

COMMUNICATION: PUSHING ALL THE BUTTONS*

▶ ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

- 🕒 **Time:** 60 minutes
- ➔ **Objectives:** By the end of this session, participants will be able to:
 - Demonstrate the importance of communicating clearly with others.
 - Establish a link between effective communication and a successful peer relationship.
- ★ **Training Methods:** Small Group Activity, Large Group Discussion
- ✓ **In This Activity You Will...**
 - Explain and organize a small group activity around communication (10 minutes).
 - Help participants facilitate the small group scenario-response activity (25 minutes).
 - Facilitate group report back and discussion (25 minutes).
- ✂ **Materials:**
 - Flip chart
 - Markers
 - Deck of playing cards (with 3 suits)
 - Prepared flipcharts
 - Handout - Pushing all the Buttons
 - Handout – Scenarios 1-3

(continued next page)

Instructions

1. This activity will be done in three small groups. Each group needs an area to write on such as a table. The success of this activity depends on an established level of trust and rapport with participants and trainers. (10 Minutes)
 - *We are going to start the afternoon with an activity that will help us communicate better with our peers and become more aware of issues that may cause us discomfort. These scenarios might raise some difficult or sensitive issues. Once we identify the issues, we want to provide options that are available to you as a peer to address the issue.*
 - *Please take a card; you will get either a diamond, club or a heart. Those with diamonds will form one group, clubs a second group and hearts a third group.*
 - *The first thing you will need to do in your group is to assign a facilitator. This will be the person who makes sure the group stays on time and asks questions related to the scenario.*
 - *The group facilitator will note and share what was discussed in the group. Facilitators should be sure not to make any judgment or try to counsel anyone.*
2. Allow groups to begin. Give scenarios and instructions to identified facilitators. (25 Minutes)
3. Inform facilitators that they will ask for reactions to the scenarios and hand them the questions to ask their groups. Facilitators will ask the groups to share and discuss the following:
 - *What or who in the scenario would “push your buttons?”*
 - *What feelings do these situations bring up in you?*
 - *How can you manage your feelings so you can be an effective peer educator if or when these situations arise?*

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

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ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY (CONT.)

Preparation:

- Make handouts with the six questions;
 1. What or who in the scenario would “push your buttons?”
 2. What feelings do these situations bring up in you?
 3. How can you manage your feelings so you can be an effective peer educator if or when these situations arise?
 4. What support and/or resources can you draw on for handling your feelings?
 5. What might be some possible approaches to deal with this peer effectively?
 6. What referral resources are available in the community to help the peer educator or peer?
 - Make handouts with the scenarios
 - Prepare flipchart with six questions
4. At least one trainer should be in each group to assist during this process. Be sure to respect participants’ boundaries, and allow them to disengage from this activity.
 5. Groups should record their ideas on flipchart paper. After each group has discussed the assigned scenario have the large group return and allow each group to share what they learned in this session. (25 minutes)
 6. Process the small group exercise with the following questions:
 - *What other situations do you think will push your buttons or make it difficult for you to remain objective?*
 - *What key points do you think that a good peer educator should follow when his/her buttons are pushed?*
 - *Remind the group that as human beings we were brought up differently, therefore we have different experiences, expectations, values, and opinions. With that said, what we feel a peer should follow may not be a priority for them or be the best for their current situation. It’s important that we remain objective and practice how to effectively control our discomfort when our values or expectations are opposed.*

Summary

- It is important that peer educators demonstrate non-judgmental communication.
- It is important that peer educators have a sense of self-awareness and empathy.
- Good peer communication takes practice.

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

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SESSION HANDOUT #1 of 2

PUSHING ALL THE BUTTONS

- What or who in the scenario would “push your buttons?”
- What feelings do these situations bring up in you?
- How can you manage your feelings so you can be an effective peer educator if or when these situations arise?
- What support and/or resources can you draw on for handling your feelings?
- What might be some possible approaches to deal with this peer effectively?
- What referral resources are available in the community to help the peer educator or peer?

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SESSION HANDOUT #2 of 2

SCENARIO 1

A married HIV (+) female peer has come to you for assistance because she knows that her husband, who is HIV (-) is sleeping around. He has a woman he keeps in an apartment, and his other girlfriends come by and call their home. She is afraid to ask him to use a condom. When asked why she is afraid, she admits that he beats her, and then wants to have sex with her. She feels he doesn't love her because he is having affairs with other women and is beating her. She doesn't know why he wants to continue to have sex with her. When he wants to have sex, she agrees because she is afraid of him.

They have two small children and her husband controls the car and the family's money.

SCENARIO 2

Your peer has been referred to you after being discharged from the hospital. She is a single parent of two children ages two and six. Her cocaine and heroin addictions have resulted in the loss of both her job and her house. She has begun turning tricks on the street in order to get money to support her children and her addictions. She was diagnosed with HIV three years ago, prior to the birth of her second child, and was recently discharged from the hospital after having bacterial pneumonia. In the hospital she became depressed and thought about suicide. It has been 36 hours since she has had some drugs. She complains of having severe pain and anxiety and wants you to help her do something to ease the pain. She's begging you to help her.

SCENARIO 3

An HIV+ woman has an HIV- partner. He, the partner, is aware of her HIV infection but wants to be with her. However, he sometimes refuses to use a condom when they have sex. She doesn't want to infect him and he isn't trying to catch the virus, but he says that sometimes he just wants to be close to her in that way. When talking with them, you find that they are both aware of the implications and risks. However, this is a choice they have made.