programmes, voluntary welfare organizations, self-help groups, community development councils, community centers, clubs, resident committees, and religious organizations.

Ministries of Education and Labour have developed life skills, career, and vocational programmes and distributed these to schools. These are comprehensive packages that contain lessons to help youth/children to be aware of, acquire, and apply their skills in all areas of expertise. Caregivers are encouraged to introduce peer support programmes as well. In addition, as we have seen in this unit, caregivers can find useful resources for career guidance in their local community.

## Glossary

**Career:** Refers to the path a person follows in his or her working life, especially in a certain profession or line of work.

**Curriculum vitae (or Resume):** A brief account of one's education, qualifications, previous employment, and other relevant information to use when applying for a job.

**Gender:** A set of commonly-held beliefs about differences between men and women.

**Gender bias:** Treating someone in a particular way because of their gender.

**Life skill competencies:** The knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour needed for an individual to lead a healthy, happy, and productive life.

**Life skills:** The various psychosocial and interpersonal skills that lead people to a healthy and productive life.

**Stereotypes:** Beliefs that all members of a group (such as a gender) must act in a certain way or have certain values; for example, that only a man can be a mechanic or only a woman should do domestic chores.

**Vocation:** A strong feeling within an individual that he or she is meant to do a certain kind of work.

**Vocational guidance:** The process by which a person is helped to choose a suitable occupation, make preparations for it, enter it, and develop within it.

## References

Ministry of Education. (1996). Counselling articles for secondary school career guidance. Swaziland: Ministry of Education.

Ndambuki, P. & Mutie, E. K. (1999). Guidance and counselling for schools and colleges. Nairobi: Oxford University Press.

Santrock, J. W. (2000). Children 6th Edition. New York: McGraw Hill.

Additional resources can be found at [www.UNICEF.org](http://www.UNICEF.org) and on web sites related to psychological and guidance services.

## NOTES

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## NOTES

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# Module 12:

# Coping with

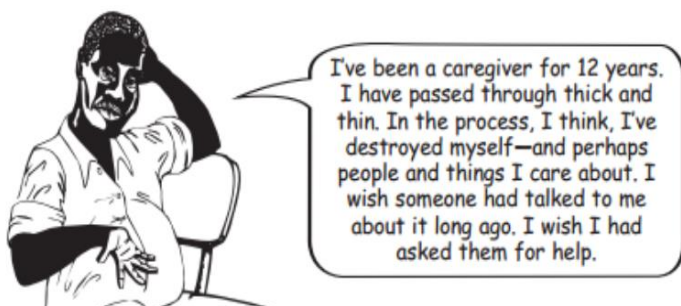
# Stress



# Coping Strategies for Caregivers

## Introduction

Some days in our life are fine days indeed. You get up in the morning feeling very refreshed and looking forward to a pleasant day. The sun is shining and there is a gentle breeze. You are looking forward to having one of your favorite meals. You feel eager to help children and enthusiastic about your work. Things are moving according to your plan and you are delighted. Wow! What a beautiful day! Yet, it is not always so. There can be frustrations in the daily life of a caregiver. Right now, you may be making great efforts in trying to cope with the needs of children under your care. These demands may come from others and from yourself.



The caregiver in the picture is Mr. Phiri. He is talking about a serious matter: *stress*. This unit will help you so that you don't end up like him. He destroyed himself, but that is not all. No! His real regret is that he feels that he messed up everything for the people and the things that he really cared

about. He feels sorry for the pain he caused his family, friends, work colleagues, and all those other people that were affected by his personal stress management, one step at a time.

Each lesson covers a number of topics and provides various activities for you to complete. In Lesson 1, you will learn about what stress is and its effect on your health and behavior. In the next lesson, you will its effects on your health and symptoms of stress. Lessons 3 will outline the causes of stress, and Lessons 4 and 5 will discuss strategies for coping with stress for caregivers and for children, respectively. The unit also contains some important questions and activities, which can help you acquire understanding and knowledge that will enable you to develop positive, healthy ways of coping with stress in your life. You *can* complete this unit successfully. Enjoy your journey!

## Objectives

By the end of the unit, you should be able to:

1. Explain what stress is, and how and why it affects your physical health, mental abilities, emotional stability, and behavior.
2. Describe physical, mental, emotional, and behavior signs and symptoms of stress.
3. Explain the casual factors of stress, both at home and work.
4. Select and practice proven techniques, devices, and strategies for coping effectively and healthily with stress in your life.
5. Recognize symptoms of stress in the children you work with and be able to help them cope with the stress they are experiencing.

## LESSON ONE

### Understanding Stress

#### What Is Stress?



Things are not good for me. I am suffering from stress. I know it and everyone knows it. Everyone is suffering because of me. I create problems for colleagues, children, parents, and everybody at the children's centre. All the people I affect feel unable to help me. They do not know what to do. I do not know

what to do.

Previously I mentioned that I have been a caregiver for the past twelve years. I have not been miserable for all twelve years. The first five years or so were good years for me. I was happy and I was liked by workmates, my supervisors and family. In fact, on two occasions, I was voted the best caregiver. If you asked me when the sad movie started, I couldn't say because it did not start all at once. I became unhappy over time. I must have passed through different stages in the past twelve years.

Over the years, many people have tried to help me but I have not listened to their suggestions. One by one, they have stopped trying to help me. Today, many simply avoid me. I cannot blame them; I have ignored the warnings signs of stress. I am out of touch with myself. As a result, I now face major problems concerning my physical health. Only last week I became very ill and was admitted at the local hospital. They discovered that I have a stomach ulcer. This was not all. They also found that I had problems with my mental ability. I lose concentration and constantly make mistakes. As a result of the various illnesses, my behavior has changed for the worse and everybody at the children's centre and at home is affected by it. I lose my temper unnecessarily. Many times I have been depressed. I blame my mistakes on the fact that I am not sleeping enough. I blame my workmates for my failure to meet deadlines. I yell at children even when they have not done anything wrong. I blame everyone for not understanding my situation. I blame my superiors for the bad weather!!

### Activity 1

After reading Mr. Phiri's story, what are your thoughts?

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During the next activities, remember what you wrote above. Read Mr. Phiri's story again. Then answer the following questions. Write three words or statements that describe the way you feel about Mr. Phiri.

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How did Mr. Phiri change over the years? How do you think he got into such a state?

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List three suggestions that could help Mr. Phiri cope with his situation.

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State three actions you could take to ensure that you will cope better than Mr. Phiri. The first item is completed for you.

1. I am reading this unit and will learn from it.

2.

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3.

How do you think other people would answer the previous question for you?

My family would say:

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My colleagues would say:

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## **How Much Do You Know about Stress?**

After reading Mr. Phiri's story, you might say that you are not Mr. Phiri and such things will not happen to you. You may be right. But it is helpful to remember that stress can happen to anyone, though what is stressful for one person may not be for another. Stress is very personal.

You might also be thinking that Mr. Phiri's stress appeared suddenly. Actually, stress can appear gradually. Our bodies react to stress by triggering our "fight or flight" reaction. This is a physical reaction to a situation that we perceive to be threatening or stressful. The body takes time to return to its normal equilibrium (balance). Even several small "triggers" in a row will raise your stress level. You could compare this to a staircase. We go up a step when something is stressful, and down a step when we deal with stress we are carrying.

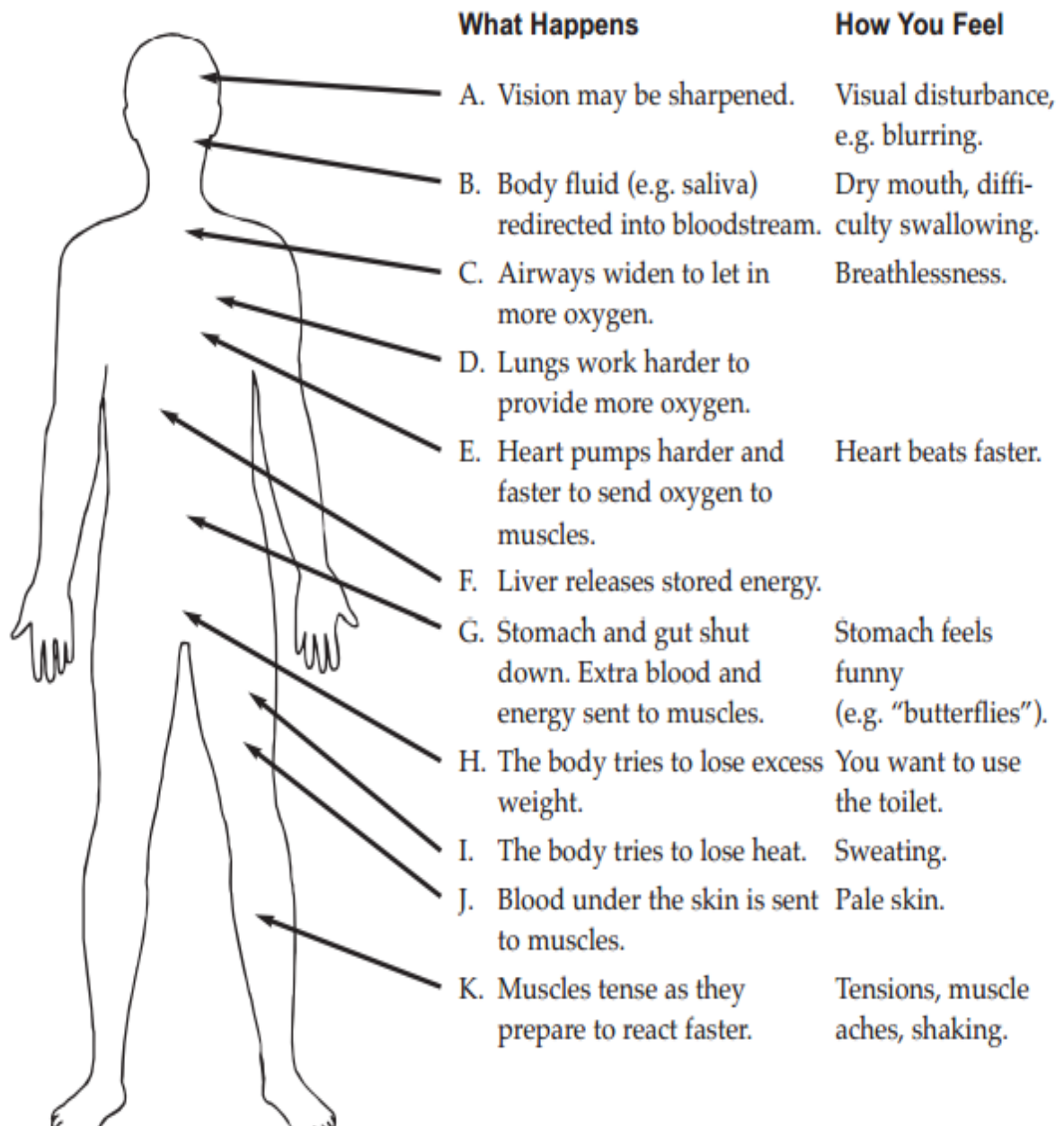
## **How Does Your Body Respond to Stress?**

Stress is the tension or pressure we feel in our bodies as we respond to everyday events or events that make us feel uncomfortable. Stress is a natural part of living. It can be positive and motivating. But it can also produce an uneasy feeling. We have problems when we have too much stress (we feel tense) or too little (we feel bored and unmotivated).

People experience stress in different ways. The rest of this lesson outlines how most people respond to stress that makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.

When a person perceives a threat, the brain will prepare the body to run away or fight. The brain sends a message to the adrenal glands, located above the kidneys. A chemical or hormone called adrenaline is released into the bloodstream and carried to every part of the body. When the adrenaline reaches your heart, lungs, muscles, and other organs, it makes changes to help them prepare your body to fight or run.

## Your Body's Responses to a Threat



**Watch YouTube Video:** Managing Stress – Brainsmart – BBC (2:24 Minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnpQrMqDoqE>

## How Are These Physical Changes Useful?

The body's reaction to stress can help with difficult situations. The reactions indicated in the diagram are further explained below.

- A. Visions disturbance may occur when you are under stress. Your body tenses and your vision is sharpened as well. If you can't use up all the adrenaline in your bloodstream, your vision may become blurred. Your vision will clear if you act or if you relax.
- B-D. When the body is under stress, it needs more oxygen. Your dry mouth enables more oxygen to enter the body with each breath. Shallow breathing or panting can pull in more oxygen than deep relaxed breathing.
- E-F. The heart beats faster to pump more blood through the body. The blood carries oxygen and the many different substances necessary for you to have the extra energy to respond to the cause of your stress.
- G. When tense, your stomach and gut stop working, because the body focuses on dealing with stress. As your stomach becomes less active, you may feel that your tummy is knotted or you may have "butterflies."
- H. You may feel sick and want to use a toilet. This is because your body tries to lose excess weight in order to be efficient and light ready for action.
- I. Sweating is how the body controls its temperature. If you are tense, your body is ready for action. You may become hot. Sweating cools your body.
- J. As the blood leaves the surface of your skin and goes to your muscles, you may appear to be pale.
- K. Muscles ache because they are tense and ready to act. (Try clenching your fist and see how long it takes before it aches!)

Important note: Studies have shown that continuous stress can lead to high blood pressure, which can, in turn, be a major cause of serious medical problems such as strokes and heart attacks.

In addition to the reaction noted in the diagram, when you are under stress and producing adrenaline, the ability to stop bleeding is speeded up. If you get hurt while you are fighting or fleeing, the bleeding will quickly stop. Also, your body produces substances called endorphins. If you are injured, these will reduce the pain.

Stress is a potential enemy to your physical and mental well-being. It affects your performance. To ensure that you avoid stress and not end up like Mr. Phiri, you need to know how stress affects you.

### Activity 2

For each of the four issues that are raised below, circle Yes or No and state the reasons for your answer. When you are finished, compare your answer with the suggestions that follows.

1. I should fear stress. Yes/No. Why or why not?

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2. I should respect stress. Yes/No. Why or why not?

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3. I should give in to stress. Yes/No. Why or why not?

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4. Are we saying that stress is always a problem? That it is unhealthy and negative? Yes/No. Why or why not?

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Did you answer like this?

1. Yes. It can destroy me, my home life, and my working life, if I let it.
2. Yes. It is a big force and can be an enemy in my efforts to have a healthy and happy life.
3. No. Even when confronted with high stress, there is always something to learn from coping with stress. Dealing with stress can help you prepare for the next difficult time.
4. No. Stress can be a powerful enemy, but it can only destroy us if we allow it to. Stress can also motivate us to act. For example, thinking about a drought can be stressful, but can also encourage us to act by conserving water. Our stress is reduced by knowing that we have saved some water.

You can manage stress. You can control it in most situations. You can use it for your personal benefit. Everyone has experienced at least one situation when stress has given them one or a combination of the following results:

- More energy
- More concentration
- More creativity
- More positive attitude
- More enthusiasm
- More self-belief
- More determination

### Activity 3

Consider the positive side of stress and recall three occasions when the stress you were under actually helped you.

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Read the following pieces of information about stress. Which information did you already know? Put a check mark next to items that you are already aware of and an “X” next to items that are new to you.

1. There are two types of stress. One is positive and good for me. The other is negative and bad for me. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Stress-related illness originates from the stress response. This is a physical response to stress. It is activated in my body when the mind detects a threat, or a challenge, or indeed any situation that requires extra energy. \_\_\_\_\_
3. 85% of all illness is considered to be stress-related. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Each year, stress costs my country large sums of money. Money is lost through absenteeism. People may stay home because of stress-related illness. They may use alcohol or drugs to deal with stress. Or they may make mistakes, cause accidents, and create disputes. All of the above may reduce people’s performance in the workplace. \_\_\_\_
5. Some insurance companies are refusing to insure organizations for claims unless they can prove that they have an active stress management policy for their workforce. \_\_\_\_\_
6. The stress response in my body is activated solely by me. Nothing and no one can activate it for me. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Stress-related illness occurs as a result of adding together the effects of several stressful events. \_\_\_\_\_



#### **Activity 4**

Based on your responses above, how knowledgeable are you about stress? (Count the number of ticks.)

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What new pieces of information are you surprised by and why?

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Will any of these 7 pieces of information influence your future approach to the stress in your life? If so, how?

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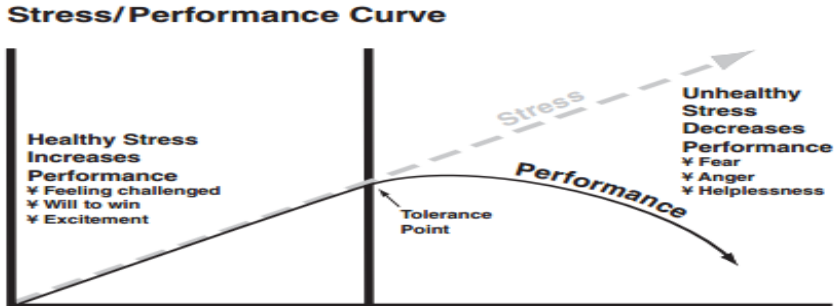
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### **The Relationship between Stress and Performance**

It is not possible to avoid stress. Stress is part of what helps us to do something well. Too much stress can impair a person's functioning, but so can no stress at all. We must learn to manage stress and deal with its mental, physical, and emotional consequences.

Obviously, we are all individuals. Thus, part of stress management is to know ourselves and what is right for us as individuals. The principles of stress management can be applied to anyone.

The stress/ performance relationship can be a bit difficult to understand at first. However, it is very important that you understand the relationship between stress and performance. Look at the diagram below.

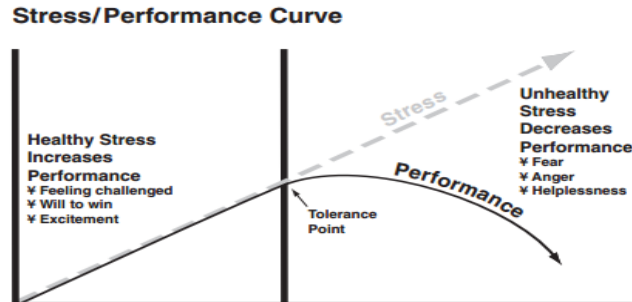


Here is an explanation of the Stress/ Performance Curve:

- The straight, dashed line represents the amount of stress you are feeling. Don't confuse this with the amount of work you do.
- The curved line shows your performance, reflecting your physical health, mental ability, emotional stability, and behavior.
- The two lines run together on the left-hand side of the diagram. This is because the left-hand side of the curve is positive and healthy. You are using the stress response to increase your energy, concentration, and Brainpower. You feel challenge. You achieve success for your efforts.
- Look at where the two lines separate. This is your tolerance point. You must be able to recognize when you have reached it. If you don't, you move into the right-hand side of the diagram, where you feel threatened, afraid, frustrated, or annoyed. In this state, your health and well-being will deteriorate, as Mr. Phiri ignored the warning signs that appeared near the tolerance point. Remember what happened to him!

## Activity 5

The Stress/Performance Curve helps you understand stress and its effect upon our life. However, what you have learned is useless unless you can relate it to your own life. On the diagram below, place an “X” where you feel you are now.



Why have you placed your “X” at that particular point?

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If your “X” is on the RIGHT, how do you cope? What do you do to make yourself feel better?

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In what situations would your “X” have been on the LEFT?

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Consider the ways you cope with unhealthy stress. Do they work? Explain your answer.

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## Some Factors That Influence Your Perception of Stress

The amount of stress created is influenced by a variety of factors including:

- Whether you perceive the situation to be a threat or a challenge.
- Whether you perceive that you have or could get the resources or skills to cope.
- Whether you perceive that stress is caused solely by the problems you face.
- Whether it is a one-time situation or ongoing situation
- Where you are on the stress/performance curve, relative to the point at which stress becomes negative.

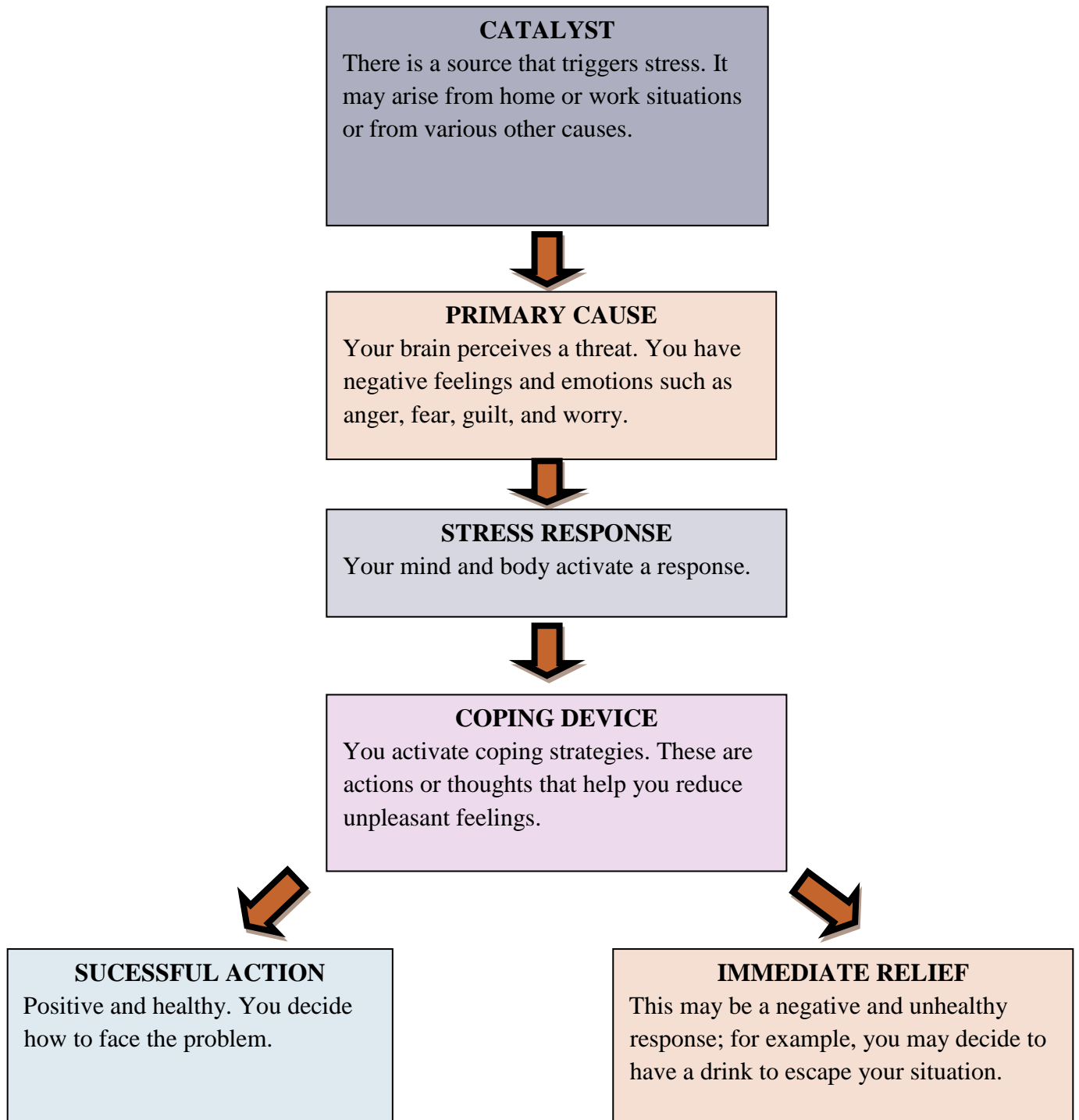
There are also “buffers,” or means which help us deal with stress. These include:

- Our social network.
- Physical exercise.
- Our individual “hardiness.” For example, we are more likely to overcome stress that may be associated with a situation if we are committed to an action, have control over the situation, and see it as a challenge.

The following terms are important to understand.

- *Commitment* is a sense of purpose, which allows a person to find meaning in what he or she is doing.
- *Control* is the perception of oneself as having influence on events, through skill, knowledge, and choice.
- *Challenge* is the belief that change is an opportunity for growth, rather than a threat to security.

# The Process of Stress



### Activity 6

When you are under stress, what negative and unhealthy coping devices do you use?

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What positive and healthy coping devices do you use when you feel stressed?

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Are you able to recognize your tolerance point, and hence the need to use positive and healthy coping devices?

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We hope that this lesson has helped you to analyze your life for stress. Perhaps you are better able to identify what you have done well and what you need to improve. At this point, you should be able to explain the following major points of this lesson.

1. Stress does not just affect those we perceive as being weak. All human beings experience stress.
2. Stress is to be respected and sometimes endured, but you should never surrender and become a victim of it.
3. Most stress can be dealt with, as long as you have a positive attitude and use good coping strategies.
4. Experiencing emotions such as challenge, achievement, pride, and determination means that you are using stress positively. Stress can be good.
5. Experiencing negative emotions such as anger, fear, helplessness, and worry means that you are on the right-hand side of the Stress/Performance Curve and therefore possibly doing yourself harm.
6. The tolerance point is the point at which positive and healthy emotions switch to negative and unhealthy feelings. Passing this tolerance point tells you that you are moving into the danger zone.

7. There are two types of coping devices: those that are positive and healthy; and, those that are negative and unhealthy.
8. People move from negative stress to positive stress by using coping devices.

If you feel uncertain about any of the points above, please review relevant sections of Lesson 1.

## LESSON TWO

### The Signs and Symptoms of Stress



#### The Warning Signs

Do you still remember Mr. Phiri? He told us that he has been a caregiver for the past twelve years. He also said that he is in a mess now. Now he confesses that there were dozens of warning signs, but he ignored them.

Can you guess what signs warned Mr. Phiri that stress was about to strike? He had headaches, constant colds, and other minor infections. He also had sleep disturbances and outbursts of temper. But he ignored them, so they became worse. He then experienced stomachaches and recurring throat infections. His headaches became more serious. He also started making silly mistakes and became forgetful. His errors began to affect his work and other people. The signs of stress come from your mind and body, and they tell you that things are not right. At first these signs are mild but if you do not take action, they will become more severe.

Instead of listening to the warning messages, Mr. Phiri chose the easy way and “buried his head in the sand,” as he says above. What does he mean by “burying his head in the sand?” Instead of acting on the warning signs, he chose to endure them. He explained and justified them, making silly excuses for them to himself and to those around him. He avoided dealing with them and looking for their cause.

Was Mr. Phiri a fool (because he ignored the warning signs until things turned so bad for him)? Well, he could be. But how many of us ignore simple warning signs? Do you know what your warning signs are? You probably don’t know all of them. In fact, you probably receive some warning signs that you may think are not related to stress at all.

#### The Three Major Categories of Warning Signs

From the last activities, you will have guessed that warning signs and symptoms of stress fall into three main categories. These are:

1. Your physical signs and symptoms (anything that happens to your body as a result of stress).
2. Your psychological (or mental) and emotional signs and symptoms (anything relating to your ability to use your brain and anything relating to the way you feel emotionally).

3. Your behavioural signs and symptoms (anything relating to the way you conduct yourself, including what you do, how you do it, what you say, and how you say it).

The following are some of the most common physical, psychological, emotional, and behavioural warning signs of stress. As you review the list, think about which of these symptoms you have experienced. Which do you experience most frequently?

Some of these symptoms may come from causes other than stress; however, if several are present then stress is probably a major factor in their origin and in your life.

### **1. Physical Symptoms**

- Lack of appetite
- Craving for food
- Frequent indigestion or heartburn
- Constipation or Diarrhea
- Insomnia
- Constant Tiredness
- Tendency to sweat for no good reason
- Headaches
- Cramps and muscle spasms
- Stomach upsets and nausea
- Breathlessness without physical activity
- Frequent crying or the desire to cry
- Lack of sexual drive
- High blood pressure
- Inability to sit still without fidgeting

### **2. Emotional Symptoms**

- Anger or rage
- Anxiety or fear
- Panic
- Guilt, shame, humiliation
- Frustration
- Jealousy
- Insecurity
- Hopelessness
- Worry
- Upset
- Embarrassment



### **3. Behavioural Symptoms**

- Tense
- Dry mouth
- Running to the toilet
- Feeling faint
- Feel like running away
- Poor concentration
- Can't sit still
- Can't carry out daily activities
- Experience unpleasant thoughts
- Withdrawal from people

### **4. Psychological Symptoms**

- Constant irritability with people
- Feeling unable to cope
- Lack of interest in life
- Constant or recurrent fear of disease
- A feeling of being a failure
- A feeling of dislike for yourself
- Difficulty in making decisions
- Loss of interest in other people
- Awareness of suppressed anger
- Impaired sense of humor
- A feeling of being the target of other people's animosity
- Feeling neglected
- Dread of the future
- Feeling of having failed as a partner or parent
- Feeling of having no one to confide in
- Difficulty in concentrating
- Inability to finish one task before rushing on to the next
- Intense fear of open or enclosed space, or of being alone

### *Activity 7*

How knowledgeable are you about how stress affects you? Rate yourself by circling one of the numbers following each statement? (0 is Poor; 1 Not good; 2 Satisfactory; 3 Good; 4 Very good; and 5 Excellent).

- I know my physical warning signs of stress, watch for them, and take note of them. 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I know my psychological and emotional warning signs of stress, watch for them, and take note of them. 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I know my behavioral warning signs of stress, watch for them, and take note of them. 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I can recognize warning signs of stress shown by my family. 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I can recognize warning signs shown by my colleagues. 0 1 2 3 4 5

### *Activity 8*

Record your three most frequent signs of stress for each category.

Physical

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Emotional

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Behavioural

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Psychological

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Before moving on to Lesson 3, check that you can list warning signs of stress for yourself and others in each of the categories listed in the lesson. Note that each of us have a different combination of warning of signs. It will be helpful in dealing with stress. If you take into account all the warnings signs that you recognize in yourself and ask your family, friends, and colleagues to tell you when they see you displaying these signs.

## LESSON THREE

### The Causes of Stress

#### Catalysts and Primary Causes



Most of my stress was created by myself. It sounds crazy, doesn't it?

You must be wondering how Mr. Phiri created stress for himself. Well, Mr. Phiri explains that what really stressed him out happens on Wednesdays. He has to take 45 children to the primary school nearest the centre. It is a trip of six hundred meters. Getting the children to

the school is a nightmare. The last time, some fought on the way. Some refused to walk fast. Others played when they were suppose to walk. He would scream at them. It took 30 minutes to cover the short distance. By the time they reached the school, Mr. Phiri was exhausted. After three hours, he returned with the children to the centre. You can imagine the state Mr. Phiri was in at the close of the day. He truly hated Wednesdays. He began dreading Wednesday on Monday, and he remained angry until Friday.

From the story told by Mr. Phiri, is it easy to conclude, as he does, that most of his stress was created by himself? In trying to answer this question, let's try to identify the catalysts and primary causes of Mr. Phiri's stress. In this way, we might also understand the difference between catalysts and primary causes of stress. In Mr. Phiri's case, the catalyst was the six hundred meter trip to the primary school with 45 uncooperative children. The primary causes of his stress were anger (at the task he had to perform), frustration (with the troublesome children), and loss of control (over his day).

You may recall what we said about stress response. We noted that stress management means finding ways of controlling stress so that it doesn't do us harm. Well, unruly children and undertaking trips (catalysts) cannot switch that stress response on. It can only be activated by you, through the negative emotions you are experiencing. Now do you understand why Mr. Phiri thinks he created his own stress?

Consider the following emotions:

Joy	Helplessness	Annoyance
Sadness	Elation	Pride
Sense of achievement	Insecurity	Frustration
Anger	Satisfaction	Fear of failure
Anxiety	Inadequacy	Guilt
Contentment	Despair	Disappointment
Despondency	Happiness	Determination
Loss	Hopelessness	Grief

### Activity 9

Place the words listed above into the two categories below.

Category 1 – Pleasant feelings (such as happiness)

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Category 2 – Unpleasant feelings (such as fear of failure)

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Which category of emotions do you experience the most?

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What three emotions in Category 2 do you experience the most?

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Use your results from the previous activity to do the following. For each catalyst, state what you think is the primary cause of stress that results from the catalyst. You are given three choices. Although all three may apply, one is the real primary cause of stress that results from the catalyst. You are given three choices. Although all three may apply, one is the real primary cause for you. Circle the one you feel is correct.

Catalyst: Problems with colleagues where you work

Primary cause of stress: a. Anger; b. Fear of failure; c. Anxiety

Catalyst: Problems with higher management in your workplace.

Primary cause of stress: a. Disappointment; b. Guilt; c. Frustration

Catalyst: Unruly and disruptive children

Primary cause of stress: a. Annoyance; b. Helplessness c; Despair

### Activity 10

In this activity, use what you have learned about catalysts and primary causes from the previous activities to complete the chart below.

<b>Category</b>	<b>What happens? (Catalyst)</b>	<b>How does this make you feel? (Primary Cause)</b>
Relationship with partner		
Relationship with children		
Relationship with wider family		
Relationship with friends		
The home (size, area, condition, etc.)		
Financial status		
Relationship with neighbors		
Relationship with colleagues at work		

Before completing this lesson, check that you are fully aware of the negative emotions and feelings you experience at work and at home, and the catalyst that provoke them. Be sure that you have thought about how you can try to change them into positive emotions. Have you decided which aspects of your behavior to work on, to reduce self-induced negative stress? You must be honest with yourself to make progress.

## LESSON FOUR

### Coping Strategies

#### Looking at Yourself



Oh, if I could do it all again!  
I'd be a positive thinker!  
I'd take lots of exercise!  
I'd eat a balanced diet!  
I'd enjoy my hobbies!  
I'd leave work problems at work!  
I'd get priorities right!  
I'd avoid stress because I would plan,  
prepare, and be organised.

Mr. Phiri has realized that he would have coped with stress better had he looked at himself more critically. Hopefully, he will be given a chance to start over. What lessons can you learn from Mr. Phiri?

From his experiences, you could learn that

when things in our lives change, we need to adapt. This takes physical, mental, and emotional energy and resources. You should therefore:

- Acknowledge that you cannot perceive your stress only in the context of work. Every aspect of your life contributes to the cumulative effects of unhealthy stress.
- Look back on your recent past and appreciate the impact that life events have had on you. Then decide whether you need a respite to replenish spent resources.
- Be prepared to plan your year ahead and alter your original plans if necessary.

Before we look at various coping strategies, examine your work and home, and look at yourself. The amount of stress you experience is influenced by the type of person you are, the relationships you form, and the way you perceive yourself and the world around you.

### *Activity 11*

Now that you have looked at yourself, try to answer the questions below. Collect perceptions of yourself from other people as much as possible.

How do you cope when you are under stress at work?

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What aspects of your answer to the question above do you think are positive and healthy for you?

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What aspects do you think are negative and unhealthy for you?

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How do your coping strategies at work affect other people?  
Positively:

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Negatively:

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---

How do you cope when you're under stress at home?

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What aspects of your answer to the previous question do you think are positive and healthy for you?

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### *Activity 11 Cont'd*

What aspects do you think are negative and unhealthy for you?

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How do your coping strategies at home affect other people?

Positively:

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Negatively:

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What should you do more often?

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What should you do less often?

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### **Coping Strategies for Your Body**

During the discussion of previous topics, we've drawn your attention to how stress takes its toll on your body, due to constant impact of the stress response. The effects of stress can do damage to your body. Coping strategies are designed to dilute the effects of this attack on your physical well-being. They are also meant to make you fitter for the times you have to face unavoidable stress. There are seven areas for you to consider:

1. Diet
2. Exercise
3. Smoking
4. Alcohol
5. Sleep
6. Drugs
7. Body Maintenance Assistance

First, measure how well you are doing at present, and then decide on what you are going to do to improve your coping skills. Be as honest as you can possibly be when completing the following activity.

### *Activity 12*

#### **Diet**

Which aspects of your overall diet (food intake) are healthy and help you to maintain a healthy body?

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Which are unhealthy and detract from maintaining a healthy body?

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#### **Exercise**

Which aspects of your overall exercise programme help you to maintain a healthy body?

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Which aspects detract from maintaining a healthy body?

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#### **Smoking**

If you smoke, what problems does it cause for you?

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#### **Alcohol**

The positive side to my drinking is:

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The negative side to my drinking is:

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### *Activity 12 Cont'd*

#### **Sleep**

I take sleep seriously because:

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I experience sleep disturbances because:

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#### **Drugs**

I use “hard” or “soft” drugs, medicines, or tablets frequently because:

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I avoid excessive use of drugs because:

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#### **Body Maintenance Assistance**

I use the assistance of professionals to help me maintain the well-being of my body.  
Please tick the items below that apply to your situation.

- Visits to health professionals when something does not seem right.
- Regular visits to clinics for skin, feet, teeth, eyes, and so forth.
- Visits to traditional healers.
- Annual medical check-ups.

Appendix A contains a self-assessment checklist designed to help identify areas where you think you could improve your lifestyle.

## Coping Strategies for Your Mind

To cope positively with stress, Mr. Phiri now employs a number of mental strategies, including:

1. Inner dialogue. The purpose of inner dialogue is to keep calm in crisis situations. When Mr. Phiri realizes that he has set up a stress response or is about to do so, he switches his negative emotions and feelings to positive ones. He does this to control his stress response, knowing it is potentially dangerous to his personal well-being. Since stress can have cumulative effects, he tries to address each stressful situation as it arises.
2. Relaxation. The purpose of relaxation is to help him feel calm and to recharge his batteries. Relaxation helps him maintain his inner dialogue.
3. Home and work boundaries. The purpose of home and work boundaries is to ensure that work does not invade or take over his home life, social life, and hobbies, thereby disrupting his life priorities. As much as possible, he should leave his work-related problems at work. To ensure that he is ready for work the next day and that he is physically and mentally refreshed, he must set boundaries between home and work.
4. Support systems. The purpose of support systems is to ensure a positive attitude towards life, and to plan and prepare for stressful times. Support systems provide a check on the perceptions of other people.

If inner dialogue is to be successful, there are difficult questions that must be addressed. Mr. Phiri knew he had to find answers to such questions as:

- “How can I stop myself from getting angry when I face unpleasant situations?”
- “How can I stop the resentment I feel when I escort children?”
- “How can I stop the dread I feel as I go to work, thinking of the awful day ahead of me?”
- “How can I stop the frustration I feel on the way home after a bad day at work?”
- “How can I stop worrying about upcoming deadlines that I might not be able to meet?”

Remember that it is important to deal, head on, with your stress response as it occurs. Inner dialogue (what we say to ourselves, how we reason with ourselves, and how we put things into perspective mentally) plays a vital role in changing our perception of stressful situations.

Appendix B contains several coping strategies which you should try in order to reduce your stress. You can rate their effectiveness. The ideas include:

- Staying calm
- Reasoning with yourself
- Removing yourself mentally
- Using humour
- Taking action

### Activity 13

This activity will help you determine how relaxation strategies work for you. Circle the word (Good/Average/Poor) that best reflects your use of (and ability to use) strategies to cope with stress.

#### **Coping Strategies:**

1. Releasing my tension on the way home from work.  
Good/Average/Poor
2. Relaxing before a difficult class or situation.  
Good/Average/Poor
3. Relaxing before a difficult meeting. Good/Average/ Poor
4. Relaxing after a difficult class. Good/Average/Poor
5. Relaxing before a presentation. Good/Average/Poor
6. Switching off my stress response before going to sleep. Good/Average/ Poor

Describe the relaxation and tension control techniques that you use.

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In what situations would you like to use these techniques? Explain why.

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#### **Hobbies**

How important are hobbies to relaxation? Give reasons.

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What hobbies and activities do you participate in during the evening? How many weekday evenings, on average, are you involved in hobbies or similar activities?

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What hobbies/activities do you participate in during the weekend?

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### *Activity 13 cont'd*

Could you increase the time you spend on hobbies and activities?

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What hobbies and activities have you stopped doing? Why?

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What hobbies and activities would you like to try?

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Should you be more actively involved in your hobbies? What improvement can you make the future?

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#### **Socializing**

For each statement below, circle the word (Good/Average/Poor) that best describes your use of socializing to cope with stress.

I have lots of friends. Good/Average/Poor

I like to meet new people. Good/Average/Poor

I have an active social life. Good/Average/Poor

I maintain my friendships. Good/Average/Poor

In an average month, describe the type and amount of socializing you do. Are you happy with the amount and quality of socializing?

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## Short-term Strategies

Short-term strategies are the ongoing monitoring part of stress management. They look at dealing with stress on a daily basis. They also help you to choose longer-term strategies. You need to pay attention to the following:

- What triggers you personally? How do these triggers affect your behavior, thought, and feelings, as well as your body?
- What helps you, personally, to reduce or deal with these consequences of stress?
- Under what conditions do you feel comfortable with stress?

Once you have identified your signs of stress and conditions under which stress is uncomfortable for you, you need to act:

- In advance, to support yourself, if you know something is going to be stressful.
- In the present moment, by stepping back from the situation and looking at it with “new” eyes.
- At the next available opportunity, by taking five minutes or half an hour to calm down, taking a step back from what is stressful, clearing your mind, and making a decision about what you need to do. Do you need to make some tea or take a lunch break out of the building? Do you need to remember to link your current short-term strategy with your long-term strategy?

It is helpful to link what you choose to do with how you are being affected. For example:

- If your adrenaline levels are high, then you need to do something physical.
- If you cannot concentrate, then you need to do something that clears your mind.

## Long-term Strategies

When you apply long-term strategies to manage stress, you must think more strategically. You must decide what activities you could build into your week, or what changes you need to make over the long term. You need to consider more than just your reaction to an individual trigger.

You must take time to:

1. Identify and think about patterns in what causes you stress, and how these affect you personally.
2. Know what your “baseline” of tension is, in order to feel comfortable and function effectively. You need to recognize when you have gone beyond your baseline and are feeling uncomfortable.
3. Identify ways of reducing stress that work for you personally. Depending on what has triggered your stress response, you may need to employ a short or long-term strategy. Try some of these stress reduction methods:
  - Build things into your week, on an ongoing basis, that relax you and lower your overall stress levels. For example, you might want to take more time for yourself. You might want to take a long bath, become more active in sports, or spend more time with friends and colleagues.

- Think about what you could do to give yourself a greater sense of control. Do you need more information about taking control, or do you need to learn any new skills?
- Practice “relaxing while you are active.”
- Take up yoga, meditation, or similar activities/ techniques that can help manage stress

## Lifestyle

This part of stress management addresses the kind of lifestyle we choose to lead and our attitudes about what is important to us. Also included are the roles we have and the goals, aims, and ambitions we set for ourselves.

When we review our lifestyle, we may be able to identify a particular part of our lifestyle that we could change or adapt, in order to reduce or manage stress better. This may not be a very easy task!

### Activity 14

The part of my lifestyle I want to change to manage stress better is

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The part of my lifestyle I want to adapt to reduce stress is

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The difficulties I may encounter in putting this into practice are

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I intend to resolve any difficulties by

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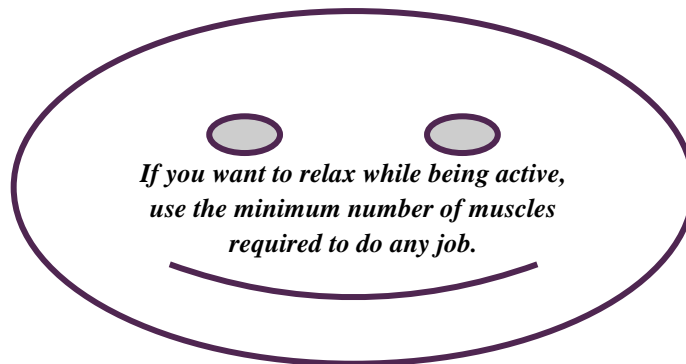
## Relaxing While Active

What does it mean? With careful observation, you can see excess tension in people around you every day. There are those who wave their arms around unnecessarily, frown too often, or move about in a way that is obviously “full of tension.” To relax while being active requires the individual to use the minimum of tension in the muscles required for carrying out any task. All other muscles not required for that task should be relaxed.

A person who remains excited during daily activities will not readily relax, so tension will build over time. Learning to relax in stressful situations can also improve your performance and increase your confidence. You should learn to relax when active as well as when lying down.

In order to learn more about relaxing while being active, you need to learn to distinguish between primary and secondary activity. Consider the following situation: You are holding a pen in one hand and keeping the paper still with the other. You are perched on the edge of your chair and hunched over the coffee table. Your legs are crossed. In this scenario you can find examples of primary and secondary activity.

- *Primary activity* is essential to a task. In the example, the primary activities are the muscles that contract to hold the pen and the hand that steadies the paper.
- *Secondary activities* are the extra activities; they are not necessary. We tend to do them to dispel excess tension, but they also create tension in themselves. They do not help you do the job any better, will use up your energy, and cause you unnecessary tension. In this case, your hunched back and crossed legs are good examples.



If you want to relax while being active, use the minimum number of muscles required to do any job. You should:

- Check that you are doing primary activities only as much as necessary. For example, are you holding your pen too tightly? Could you use a taller table than a coffee table?
- Note all your secondary activities, such as smoking, crossing legs, clenching your teeth, or fiddling with your hair. When are they triggered? Why are you doing any of these things? What are you thinking as you do them? Try to reduce the number of secondary activities that you do.

Below are two ways of focusing on relaxing while active. You may want to try them.

- Pick an activity that you do regularly such as walking the dog, washing dishes, or watching television. Work out the primary activity necessary to do the job and the secondary activities that you do as well. Each time you do that activity, concentrate on doing it in the most relaxed way possible. Eliminate all the secondary activities. For example, don't allow yourself to plan tomorrow's meals while you're walking the dog. Enjoy being out with the dog. Enjoy the moment. Once you have managed to focus on one primary activity, learn to focus on another activity.
- Pick your most peaceful hour of the day. Perhaps it's after supper when the children are in bed. Within that hour, do everything in the most relaxed way possible. Do one task at a time. Do not perform any secondary activities. Once you have managed to do this for an hour, try to do the same during a more pressured hour, and so on.

Once you begin to consciously apply these principles in your daily life, you will find yourself breaking old habits and feelings less fatigued.

## LESSON FIVE

### Coping Strategies for Children & Youth

#### Stressors for Children & Youth

It is likely that pressures of modern life are forcing children to grow up too soon and making their childhoods too stressful. Many of today's children are expected to succeed in school, to compete in sports, and to meet parents' emotional needs. They are pressured by adults and peers to act in certain ways. Children are exposed to many adult problems on television and in real life, before they have mastered the problems of childhood. They know about sex and violence, and they often must shoulder adult responsibilities (refer to Unit 7). Many children move frequently and have to change homes and schools as a result. They leave old friends behind. The tightly scheduled pace of life can also be stressful. Yet children are not adults. They feel and think like children, and they need the years of childhood for healthy development. This is why you must help them.

#### *Activity 15*

Identify stressors or situations that cause stress in most children under your care.

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How can you help children to identify stress in their lives?

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## Coping Strategies for Children & Youth

Some strategies mentioned in this unit can be used to teach youth and children how to manage stressful events. In youth and children, stress is a response to the physical and psychological demands upon them. Stressful events, or stressors, are part of childhood, and most young people learn to cope.

As is the case for adults, stress that becomes overwhelming can lead to psychological problems. Experiences such as being abused or watching a parent die of cancer are likely to have long-term effects on children's physical and psychological well-being.

In order to help youth cope with stress, you can provide individual counselling in which you meet with a youth one-on-one to help the youth gain insights into his or her personality and relationships. You begin by trying to interpret the youth's feelings and behaviour. Such treatment may be helpful at a time of stress, such as experiencing the loss of a pet, death of a parent, or parental divorce. Even when a youth has not shown signs of stress, counselling may be helpful. Child counselling is usually more effective when combined with counselling for the parents or guardians.

In family counselling, you see the whole family together, or it might be a youth with his or her guardian. You are able to see how family members interact, and point out both growth-producing and growth-inhibiting or destructive patterns of family functioning. Sometimes the youth whose problem brings the family into a counselling session is actually the healthiest member of the family. This youth is responding openly to a troubled family situation. Counselling can help parents or guardians confront their own conflicts and begin to resolve them. This is often the first step toward resolving the youth's problems as well.

When children and youth have limited verbal and conceptual skills, or have suffered emotional trauma, you may need to use the art, drama, play and writing counselling techniques that you learned in Units 1 and 3.

### *Activity 16*

What are your experiences with conducting individual and family counselling related to behaviour caused by stress? What were the difficulties and successes?

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## How Caregivers Can Help Children Cope with Stress

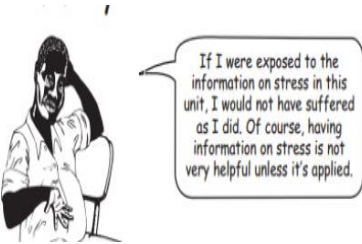
After you have helped children identify signs of stress in their lives, you can:

- Encourage children to share their concerns with peers and adults they feel close to.
- Teach assertiveness skills, such as saying “No” and using “I” messages (refer to Unit 2).
- Encourage children to talk with their caregivers about worries they have.
- Teach children the importance of a healthy diet and adequate sleep.
- Emphasize the need to avoid abusing drugs, such as alcohol, tobacco, or coffee.
- Promote regular exercise.
- Teach the importance of managing time efficiently.
- Teach the use of effective work habits and study skills.
- Help children understand and learn how to function effectively in their home situations.
- Encourage children to cooperate with their peers, in order to learn most effectively.

We encourage you to use the knowledge, skills, and strategies you have learned while working on this unit to:

- Influence members within your centre or group home to develop a policy on stress management for children.
- Design a programme to teach children stress management strategies.
- Design an evaluation form, which you can use when monitoring and evaluating how children manage their stress.

### Summary



If I were exposed to the information on stress in this unit, I would not have suffered as I did. Of course, having information on stress is not very helpful unless it's applied.

Mr. Phiri summarises this unit very well in the above picture. We hope you are encouraged to help yourself and the children under your care deal effectively with stress. You are too valuable a resource to your community to lose your soul and mind to the effects of stress. In this unit, we provided you with tools that will help you manage your personal and professional levels of stress. If you handle stress effectively, not only will you benefit, but those around you will also benefit. You are encouraged to pass on basic stress management techniques to children under your care.

## Glossary

**Adrenal glands:** Two glands above the kidneys which secrete adrenaline.

**Adrenaline:** A hormone produced by the adrenal glands, affecting circulation and muscular action and causing excitement and stimulation.

**Behavioral:** Relating to the way we conduct ourselves, including what we do and say and how we do and say things.

**Coping strategies:** Actions or thoughts that help one to reduce unpleasant feelings and manage stress.

**Endorphins:** A group of peptide neurotransmitters occurring naturally in the brain and having pain-relieving properties.

**Inner dialogue:** The things that we say to ourselves in our minds.

**Psychological:** Having to do with mental characteristics or attitude.

**Stress:** The tension or pressure we feel in our bodies as we respond to everyday events or events that make us feel uncomfortable.

## References

Mills, S. (1995). Stress management for the individual teacher. London: Framework Press.

## Additional Sources of Information

In addition to this unit, you are advised to consult widely on stress management. You may find individuals and agencies in your community who would be good sources of information. The following references are also useful.

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Fester, G. & Bagley, C. (1988). Journal of Child Care. 3 (6).

Hornsby, G., Hall, C., & Hall, E. (2003). Counselling pupils in schools: Skills and strategies for teachers. London: Rutledge Flamer.

Latonia, G.A. & Sicilia, L.W. (1999). Guiding and counselling in schools and colleges. Nairobi: Zima Press.

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## Appendix A

### Improving Your Lifestyle

Select areas where you think you need help. Tick items below that you will try in order to make improvements in your lifestyle. Note that this appendix includes statements about diet, exercise, smoking, alcohol, sleep, drugs, and body maintenance assistance.

#### Diet

- I will list all that I eat each day for one week. At the end of the week, I will see how balanced my diet is
- For one week, I will record when, and why, I eat sweet foods and snacks. These foods are nice to have, but they are not good for me. I will substitute healthier snacks at least 50% of the time.
- I will eat less fatty foods and more fruit and vegetables.
- I will grill more foods, rather than fry them.
- I will cut down on salt, as this is bad for my blood pressure.
- I will reduce the use of sugar in drinks.
- I will reduce my intake of caffeine. I will substitute at least 25% of my intake of tea and coffee with hot water or herbal / fruits teas.
- I will eat more fish and white meat, rather than red meat.
- I will drink eight glasses of water per day to improve my digestion.
- I will discuss issues of diet with my family, as it is a vital lifestyle issue.
- I will make an action plan to improve my diet.
- I will identify sources of help and support in this area.

#### Exercise

- I know that I do not exercise enough. I am determined to change this situation.
- I have enjoyed activities in my past. However, due to work, age, or lack of fitness, I have stopped exercising. I will exercise more.
- Once I get home, I don't want to go out again. I could arrange to do regular exercise after work and before I return home.
- I find it difficult to motivate myself to exercise. I could exercise with other people. They would notice if I am missing and encourage me to attend.
- I am not very sporty. But I can take brisk walks because they are good exercise.
- I need not go outside for regular exercise. I could design a fitness programme in my home. I don't need expensive equipment to work out.
- I can exercise more at work by using stairs instead of lifts, walking to see someone instead of phoning, and by taking a walk at breaks and lunchtimes.
- I will use exercise as a way of giving me energy. Instead of talking about exercise, I will do it.

- I will make an action plan to keep active.
- I will identify sources of help and support in this area.

## Smoking

- I am determined to stop smoking because I know I would feel, look, and smell better. I would get more work done as I wouldn't need to take long breaks.
- I will set a date within the next two weeks to give up smoking. I will tell everyone that I am going to give up and ask them for their support.
- I will take advantage of devices that can help me to stop smoking. For example, I could use nicotine patches, chewing gums and tablets, hypnosis, or acupuncture.
- When I no longer smoke, I will continue to "spend" cigarette money on a daily basis by placing it in a "well done" kitty for one month. I will then treat myself to a personal reward, such as a piece of furniture, new clothes, or some other personal reward that I will look at and say, "I deserved that!"
- I intend to give up smoking but feel that my life is too stressful. Yet I want to do something positive. Therefore, I will aim to give up slowly and by degrees. I will record, on paper, the number of cigarettes I smoke and when, every day for a week. I will make these charts visible. Each week, I will target a lower daily figure. For example: Week 1: 25 cigarettes per day, Week 2: 20 cigarettes per day
- You might want to consider the following guidelines, if you decide to give up smoking gradually:
  - Reduce by five each week, if the total is high, and two each week, if the total is fairly low.
  - Never "borrow" from the next day. Instead, look forward to the next "legal" cigarette.
  - Never use "spares" from previous days!
- I will make an action plan to reduce my smoking.
- I will identify sources of help and support in this area.

## Alcohol

- I know I drink more alcohol than I should. I am determined to address this situation.
- My favourite alcoholic drink is wine. I will restrict my intake to 10 glasses per week.
- My favourite alcoholic drink is spirits. I will restrict my intake to 10 single measures per week.
- My favourite alcoholic drink is beer. I will restrict my intake to 5 liters per week.
- I will discuss the issue of alcohol intake with my family.
- My excessive drinking causes problems in my home. I am determined to change this situation.
- My excessive drinking causes problems at work. I am determined to change this situation.



- I need further help with my excessive drinking, and will talk to a doctor or nurse about it.
- I will make an action plan to reduce my drinking.
- I will identify sources of help and support in this area.

## Sleep

- I recognize that sleep is an important part of stress management. I know that quality of sleep is more important than quantity.
- I have a bed that is big and comfortable enough for my partner and me.
- I do not “clock watch”. If I cannot sleep, I get up. I read, listen to music, talk, or walk to ensure that I am ready to sleep.
- I try not to exercise just before bedtime.
- I avoid coffee and food near bedtime. If I eat or drink, my stomach will have to work and this will keep me awake.
- Before I go to bed, I do something relaxing. I never embark on work activities just before going to bed.
- I have learned and mastered some relaxation activities that will help me to switch off my overly active mind.
- I will make an action plan to sleep better.
- I will identify sources of help and support in this area.

## Drugs

- Hard” drugs destroy my mind as well as my body. I will seek professional help because I do not want to become a drug addict.
- “Soft” drugs are very useful in alleviating my stress. However, I may soon need to use hard drugs to achieve the same effect soft drugs once produced. I will seek professional help to avoid this move to hard drugs.
- I am becoming dependent on medicines and tablets from my doctor for what I now know are stress-related ailments. I will talk to my doctor about my stress, rather than my ailments.
- I plan to reduce the amount of drugs and chemicals that I feed my body. I will talk to my doctor or nurse about stress and my constant visits to him/her for alleviation of my stress related illnesses. Note that you should not, under ANY circumstances, refrain from medical treatment without discussing it first with your doctor.

## Body Maintenance Assistance

- I have an annual physical check-up. This keeps my doctor and me aware of my physical health and highlights problems at an early stage.
- I attend clinics regularly to test for early warning signs of physical problems. Thus, I am able to respond quickly to changes in my body.
- I have a regular massage from a masseur or remedial therapist to relax me and help rid my bloodstream and muscles of toxins created by the stress response.
- I am prepared to spend time, effort, and money, if necessary, to achieve healthy body maintenance.

- I will make an action plan to get the assistance I need with body maintenance.
- I will identify sources of help and support in this area.

## Summary

Looking back through all seven keys area, select five things that you are going to do, starting today. Write them here:

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## Appendix B

### Coping Strategies

Each of the ideas noted on the next few pages has been used successfully. Read each idea and rate its usefulness (to you) by placing a circle around the appropriate score. Use the following scoring guideline.

3: Very useful—I will definitely use this device.

2: Quite useful—I will consider using this.

1: Not useful—I would find this device difficult to learn and use and therefore will not try to use this suggestion.

### Stay calm

- Repeat to yourself, “calm down, calm down.” At the same time, make a conscious effort to relax your muscles, especially those around your eyes and mouth. 3 2 1
- Count backwards from 10 to 1, telling yourself that at each number, you will be calmer and more relaxed. 3 2 1
- Ask yourself, “Why am I getting so upset? Do I enjoy feeling like this? I’d feel better if I remained calm and in control.” 3 2 1
- Breathe in deeply and say to yourself, “Peace and calm in.” Breathe out deeply and say to yourself, “Problems and tension gone.” 3 2 1
- Say to yourself, “People who lose their cool look stupid and regret it afterward. I’m not going to do that; I have my pride to think about.” 3 2 1
- Say to yourself, “This is my job. Dealing with this situation effectively is what I am paid to do. I must do the right thing rather than what I would like to do. So, stay calm and do it well.” 3 2 1

## Reason with Yourself

- Tell yourself that this is not the life crisis you are making it out to be. It is temporary and it is minor, compared to what could happen. 3 2 1
- Imagine that you have 100 stress responses left. Ask yourself, “Is it worth it to spend a stress response on this person, situation, or emotion?” 3 2 1
- Remember that the person who really suffers when you feel a negative emotion is you. Ask yourself, “Am I going to let this person or situation cause me harm?” 3 2 1
- Look at the person/people causing your negative feeling. Ask yourself, “Who’s got the problem? Me, or him/her/them? Why should I pay for their behavioural problem?” 3 2 1
- Change your anger to compassion or gratitude by saying to yourself, “Thank goodness I’m not like him/her/them. It must be awful to be like them.” 3 2 1
- Be tough on yourself. Tell yourself to snap out of this feeling. It’s doing you harm, and you’re almost guaranteeing that you’ll handle the situation badly because you are not in full control. 3 2 1
- Take pride in your ability to stay in control of your own mind. Move your concentration away from your own feelings and toward the person or situation. Look for reasons by asking yourself, “Why is he/she/them acting this way? Why is this happening?” Concentrate on their stress, not yours. Try to solve the problem rather than letting it continue. 3 2 1
- Say to yourself, “Life’s short and I’ll be a long time dead. Do I want to spend my life feeling like this?” 3 2 1
- Say to yourself, “The life I’m living now is not a rehearsal. This is it! So, make the most of it. Do it right and don’t let these hiccups distract me from the priorities in my life.” 3 2 1

## Remove Yourself Mentally

- Mentally step outside a circle, leaving the problem and the people inside. Look at it all from a distance and look at your own participation in it. Ask yourself, “Am I handling it well? How do I look? What must they think of me? Do I like/respect myself?” 3 2 1
- When a problem worries you but you can’t immediately solve it, mentally place the problem in a box. Close the lid and walk away. Promise yourself that you will return to this problem when you can do something about it. 3 2 1
- Create a mental “worry room.” Place all worries in this room. Set aside some time in your day to “visit” this room and see what you can do about any of your worries. Your visit must be short and very positive. 3 2 1
- Give your mind a brief respite from the problem by focusing on the nicer parts of your life. Ask yourself, “What am I going to do tonight/this weekend? What preparations do I need to make for dinner/decorating/shopping/gardening?” 3 2 1
- Visualize a place where you would love to be. Imagine yourself there, and experience the enjoyment. Ask yourself, “What would I do? What would I feel? How would I rate the situation I’m in now?” 3 2 1
- Mentally “visit” other people: family members, friends, or colleagues. What are they doing now? What would they think about this situation? 3 2 1

- Imagine yourself as an actor in a play. Ask yourself, “How would X (a famous actor) play this part?” 3 2 1

### Use Humor

- Talk seriously, but wear a grin. Say, “If you don’t stop doing that, I’ll pull your ears off.” 3 2 1
- Say to yourself, “I could have been a brain surgeon/a diplomat in the Seychelles. Why did I choose this job?” 3 2 1
- Revert to childish behaviour. Pull faces, make silly noises, etc., but make sure there are no witnesses. 3 2 1
- Imagine something ridiculous happening to the person/room/desk/object/building that is causing you a problem; for example, blowing up, turning a different colour, or disappearing into the floor. 3 2 1

### Take Action

- When you realize that you are losing control of your feelings, plan to address the problem later. Suggest to the other person that you both “take a break,” and resume the conversation later. Meanwhile, use the time to calm down and prepare yourself to handle the situation effectively. 3 2 1
- Feign pain when you think an injection of humour might relieve the increasing tension. Appear to be deeply hurt by a remark or someone’s behaviour. Hold your hand to your brow and say, “Susan/Barry/Mr. X, I’m devastated by that remark!” 3 2 1
- Be assertive when you think humour will not be received well. Say, “Mr. X, I do appreciate/understand/sympathize with how you are feeling/must feel/why you are doing this. However, it’s not solving the problem. Can we discuss this and solve the problem that obviously exists?” 3 2 1
- Before you say or do anything, picture the following two words in your mind and decide which one is the best choice for managing your stress positively and healthily:
  1. React—This is spontaneous, and involves no rational thought or concern for consequences and outcomes. It is a typical and widely used negative coping device, because it vents our tension and makes us feel better in the short term.
  2. Respond—This practice allows you a chance to pause for thought—to engage your brain before putting your mouth into action. Ask yourself, “What do I want the outcome to be here? What do I want to achieve here? What should I say/do? Never mind what I want to say/do. What must I say/do to solve the problem?” 3 2 1
- Take your worries for a walk. Exercise (which removes stress chemicals from your body), fresh air, and a change of scenery will help you to cope with the problem(s) on your mind. This can be done at home or work, even if it is only for five minutes at a time. 3 2 1
- Use the “D/S/W” technique. This has been widely used in the field of psychology and involves three personal requests:
  1. Determination—Let me have the determination to work toward changing things that are wrong and that can be changed for the better with effort.

2. Serenity—Let me have the serenity to accept those things that are wrong but cannot be changed, no matter how hard I might try.
  3. Wisdom—Let me have the wisdom to know the difference between the two. 3 2 1
- Consider the “Perfection/Excellence” technique. Perfection is rarely achievable. There is always something that could be improved upon by doing it better, more neatly, more quickly, with less waste, etc. Those who strive for perfection are constantly in a “failure” situation, which causes further stress. Ask yourself, “Why struggle for perfection, when excellence will do?” 3 2 1
  - Never get locked into disagreements. They have a tendency to spiral and draw you into arguments unrelated to the problem at hand. We get side-tracked, drawn down back alleys and taken off on tangents. Say to yourself and the other person, “That’s a fair comment. However, it’s not the issue here. Let’s get back to the real issue here, which is.../Let’s not lose sight of the real issue which is...” 3 2 1
  - A Hindu remedy for dwelling, worry, grief, and other similar feelings is to accept them as “Karma” —a little bit like saying “That’s life,” but deeper. Say to yourself, “Can I alter what has happened? Can I put the clock back? What’s the point of feeling like this?” Say to yourself, “I must accept it because I cannot change it.” 3 2 1
  - When you begin to feel a negative emotion, imagine it as a monster creeping up on you, determined to do you harm. Say to yourself, “Ooh no, I’m not joining you yet, Trimble! I know all about stress and the damage it can cause. But I also know that the inner dialogue I am using now will put you off for a little longer. Go away, Trimble! I have a life to live and enjoy!” 3 2 1

## NOTES

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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