



# BEHAVIOR CHANGE\*

## ▶ ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

 **Time:** 60 minutes

 **Objectives:** By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify how people make changes in their behaviors;
- Ask questions that can help a peer identify their readiness to change a behavior.

 **Training Methods:** Individual Activity, Dyad Activity, Large Group Discussion



### In This Activity You Will...

- Introduce concept of behavior change and explain activity (20 minutes).
- Facilitate behavior change activity and discussion (20 minutes).
- Review the Essential Ingredients of Behavior Change and Wheel of Change flipchart (20 minutes).

 **Materials:**

- Handout – Behavior Change and Me
- Handout –Essential Elements of Behavior Change,
- Handout –Stages of Change
- Flipchart – Wheel of Change
- Color-coded cards for assigning people to pairs
- Flipchart
- Markers

 **Preparation:**

- Prepare Wheel of Change flipchart
- Prepare handouts

## Instructions

1. Introduce activity.

*Many of us are peer educators because we hope that through education people will adopt more healthy behaviors. Whether we work in HIV/ AIDS, substance abuse or another program, we all hope our education will make a real difference.*

2. Acknowledge that behavior change is a complex process.

*There are many different theories of behavior change (approximately 51). In this workshop, we will learn about a widely used model, called “stages of change.”*

*This will help us understand how behavior change happens so we can be more effective in supporting the peers we work with.*

3. Ask each participant to think of some behavior she or he has tried or wanted to change.

*Think of a behavior you have tried to change that you are willing to share.*

*Please take out the handout Behavior Change and Me. Take a few minutes to fill out the questions about a behavior you tried to change. [Note to trainers: Be available if participants need help reading or filling out the questionnaire. Should take 20 minutes up to this point]*

4. Place participants in pairs using their color-coded cards. Instruct them to share their responses with their partners, with the first partner sharing all of his/her steps and then the second partner sharing all of his/hers.

*We are going to find our partners based on our cards, and share our responses with our partners. Please take turns sharing with your partner and then come back to the large group [10 minutes].*

\* This module comes from Duke University, Partners in Caring: Center for Creative Education, 2006.

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5. Call the group back together after 10 minutes and ask participants to share any insights gained during this exercise with the group [another 10 minutes].

*What did you realize about your change process?*

*How many people needed more information in order to make a behavior change?*

*Did anyone say something to you that really helped you make the change?*

*Did you succeed the first time?*

6. Refer participants to the “Wheel of Change” flipchart and Essential Ingredients of Behavior Change handout. Review the wheel of change. Discuss the tasks at each stage [10 minutes].

*Please look at the Essential Ingredients of Behavior Change handout. Look at the different factors at each stage and what helps people change. Peers can help people identify what it will take to change a behavior. Please look at the Stages of Change handout. With your partner, think of something a peer could say to clients at each stage change that helps them focus on their goal of changing?*

7. After 10 minutes, ask for suggestions for each stage. Emphasize that people need more than information to change behaviors. Challenge the peer educators to remember this point when talking to peers. Some examples:

- **Stage 1** - Pre-Contemplation – “Did you know this is happening to other people just like you?” “Gee, there are advantages to your behavior. Are there any negatives?”

- **Stage 2** – Contemplation – “Why is it important for

you to make this change?” “How will you feel when you have achieved it?”

- **Stage 3** - Decision – “Sounds like you’re ready. “What are you going to do to make the change?” “What resources can help you?” “What might get in the way and what can you do?”

- **Stage 4** – Action – “How is it going? How do you feel about yourself? What is working really well? What is getting in the way?”

- **Stage 5** – Maintenance – “Way to go! What might trip you up?”

- **Stage 6** – Recycle/Relapse – “Give yourself a break. We all fall down, and then we get up. Change is hard and failure is often part of the process. It’s normal, but it doesn’t feel good. Do you know anyone else who failed at first? Are you ready to get back on track? Do you need to make any changes in how you are doing it? Who and what would help you?” How can you use these when working with peers?

8. Close by thanking the group for their suggestions.

## Summary

Wrap up with the following points:

- It is important for peer educators to understand that people change in their own way and at their own pace.
- Change is a process that usually takes several tries before change it lasts.
- Information alone is not always enough for people to change their behaviors.

\* This module is part of the online toolkit Building Blocks to Peer Success. For more information, visit [http://www.hdwg.org/peer\\_center/training\\_toolkit](http://www.hdwg.org/peer_center/training_toolkit). This module comes from Duke University, Partners in Caring; Center for Creative Education, 2006.

# BEHAVIOR CHANGE

## SESSION HANDOUT # 1 of 3

### ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE

#### How it happens

- Peer-centered – the peer has to want to change.
- This is the peer’s process NOT yours - meet them where they are – let them set the pace.
- Help peers discover for themselves what realistic steps are necessary to change.
- Keep checking in and be a cheerleader throughout the process.
- Work with the peers to figure out how much responsibility they are willing to take for their own behavior change process. Help them remember how important their role is in the process.

#### What knowledge, information, facts are needed?

(What the PEER EDUCATOR can DO to help peers change behavior)

- Educate about why change would be helpful.
- Provide new information to make change possible.
- Help find tools; learn skills; get information and other resources.
- Figure out where to begin.

#### If you believe it, you can do it!

- Peer believes there are steps s/he can take to make change happen.
- Peer understands the risk of NOT changing.
- Peer believes that change is possible ->HOPE.
- Peer has self-confidence that s/he can change.
- Peer understands barriers/obstacles to change.
- Peer believes s/he will feel better about themselves once they have changed.



#### Making it happen: knowledge in action

(What the peer has to do to change their behavior)

- Use tools and apply skills to make change happen - “What do I need to learn to do differently to make the change I want?”
- Use tools and apply skills in new situations
- Communicate with others to get them to support the change they want

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## SESSION HANDOUT # 1 of 3 (cont.)

### ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE (CONT.)

#### The world around us.

The PEER EDUCATOR can help the peer to:

- Identify a support system, role models and mentor for making and maintaining change.
- Figure out how society, neighborhood and family expectations can affect the behavior change they want to make
- Decide where there are incentives and rewards to motivate behavior change
- Identify obstacles, challenges and opportunities around their behavior change
- Understand laws, rules, and financial limitations around their behavior change

#### Other important things a PEER EDUCATOR can do to help:

- Partner with the peer to create a plan for change.
- Be a cheerleader all the way! – Celebrate every little step.

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## SESSION HANDOUT # 2 of 3

### BEHAVIOR CHANGE AND ME

Think about a behavior change you have made (or tried to make) and answer the questions below with your partner:

The behavior I tried to change was:

I decided I wanted to make this behavior change because:

I believed that if I made this behavior change, my life would be different by...

The new things I needed to know or learn in order to make this behavior change were:

People and activities that helped me make this change were:

Other things that blocked me from making this change were:

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## SESSION HANDOUT # 3 of 3

### STAGES OF CHANGE

Successful behavior change is a PROCESS. People rarely change their behavior immediately when they get new information. They go through a series of stages or steps, and may “re-cycle” a few times before they change successfully.

**Stage 1:** “Not even thinking about it.” People at this stage don’t think that information about risk applies to them. For example, a person at this stage might say, “What do you mean I need to quit drinking? I can drink a 12-pack and not pass out!”

What can a PEER EDUCATOR say to a peer this stage?

**Stage 2:** “Thinking about it.” People at this stage know they eventually want to make a change, but they are not quite ready. For example, “People in my family tend to get diabetes in their fifties. I should probably start watching what I eat.”

What can a PEER EDUCATOR say to people at this stage?

**Stage 3:** “Now I’m ready!” People at this stage are ready to take action. They might say, “My case manager got me a new pillbox and helped me fill it up so I can take my meds everyday like my doctor wants me to.”

What can a PEER EDUCATOR say to people at this stage?

# BEHAVIOR CHANGE

## SESSION HANDOUT # 3 of 3 (cont.)

### STAGES OF CHANGE (CONT.)

**Stage 4:** “I’m doing it!” People at this stage have begun practicing their new behavior. For example, “I take a friend with me now when I go out to bars and she stops me from ordering that second drink.”

What can a PEER EDUCATOR say to people at this stage?

**Stage 5:** “Keep on keeping on.” People at this stage have successfully changed something. You might hear, “For the past six months I make sure I have condoms with me at all times, and I use them every time I have sex.”

What can a PEER EDUCATOR say to people at this stage?

**Stage 6:** “Whoops!” People at this stage have gone back to an old behavior, usually for a reason. For example, “I was sober for over a year, but then my mom died and I couldn’t handle it.”

What can a PEER EDUCATOR say to people at this stage?

### Wheel of Change

