

# **T.L.C. Facilitator's Manual**

## **Act Safe Module**

### **Sexual Decisions of HIV-Positive Youth**

#### **Session #3: Should I Tell My Partner I Am HIV-Positive? (2hrs)**

##### OBJECTIVES:

1. Youth will identify the pros and cons of telling their sexual partners that they are HIV-positive.
2. Youth will make a decision about whether to tell their sexual partners that they are HIV-positive.
3. Youth will explore the ethical issues in telling a partner.
4. Youth will practice telling their sexual partners that they are HIV-positive.

##### RATIONALE:

This session deals with the decision of whether youth should tell sexual partners that they are HIV-positive. It is assumed that the future and ideal self may provide the youth with some guidance in approaching this issue.

Another approach to helping make the decision is to identify advantages and disadvantages in telling. As has been seen in stages of change models, evaluations of pros and cons is a critical factor in altering the balance toward taking a difficult action--such as telling a partner.

Moral reasoning about the disclosure decision is approached directly, but in a way that encourages exploration rather than following a set of rules and that fosters responsibility rather than guilt or impulsivity. Also, the exercises are framed in ways that reduce condemnation. Choice is the main theme, which leads to empowerment.

To make telling easier, it is practiced through role playing. The strategy is to reduce anxiety, so that the decision is less colored by fear.

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

### SUMMARY OF EXERCISES:

1. Welcome the participants. Do a lottery. Give out "Thanks". Review goals. (20 minutes)
2. Use a soap scene to apply the ideal self to the dilemmas in telling a sexual partner of one's status. (15 minutes)
3. Develop a list of advantages and disadvantages in telling a sexual partner about one's HIV status. (15 minutes)
4. Use a soap scene with the male as the victim in order to increase empathy. (10 minutes)
5. Practice telling a sexual partner through role playing. (40 minutes)
6. Set goals and give group appreciation. (20 minutes)

### MATERIALS:

Lottery tickets  
Lottery prize  
"Thanks"  
Newsprint and marking pens  
Paper and pencils  
Goal Cards  
Goal Summary Sheet  
Goal Setting Chart  
Scripts: "What Should I Do?", "Guess What Happened to Me?"  
Tips on Telling Your Partner  
Feeling Thermometer Chart

NOTES TO THE FACILITATORS: Text in **bold** letters tells you what the purpose of each exercise is. Text in CAPITAL letters tells you what to do. Text in small letters tells you what to say. Once you become familiar with what to say, please put it in your own words. Do not read aloud the text in small letters--make it natural.

The times listed under the headings of each exercise are to help you keep on target and move the session along. Exercises may be lengthened or shortened at your discretion, as long as all the material is covered.

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

FACILITATOR'S NOTES--REMINDERS AND POINTS TO MAKE

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

Exercise 1: What Happened Between Sessions?  
(20 minutes)

**[The purposes of this exercise are to establish a comfortable atmosphere, to reinforce trying to transfer what was learned in the sessions to the real life environment, and to increase both self-esteem and group cohesion. Introductions, a lottery, goal review, a progress report, "Thanks," and a description of what the session will cover are the approaches used.]**

Welcome back.

Thank you for being on time.

Let's do a lottery now.

Remember to put your name on the lottery tickets and hand them in.

**■HAND OUT THE LOTTERY TICKETS AND HAVE THE MEMBERS WRITE THEIR NAMES ON THEM. COLLECT THE TICKETS, MIX THEM UP, AND DRAW A WINNER. GIVE OUT THE PRIZE.**

Before we start reviewing what you did over the week, I want you to have your pile of "Thanks" so that you can show other group members that you liked what they did.

**■HAND OUT 20 "THANKS" TO EACH GROUP MEMBER.**

Now I want to review how your goals went.

Remember the ingredients of a good goal--realistic, clear, not too easy or too hard, and easy to tell when it is accomplished.

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

■POST THE GOAL SETTING CHART.

When one person has shared what his or her goal was and how completing it went, others in the group can ask questions and make suggestions on how to overcome barriers if any developed.

We'll go around one by one.

■HAVE EACH GROUP MEMBER TELL WHAT HIS/HER GOAL WAS AND HOW HE/SHE DID. REFER TO THE GOAL CARDS AND THE GOAL SUMMARY SHEET. GIVE OUT "THANKS" AND COACH THE GROUP IN BRAINSTORMING ANY BARRIERS THAT STOOD IN THE WAY OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT.

That was very good.

I am glad that you are making progress on your short-term goals.

There are five sessions in this series on sexual decisions, and each is about a choice you need to make when it comes to HIV and sex.

Sex is such an important and natural part of most people's lives, that we hope your choices are good for you, good for the people around you, and good for having a healthy and enjoyable sex life.

We have goals for the sessions too.

It is hard to be positive. There are new problems to worry about. You can get reinfected with a different strain of HIV or get STDs--both can make your health worse.

You can infect others and spread HIV in your community.

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

You face some hard choices.

These decisions have pluses and minuses to them.

They are not simple choices.

What are you going to do?

Are you going to tell your partner that you are HIV-positive?

Are you going to insist on protected sex?

Are you going to have unprotected sex with a partner who is also HIV-positive?

Are you or your partner going to get pregnant?

How will you protect yourself against pregnancy and disease?

Which sexual acts are fun and at the same time less likely to re-infect you or spread HIV?

Today we are going to explore whether to tell your sexual partner that you are HIV-positive.

This decision is not easy or simple. Therefore, we want to look at this issue carefully.

Exercise 2: What Would My Ideal Self Do?  
(15 minutes)

**[The purpose of this exercise is to use the ideal self as a guide for decision-making in whether to tell one's status to a sexual partner. Evaluating a script is used.]**

During the first session, you identified some of the characteristics that your ideal self would possess as a lover or sexual partner.

Can you remember some of those qualities and call them out to me?

■ENCOURAGE RESPONDING AND WRITE THE  
RESPONSES UP ON NEWSPRINT.

Thank you for sharing those qualities.

Now we are going to act out a little scene from the soaps.

■FACILITATORS READ SCRIPT.

Chris, the person Marshall and Jackson are talking about, can be male or female.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

MARSHALL: Jackson, can I talk with you for a minute?

JACKSON:           What's it about?

MARSHALL: Chris.

JACKSON:           You breaking up?

MARSHALL: Hardly. I know it's not fair to keep Chris in the dark but I...

JACKSON: Keep him in the dark about what?

MARSHALL: About my having the virus. It's not fair to hide that from him/her, but I just can't tell him/her.

JACKSON: You fool. You tell Chris, and he'll/she'll be long gone.

MARSHALL: He/She loves me.

JACKSON: Sure he/she does, but what's that got to do with it? You go around telling people you've got the virus and that's the last piece you'll ever see.

MARSHALL: Not everyone reacts that way.

JACKSON: You want sex?

MARSHALL: Yes, but I just want to do what is best for Chris. I've kept it from him/her for three months now, and I feel terrible about it.

JACKSON: If you tell him/her now, he'll/she'll be pissed you didn't tell him/her earlier. He'll/she'll be hurt. He'll/she'll think you didn't care enough to let him/her now. He/she won't be able to trust anyone again. Is that what you want?

MARSHALL: No.

JACKSON: So where does this crazy notion of telling him/her come from?

MARSHALL: I don't want to give it to him/her.

JACKSON: You probably already did.

MARSHALL: He/she was negative the last time he/she got tested.

JACKSON: You know those tests lie.

MARSHALL: Well, I don't want to keep lying. There is a chance I could protect him/her. We could wear condoms. Chris hates them, but he/she might change his/her mind if he/she knew I was positive. Shouldn't he/she be able to make up his/her own mind?

JACKSON: He'll/she'll make up his/her own mind--to leave you.

MARSHALL: Don't be so like that. Sharing with him/her might make us close.

JACKSON: I never heard such crap. Give me one good reason to tell him/her.

MARSHALL: If I tell him/her, he/she might use condoms. We'll both be protected.

JACKSON: What are you protected from?

MARSHALL: Getting reinfected and STDs.

JACKSON: You don't trust him/her?

MARSHALL: We all make mistakes.

JACKSON: I knew it.

MARSHALL: Knew what?

JACKSON: All this talk about telling him/her you have HIV is just a lot of bullshit to get rid of Chris. If you want help telling him/her you are positive, don't ask me.

MARSHALL: I love Chris. I'm not dropping Chris. I want him/her to love me. Jackson, you're one big pain in the ass. I don't know why I ever asked you for advice.

JACKSON: Because I'm your friend. You can talk to me.

MARSHALL: What am I going to do? What's best for Chris What's best for me? What can I live with? I don't want to do something that goes against my beliefs. I sure wish I knew what to do.

THE END

Thanks, that was great!

■GIVE OUT THANKS TO PLAYERS.

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

I want to get out some ideas about how Marshall might do the "right" thing.

I have a question for each of you.

■GO AROUND THE ROOM AND ASK EACH YOUTH A QUESTION. THE QUESTIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. DID MARSHALL SHOW ANY OF YOUR "IDEAL SELF" CHARACTERISTICS?
2. WHAT'S BEST FOR CHRIS?
3. WHAT WOULD BE TERRIBLE FOR CHRIS?
4. WHAT ARE THE TWO SIDES OF MARSHALL'S CONFLICT?
5. IF CHRIS ASKED MARSHALL IF HE WAS HIV-POSITIVE, SHOULD MARSHALL TELL THE TRUTH?
6. WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT--PROTECTING CHRIS OR KEEPING HIM/HER FROM LEAVING?
7. WHAT IS BEST FOR MARSHALL?

Those were some interesting answers.

Let's open it up for discussion.

What should Marshall do?

What would you do if you were in Marshall's shoes?

Is there a right thing to do in this situation?

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

What have you done in similar situations?

■ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION. FOCUS ON ETHICAL  
DILEMMAS. CONFLICTS BETWEEN TWO POSITIVE  
VALUES SHOULD BE BROUGHT OUT.

Now that we have explored some of the issues that come up around whether telling your partner is the right thing to do, let's see what the advantages and disadvantages are.

Exercise 3: What Are the Advantages and Disadvantages of Telling?  
(15 minutes)

**[The purposes of this exercise are to improve decision making and to increase motivation to tell one's partner about one's status. Considering the advantages and disadvantages and letter writing are the approaches used.]**

There are pros and cons of telling and not telling.

Let's see if we can find out what they are.

That will help you in your decision making.

■ON NEWSPRINT MAKE A COLUMN HEADED  
"ADVANTAGES" AND ONE HEADED "DISADVANTAGES."

We can work on the advantages and disadvantages of telling or of not telling?

What are some advantages of telling?

For example, an advantage might be providing a good reason for wearing a condom.

What are some disadvantages of telling?

A disadvantage might be that your partner would not want to have sex with you.

What are some advantages and disadvantages of not telling?

What are your ideas?

■ENCOURAGE RESPONSES. WRITE IDEAS ON THE  
NEWSPRINT UNDER THE RIGHT COLUMNS.

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

After seeing these lists of advantages and disadvantages, where do you stand on the issue of telling your partner?

**■ENCOURAGE SHARING OF POSITIONS AND DISCUSSION.**

Whether or not you end up telling a partner depends in part on what it means to you to do it.

Let's imagine that you decided not to tell your partner.

What meaning would not telling have to you?

**■ENCOURAGE SHARING.**

Let's look at what the meaning could be for the partner of an HIV-positive lover.

Exercise 4: What If I Don't Tell Him?  
(10 minutes)

**[The purpose of this exercise is to increase empathy for the sexual partner who is not told. Evaluating a soap scene in which the man is the victim is the approach taken.]**

We'll do another little soap scene.

This scene is about someone who gets infected by a partner who had not revealed their HIV status.

Who will play Leslie and who will play Nick?

Again, Leslie can be a man or a woman, so make Leslie whatever sex you want to.

■SELECT THE VOLUNTEERS AND DECIDE WHO WILL  
PLAY EACH ROLE. GIVE OUT THE SCRIPTS AND HAVE  
THEM READ THE PARTS TO THE GROUP.

GUESS WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?

NICK: I just found out I got HIV.

LESLIE: I thought you already had HIV.

NICK: No, I never had it. You gave it to me.

LESLIE: How can you be so sure?

NICK: You're the first and only girl/guy I had sex with. That's the honest truth.

LESLIE: That's terrible! I thought you already had it.

NICK: So, you knew you were positive when we had sex?

LESLIE: Yes, but I thought you were positive too.

NICK: No! Now what am I going to do? My whole life is ruined.

LESLIE: I'm sorry. I just thought it didn't make a difference. I cared for you. I would never want this to happen.

NICK: I really liked you. I can't believe you would do this to me.

LESLIE: It wasn't on purpose.

THE END

Thank you. That was great!

■GIVE OUT THANKS.

Now I want to ask both of you--Leslie and Nick--how you felt during that scene.

■SHOW THE FEELING THERMOMETER CHART.

How much comfort or discomfort did you experience?

■OBTAIN COMFORT LEVELS.

What feeling did you think you had?

■OBTAIN RESPONSES OF THE KIND OF FEELINGS--SADNESS, IRRITATION, ETC.

How would the rest of you have felt if you had been Leslie?

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

**■OBTAIN RESPONSES.**

How would a boy feel if a girl gave him the virus?

**■ENCOURAGE COMMENTS ON HOW A BOY WOULD FEEL.**

How do you feel towards Nick?

Do you feel sorry for him?

**■ENCOURAGE REACTIONS AND DISCUSS THE SCENE. DON'T TRY TO ASSESS RESPONSIBILITY. EXPLORE EMPATHETIC REACTIONS TO LESLIE AND NICK.**

ext, to get ready for practicing telling a partner, we will imagine going through a scene.

Exercise 5: How Do I Tell A Partner I'm HIV-positive?  
(40 minutes)

**[The purpose of this exercise is to increase the member's skills in telling a partner that they are HIV-positive. Imagining and role playing are used to practice the skills involved.]**

Some folks may put off telling a partner because they dread going through the experience.

They want to tell their partner, but feel unsure about how to do it.

They don't believe they have the skills to do it.

They worry that they are not going to say the right things.

In this exercise our goal is to improve your telling skills.

To set the stage I want you to take three deep breaths and let the air out slowly.

**■MODEL TAKING THREE DEEP BREATHS AND LETTING THE AIR OUT SLOWLY. HAVE THE GROUP TAKE THREE DEEP BREATHS AND EXHALE SLOWLY.**

Now close your eyes.

Imagine that you are with someone you recently met.

You find this person very attractive and will probably have sex with them.

Imagine being with this person in a nice place where you can talk--not the bedroom.

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

Imagine saying that you are HIV-positive and that the situation comes out as you would like it.

■ALLOW TIME FOR VISUALIZATION.

Let's move to a different scene.

This time the situation involves your steady partner.

You found out a month ago that you are HIV-positive and have decided to tell your partner.

Think of where you want to tell--a safe place.

Take three deep breaths and let the air out slowly. PAUSE.

Feel the warm air flowing out and the cool air rushing in.

In and out.

In and out.

Imagine telling your steady partner that you are HIV-positive.

Imagine that the situation comes out OK--just as you wanted it to.

■ALLOW FOR VISUALIZATION.

Open your eyes and get yourselves ready for some practice.

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

There is no one right way to tell a sexual partner that you have HIV.

It depends on the kind of person you are, what your steady partner is like, what your relationship is like, and attitudes in your community.

Here are some tips to consider.

■HAND OUT "TIPS ON TELLING YOUR PARTNER."

TIPS ON TELLING YOUR PARTNER

1. DECIDE WHERE AND WHEN YOU WANT TO TELL HIM OR HER.
2. DECIDE HOW YOU WANT TO TELL--LETTER, PHONE, FACE-TO-FACE, WITH SOMEONE ELSE THERE.
3. WRITE OUT EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY AND PRACTICE SAYING IT TO YOURSELF AND A FRIEND..
4. IMAGINE YOURSELF DOING IT.
5. THINK OF SEVERAL DIFFERENT WAYS YOUR PARTNER MIGHT REACT AND DECIDE HOW YOU WILL RESPOND TO THOSE REACTIONS.
6. USE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER.

Let me comment on each point.

Pick a place where you feel comfortable and safe and that is not threatening to your partner.

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

Maybe you want a place where the chance of unpleasant behavior arising is controlled.

Decide when is the best time--before, during, and after sex may not be a good idea.

Pick the method of telling that is best for you.

Writing a letter or talking on the phone can be effective alternatives.

If you feel better with someone else there, get support.

You don't have to discuss sex in front of others--just discuss that you are HIV-positive.

Sex can be talked about later when others are not there.

It helps reduce anxiety to think out and write down what you plan to say.

Then practice telling your partner--by yourself or with a friend playing your partner, and imagine going through the whole scene.

Prepare for your partner's reactions.

Think of several ways he or she might react and decide how you will handle them.

Get relaxed beforehand; sneak in a few deep breaths while telling your partner, and unwind afterwards.

Do you have other suggestions from your own experiences?

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

■ENCOURAGE RESPONSES AND WRITE OTHER SUGGESTIONS ON NEWSPRINT. GIVE OUT "THANKS."

What would you say to the lover who gets angry at you because he or she might have become HIV-positive from sex with you?

■ENCOURAGE RESPONSES AND DISCUSSION. LOOK FOR CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS SUCH AS YOUR PARTNER GETTING TESTED AND USING CONDOMS, GIVING APOLOGIES AND LISTENING TO ANGER WITHOUT BECOMING DEFENSIVE.

Now let's role play a scene.

■DIVIDE THE GROUP IN HALF IN ORDER TO GIVE MORE PEOPLE A CHANCE TO PRACTICE TELLING A PARTNER. IF THE GROUP HAS SIX OR FEWER MEMBERS, DO NOT DIVIDE IT IN HALF. FACILITATORS MAY NEED TO ROLE PLAY THE PARTNER IN SOME SITUATIONS TO MAKE THE NUMBERS COME OUT RIGHT.

NOTE: BE AWARE OF PAIRINGS. PAIR GAY YOUTH TOGETHER AND HETEROSEXUAL YOUTH TOGETHER. PAIR AN ODD YOUTH WITH A FACILITATOR. BISEXUAL YOUTH CAN DECIDE WHO THEY WANT TO PRACTICE WITH.

■IF THE GROUP IS DIVIDED IN HALF, EACH FACILITATOR FOLLOWS THE INSTRUCTIONS THAT ARE FOUND BELOW.

I am going to divide the group in half so that more people have a chance to practice.

If you are telling someone with whom you have been having unprotected sex, that can be harder

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

than telling someone with whom you have not had sex.

I need two volunteers--one to play the person who is telling and one to play the partner.

**■SELECT TWO VOLUNTEERS AND DECIDE WHO WILL  
PLAY EACH ROLE. PLACE TWO CHAIRS IN THE MIDDLE  
OF THE ROOM.**

(TO THE ONE WHO IS TELLING)--You find this new person really attractive and the two of you have been going out for three weeks, but no sex has happened yet.

You expect it will happen soon.

Your goal is to tell your new friend that you are HIV-positive.

(TO THE NEW PARTNER)--You like your new friend and want to get to know him or her better no matter what he or she tells you.

On the other hand you don't want to get infected.

But don't be too hard on your friend.

Please sit in these two chairs.

The rest of you will be observers.

Let me give the observers their assignments.

**■HAVE EACH OBSERVER PAY ATTENTION TO A  
SPECIFIC PART OF THE INTERCHANGE.**

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

You pay attention to:            facial expressions  
   eye contact  
   gestures  
   posture  
   breathing  
   feelings  
   voice  
   words

Before the two of you start the role play, will the one who is positive please tell us where and when this conversation is taking place?

■OBTAIN A RESPONSE.

OK. Go ahead and do the role play.

■ALLOW THE ROLE PLAY TO GO FOR A FEW MINUTES. THEN OBTAIN FEEDBACK.

That was great!

■GIVE OUT "THANKS" TO THE PLAYERS.

(TO THE PERSON DISCLOSING)--Tell us how you felt, what one thing you did that you liked, and what one thing you would do differently.

■SHOW THE FEELING THERMOMETER CHART AND OBTAIN FEEDBACK.

(TO THE NEW PARTNER)--Tell us how you felt, what one thing the other person did that you liked, and what one thing you would do differently if you had played that part.

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

**■OBTAIN FEEDBACK.**

(TO THE OBSERVERS)--Tell us one thing the person who was positive did that you liked, and what one thing you would do differently if you had played that role.

**■OBTAIN FEEDBACK AND OPEN UP GENERAL DISCUSSION ON THE ROLE PLAY.**

This time we will pick the situation where you and your lover have had unprotected sex.

You knew beforehand that you were HIV-positive, but it took you awhile to decide to tell.

Now you are going to tell your partner that you found out you were HIV-positive.

I need two volunteers--one to play the person telling and one to play the steady partner.

**■SELECT TWO VOLUNTEERS, MAKING SURE THEY ARE DIFFERENT FROM THE ONES WHO JUST DID A ROLE PLAY. DECIDE WHO WILL PLAY EACH ROLE. PLACE TWO CHAIRS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM.**

(TO THE PERSON DISCLOSING)--Your goal is to tell your steady partner that you are HIV-positive.

Try to do it in a way that expresses your hopes for self in this situation.

(TO THE STEADY PARTNER)--In playing the lover you can react with surprise, concern, irritation, or resignation as you choose, but don't be too hard on your lover.

Please sit in these two chairs.

The rest of you will be observers.

Let me give the observers their assignments.

**■HAVE EACH OBSERVER PAY ATTENTION TO A SPECIFIC PART.**

You pay attention to:

- facial expressions
- eye contact
- gestures
- posture
- breathing
- feelings
- voice
- words

Before the two of you start the role play, will the person who is positive tell us where and when this conversation is taking place?

**■OBTAIN A RESPONSE.**

OK. Go ahead and do the role play.

**■ALLOW THE ROLE PLAY TO GO FOR A FEW MINUTES. THEN OBTAIN FEEDBACK.**

That was great!

**■GIVE OUT "THANKS" TO THE PLAYERS.**

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

(TO THE PERSON WHO DISCLOSED)--Tell us how you felt, what one thing you did that you liked, and what one thing you would do differently.

■SHOW THE FEELING THERMOMETER CHART AND OBTAIN FEEDBACK.

(TO THE STEADY PARTNER)--Tell us how you felt, what one thing the other person did that you liked, and what one thing you would do differently had you been playing that role.

■OBTAIN FEEDBACK.

(TO THE OBSERVERS)--Tell us one thing the person who was positive did that you liked, and what one thing you would do differently had you been playing that role.

■OBTAIN FEEDBACK. BRING THE GROUPS BACK TOGETHER.

Now that we are back together I want to know how you feel after having done the role plays.

Using the Feeling Thermometer with 100 degrees being very uncomfortable and 0 degrees being completely comfortable, how do you feel.

■OBTAIN FEELING THERMOMETER READINGS.

What would make you more comfortable and less comfortable in telling your partner that you were positive?

■SHARE RESPONSES AND OPEN UP A GENERAL DISCUSSION ON TELLING AND ON THE ROLE PLAY.

As we are near the end of today's session we want to focus on future goals, progress, and appreciation.

Exercise 6: What Is A Good Between-Sessions Goal?  
(20 minutes)

**[The purposes of this exercise are to transfer learning from the session to back home, to improve goal setting, and to increase group cohesion. Goal setting and group appreciation are employed.]**

At the end of each session we will set a goal to accomplish before we meet again.

A constructive goal meets four standards: 1) realistic; 2) clear; 3) not too easy or too hard; and 4) easy to tell it is accomplished.

■POST GOAL SETTING CHART.

Pick a goal that is related to what we have been doing in today's session.

What stands out in your mind about today's session?

We have worked on one of the important choices a girl or guy has to make: whether to tell his or her sexual partner that he or she is HIV-positive.

We looked at what the ideal self would do, advantages and disadvantages, what it feels like to be a victim, the issues around telling, and how to tell.

Some examples of possible goals for this week are as follows:

1. Make up a story about another couple where the girl or guy is HIV-positive, tell it to your partner and see what reaction you get.
2. With a friend playing your partner, practice telling your partner.
3. Talk to a friend about the advantages and disadvantages of telling your sexual partner.

4. Teach a friend how to talk to her or his sexual partner about being HIV-positive.
5. Write a story or poem about telling your lover.
6. Discuss whether or not to tell with someone whose advice you respect.

What ideas do you have?

**■ENCOURAGE OTHER SUGGESTIONS. WRITE THEM ON NEWSPRINT.**

Remember that you might need to know more about something.

Therefore getting information can become a goal.

Also, even if you decided to tell your boyfriend or girlfriend, you might still need certain skills and resources to be successful.

So, acquiring skills and resources can become a goal.

Take a few minutes and think about what your goal is for this week.

Write your goals on your Goal Cards.

**■HAND OUT GOAL CARDS AND ALLOW TIME FOR SELECTING A GOAL.**

What goals have you chosen?

**■GO AROUND THE ROOM AND HAVE EACH YOUTH DESCRIBE THE GOAL THAT WAS SELECTED. HELP SHAPE THE GOALS SO THAT THEY MEET BEING**

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

REALISTIC, CLEAR, NOT TOO EASY OR TOO HARD, AND EASY TO SEE IF ACHIEVED. RECORD THE GOALS ON THE GOAL SUMMARY SHEET.

Those are some good goals.

At the beginning of the next time we will want to hear about how you made out.

Remember that even if you run up against a barrier, we can learn from that.

If you decided not to pursue your goal, that is your choice.

We want you here--with us--regardless of what happens with your goals.

Let's take a few minutes and show appreciation to each other.

You all have made contributions to the group.

We like things you have said or done, or your style, or your presence in the group.

Now is the time to show it.

■BEGIN BY MODELLING. GIVE OUT "THANKS," VERBAL PRAISE, SUPPORTIVE GESTURES. ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO GIVE. MAKE SURE EVERYONE IS INCLUDED.

I look forward to seeing you next time.

We meet again on \_\_\_\_\_ (day and date) at \_\_\_\_\_ (time and place).

THE END OF SESSION 2

January 1995  
Module 2  
Session #3

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

MARSHALL: Jackson, can I talk with you for a minute?

JACKSON:           What's it about?

MARSHALL: Chris.

JACKSON:           You breaking up?

MARSHALL: Hardly. I know it's not fair to keep Chris in the dark but I...

JACKSON:           Keep him in the dark about what?

MARSHALL: About my having the virus. It's not fair to hide that from him/her, but I just can't tell him/her.

JACKSON:           You fool. You tell Chris, and he'll/she'll be long gone.

MARSHALL: He/She loves me.

JACKSON:           Sure he/she does, but what's that got to do with it? You go around telling people you've got the virus and that's the last piece you'll ever see.

MARSHALL: Not everyone reacts that way.

JACKSON:           You want sex?

MARSHALL: Yes, but I just want to do what is best for Chris. I've kept it from him/her for three months now, and I feel terrible about it.

JACKSON:           If you tell him/her now, he'll/she'll be pissed you didn't tell him/her earlier. He'll/she'll be hurt. He'll/she'll think you didn't care enough to let him/her now. He/she won't be able to trust anyone again. Is that what you want?

MARSHALL: No.

JACKSON:           So where does this crazy notion of telling him/her come from?

MARSHALL: I don't want to give it to him/her.

JACKSON:           You probably already did.

MARSHALL: He/she was negative the last time he/she got tested.

JACKSON: You know those tests lie.

MARSHALL: Well, I don't want to keep lying. There is a chance I could protect him/her. We could wear condoms. Chris hates them, but he/she might change his/her mind if he/she knew I was positive. Shouldn't he/she be able to make up his/her own mind?

JACKSON: He'll/she'll make up his/her own mind--to leave you.

MARSHALL: Don't be so like that. Sharing with him/her might make us close.

JACKSON: I never heard such crap. Give me one good reason to tell him/her.

MARSHALL: If I tell him/her, he/she might use condoms. We'll both be protected.

JACKSON: What are you protected from?

MARSHALL: Getting reinfected and STDs.

JACKSON: You don't trust him/her?

MARSHALL: We all make mistakes.

JACKSON: I knew it.

MARSHALL: Knew what?

JACKSON: All this talk about telling him/her you have HIV is just a lot of bullshit to get rid of Chris. If you want help telling him/her you are positive, don't ask me.

MARSHALL: I love Chris. I'm not dropping Chris. I want him/her to love me. Jackson, you're one big pain in the ass. I don't know why I ever asked you for advice.

JACKSON: Because I'm your friend. You can talk to me.

MARSHALL: What am I going to do? What's best for Chris What's best for me? What can I live with? I don't want to do something that goes against my beliefs. I sure wish I knew what to do.

THE END

GUESS WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?

NICK: I just found out I got HIV.

LESLIE: I thought you already had HIV.

NICK: No, I never had it. You gave it to me.

LESLIE: How can you be so sure?

NICK: You're the first and only girl/guy I had sex with. That's the honest truth.

LESLIE: That's terrible! I thought you already had it.

NICK: So, you knew you were positive when we had sex?

LESLIE: Yes, but I thought you were positive too.

NICK: No! Now what am I going to do? My whole life is ruined.

LESLIE: I'm sorry. I just thought it didn't make a difference. I cared for you. I would never want this to happen.

NICK: I really liked you. I can't believe you would do this to me.

LESLIE: It wasn't on purpose.

THE END

## TIPS ON TELLING YOUR PARTNER

1. DECIDE WHERE AND WHEN YOU WANT TO TELL HIM OR HER.
2. DECIDE HOW YOU WANT TO TELL--LETTER, PHONE, FACE-TO-FACE, WITH SOMEONE ELSE THERE.
3. WRITE OUT EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY AND PRACTICE SAYING IT TO YOURSELF AND A FRIEND..
4. IMAGINE YOURSELF DOING IT.
5. THINK OF SEVERAL DIFFERENT WAYS YOUR PARTNER MIGHT REACT AND DECIDE HOW YOU WILL RESPOND TO THOSE REACTIONS.
6. USE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER.