

ADOLESCENT TRAINING - ILLNESS PHASE  
(HRA PROJECT)

SESSION 2: SHOULD I TELL SOMEONE MY MOTHER HAS AIDS?

(Day 1, Afternoon. Two hours in length.)

OBJECTIVES:

1. Youths will improve their skills in making a decision about telling someone of their mother is living with AIDS.
2. Youths will be able to tell someone that their mother is living with AIDS.

RATIONALE:

Whether to tell others that their mother has AIDS is a critical decision with advantages and disadvantages. Considering the decision can be very stressful, and denial can contribute to difficulties in coping with the problems that this situation brings with it. Furthermore, failing to confide in a trusted companion leads to isolation and less resistance to stress. Being able to tell, when it is appropriate, can provide social support and a buffering of stressful situations. The consequences of telling when it was not wise can be significant.

Making such a decision is a good place to practice social problem solving. As the research data shows that problem solving skills are critical in the adjustment and coping of many youths, wherever it can be introduced and used, the opportunity should not be missed. Also how to tell another person is not a simple matter. It needs to be thought out and rehearsed.

PROCEDURES:

1. Introduce the participants, facilitators, and use of Strokes. Review goal achievement and actions taken to make life better. Do a lottery. (10 minutes)
2. Introduce the topic with a script. Connect the topic to feelings with the Feeling Thermometer. Explore the personal meaning of telling someone. (15 minutes)
3. Practice problem-solving whether to tell. (50 minutes)
4. Do a relaxation sequence. (5 minutes)
5. Practice telling someone. (25 minutes)
6. End with an announcement of the next topic, goal setting, and appreciation of each other. (15 minutes)

MATERIALS:

Lottery tickets  
Lottery Prize  
Strokes  
Feeling Thermometers  
Script on telling  
The Steps in Problem Solving  
Script on Telling Cousin Victor  
Guidelines for Telling

Exercise 1: What Are We Going To Do Next?  
(10 minutes)

**[The purpose of this exercise is to build self-esteem and to encourage group cohesion. Introductions, reporting on steps taken, and sharing efforts to make life better are used to achieve these ends.]**

Welcome back from lunch.

I am glad to see you here for the afternoon session.

Let's start off with introducing ourselves again.

Please tell us your first name and one wish that you would like to have come true.

You might say, "My name is George, and my one wish is that I can find a good job when I get out of school."

I'll start.

My name is ..... and my one wish is .....

HAVE EVERYONE GIVE HER OR HIS FIRST NAME AND ONE WISH.

Here are your Strokes for today.

HAND OUT TWENTY STROKES TO EACH PERSON.

Remember to give them out when someone does or says something that you like.

You can also give out for the way a person looks or just for their being here.

It's good to have few Strokes left in your hand by the end of the session.

This afternoon's session is about whether or not to tell others that your mother is living with AIDS.

Before get into that we are doing to do a lottery.

GIVE OUT LOTTERY TICKETS. USE THE LOTTERY TO REINFORCE BEING ON TIME AND BEING ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS.

Please write your name on a ticket and put the ticket in the bowl.

HAVE SOMEONE MIX THE TICKETS UP AND DRAW ONE. GIVE OUT THE LOTTERY PRIZE.

Exercise 2: How Do I Feel About Telling Someone?  
(15 minutes)

**[The purpose of this exercise is to connect the issue of telling someone with the youths' feelings and personal meaning. It is assumed that using a script, Feeling Thermometer, and discussion around personal meaning the goals of the exercise will be achieved.]**

Now we want to explore the question of whether you should tell someone that your mother is living with AIDS.

To do this I will need the help of two volunteers to play the parts of Billy and Frank.

Who will help me?

SELECT TWO VOLUNTEERS. GIVE THEM A COPY OF THE SCRIPT AND HAVE THEM READ IT. WHEN THEY ARE FINISHED, GIVE OUT STROKES. THE SCRIPT IS AS FOLLOWS:

SCRIPT ON TELLING OTHERS

BILLY: We are good friends, aren't we?

FRANK: Sure. Why did you ask?

BILLY: Just wondered.

FRANK: You must have had a reason.

BILLY: What would make you stop being a friend?

FRANK: I don't know.

BILLY: What if I told you something terrible about myself and my family?

FRANK: It wouldn't matter. I have my own secrets. What are you worried about?

BILLY: I'm worried about your reaction.

FRANK: No, I mean what is it you think I won't like?

BILLY: I just found out something terrible.

FRANK: What is it?

BILLY: You promise you won't tell?

FRANK: Of course.

BILLY: And you won't say, "See you later, my man?"

FRANK: Come on. Tell me.

BILLY: I'm scared.

FRANK: Tell me.

BILLY: My mother has AIDS.

FRANK: No shit!

BILLY: Does it change what you think of me?

FRANK: That's terrible. I really feel sorry for you. And for her too. It's nothing to be ashamed about. I know people who have AIDS.

BILLY: But do you still want to hang out with me?

FRANK: What kind of friend do you think I am?

BILLY: A good friend. That's why I could tell you.

FRANK: Then, be real. I'm not cutting out on you because your mother's got AIDS. If my mother had it, would you stop being a brother?

BILLY: No.

FRANK: Then stop worrying about it. I'm not saying anything to anybody. What can I do to help?

THE END

That was great!

GIVE OUT STROKES TO THE PLAYERS.

How did you feel playing Frank and Billy?

ENCOURAGE RESPONSES.

Having all kinds of reactions to hearing the news is normal.

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First, people want to keep it a secret.

They'll never tell anyone.

They feel alone.

Then they start thinking about who they could talk to about it.

They drop hints.

Then they decide they will talk to a friend and begin to prepare for it.

They think about when, where and how to do it.

They rehearse in their mind what they are going to say.

Finally they get up the courage to tell somebody.

You may stop any place along the way of steps toward telling and decide not to go further.

Let's use the Feeling Thermometer and check out your feelings about telling someone that your mother has AIDS.

**HAND OUT THE FEELING THERMOMETER ON TELLING. READ THE SITUATIONS ALOUD AND ALLOW TIME TO MARK DOWN A RESPONSE. THE SITUATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

Your best friend says your mother looks ill and asks you if she has AIDS. You say "no."

You go with your mother to the clinic and when you come out together, you see someone you know.

When you tell a teacher that your mother has AIDS, she promises not to say a word. Later you find out she told another teacher.

Is someone willing to share with the group which situation was most uncomfortable and which one least uncomfortable?

ENCOURAGE SHARING.

Are there other situations that you can think of which are very uncomfortable for you?

ENCOURAGE SHARING.

Sometimes people don't want to tell others because they think telling would mean something negative about them.

For example, "Telling someone is crying on them. It's a sign of weakness."

Or, "If I told someone, it would be like I was a rat, breaking the family trust. Putting the family's business out in the street."

What kind of person would you be if you told a trusted friend that your mother had AIDS?

ASK EACH YOUTH WHAT KIND OF PERSON HE OR SHE WOULD BE IF THEY TOLD A TRUSTED FRIEND. DISCUSS HOW VIEWS OF ONESELF HELP OR HINDER TELLING.

Exercise 3: Should I Tell?  
(50 minutes)

**[The purpose of this exercise is to improve the youths' decision-making, problem-solving skills.  
Practicing the steps of problem solving is the method used.]**

As you could see from looking at how you feel about telling, there is a real dilemma.

On the one hand it can increase social supports, but on the other hand it can have negative consequences in terms of discrimination.

Now we are going to work on how to decide if you should tell someone.

When trying to make up your mind about whether to tell or not, there are some helpful steps that can be taken.

Following these steps makes decisions better and easier.

Here is an outline of the steps.

HAND OUT THE STEPS IN PROBLEM SOLVING.

THE COMPLETE STEPS IN PROBLEM SOLVING

1. GET READY.
2. DEFINE THE PROBLEM.
3. GET INFORMATION ON THE PROBLEM.
4. FIGURE OUT THE GOAL.

5. LIST ACTIONS YOU MIGHT TAKE.
6. JUDGE THE POSSIBLE ACTIONS.
7. DECIDE ON A COURSE OF ACTION.
8. DO IT!
9. REVIEW IT.

#### THE PROBE SYSTEM

**P = PROBLEM.** WHAT IS IT?

**R = RESULTS.** WHAT RESULTS TO YOU WANT?

**O = OPTIONS.** WHAT ARE YOUR ALTERNATIVES?

**B = BEST.** WHICH OPTION IS BEST?

**E = ENACT IT.** TRY IT AND REVIEW IT

I will briefly explain the steps and then we will practice each one in more detail.

"Get Ready" - You can have an attitude that keeps you from solving problems. "I'll never be able to figure this out" puts barrier between you and making a good decision.

"Define the Problem" - What exactly has to be solved or fixed?  
Sometimes we make the mistake of working on the wrong problem because did not define the problem well.

"Get Information on the Problem" - Finding out what we need to know about the problem.

"Figure Out the Goal" - How do you want this situation to come out?

"List Actions You Might Take" - Think of as many ways to fix the problem as you can but don't evaluate the alternatives now.

"Judge the Possible Actions" - What are the pluses and minuses of each action? If you do it, what will it lead to?

"Decide on a Course of Action" - Select the best action to take and plan how you are going to do it.

"Do It" - Try out the action you select.

"Review It" - Did it work? Did you give yourself some strokes for your success? Would you do it differently next time?

An easy way to remember the steps is to think of the word "Probe."

"P" stands for problem. What's the problem here?

"R" stands for results. What results do you want? What's the goal?

"O" stands for options. What are the alternatives for fixing the problem?

"B" stands for best. Choose the best action to take.

"E" stands for enact. Do it and then review it.

Now we can try to solve the problem of whether to tell someone one.

First we will work on "Get Ready."

Here are the most important attitudes to have when starting to work on a problem.

PUT THE KEY WORDS UP ON NEWSPRINT AS YOU GO ALONG.

- a. Acceptance of problems as a **normal**, a regular part of living.
- b. Belief in your **ability to solve** life's everyday problems.
- c. **Recognizing** that when you feel discomfort, stressed and have lots of physical aches and pains you probably have a problem.
- d. **Controlling** the natural tendency to respond emotionally to problems and using "STOP AND THINK" techniques in problem situations.
- e. Having **realistic expectations** of what problem solving can and cannot do and understanding the amount of time and effort that is involved in identifying and implementing effective solutions.

Now we are going to role play countering bad attitudes.

Three friends are talking - one of whom is played by me.

The other two friends are to try and convince me of a better attitude.

SELECT TWO VOLUNTEERS TO PLAY THE FRIENDS.

The rest of you will be observers.

ASSIGN OBSERVER TASKS.

You watch eyes, facial expressions, voices, postures, gestures.

Let me show you how this will work.

If I say "it's not fair that there are problems in life," you might say that problems are part of living for everyone, and, if you expect the world to be fair, you will be unhappy all the time.

So what is the goal of the two friends?

CLARIFY THE GOAL, IF THE TWO FRIENDS DO NOT SEEM TO UNDERSTAND.

Now we are going to begin.

START OFF BY SAYING TO THE FIRST FRIEND, "I'LL BET THERE ARE VERY FEW PEOPLE IN THE WORLD WHO HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHO TO TELL ABOUT THEIR MOTHER HAVING AIDS. NO ONE HAS PROBLEMS LIKE MINE." HAVE A SHORT DIALOGUE WITH THE FIRST FRIEND AND ADJUST YOUR ATTITUDE SOME. TRY TO KEEP THE DIALOGUE FLOWING FROM ONE ATTITUDE TO THE NEXT ONE. USE TRANSITION FILLERS LIKE "WELL, YES THAT'S TRUE BUT I ALSO THINK THAT..."

AFTER THE FIRST FRIEND HAS ARGUED AGAINST THAT IDEA, PRESENT THE NEXT ATTITUDE TO THE SECOND FRIEND. "THIS PROBLEM ABOUT WHETHER TO TELL MY FRIEND ABOUT MY MOTHER IS MUCH TOO COMPLICATED. I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO FIGURE IT OUT." HAVE A SHORT DIALOGUE WITH THE SECOND FRIEND AND CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE A LITTLE BIT.

PRESENT A THIRD ATTITUDE TO THE FIRST FRIEND. "I HAVE DECIDED TO FORGET ABOUT THE PROBLEM. IT IS BEST TO JUST AVOID IT AND PRETEND THAT IT DIDN'T EXIST." HAVE A SHORT DIALOGUE WITH THE FIRST FRIEND AND ADJUST YOUR ATTITUDE A LITTLE BIT.

PRESENT A FOURTH ATTITUDE TO THE SECOND FRIEND. "I KNOW THERE IS ONE RIGHT AND PERFECT SOLUTION FOR EVERY PROBLEM. I'M WORRIED THAT I WILL NOT BE ABLE TO FIND THE PERFECT SOLUTION." HAVE A SHORT DIALOGUE WITH THE SECOND FRIEND AND CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE A LITTLE BIT.

YOU CAN BRING MORE YOUTHS IN AS FRIENDS DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE ROLE PLAY IF YOU WISH.

That was a good role play.

GIVE OUT STROKES TO THE TWO PLAYERS.

How do you two friends feel?

ENCOURAGE RESPONSES.

What was one thing that you liked about what you did and one thing you would have done differently?

ENCOURAGE RESPONSES.

Now let's get feedback from the observers.

What was one thing that you liked about the way the two friends worked on me, and what was one thing you would have done differently?

OBTAIN FEEDBACK.

So, you can see that how you approach making a decision - how you go into it - makes a difference.

Now, we have to define the problem.

What is the problem?

The problem is not "Should I tell that my mother has AIDS," but "should I tell \_\_\_\_\_" (a specific person).

Also, what do you want from that person?

Give me some ideas of who the people are that you might be thinking of telling and what you want from that person.

ENCOURAGE SHARING.

Has everyone got the idea?

You each have a special problem.

It is whether to tell a particular friend or teacher or coach or priest or minister or relative about your mother.

Make the problem specific to you.

Now we need to pay attention to what information we need to make a good decision about whether to tell Cousin Bill or friend Samir.

What would you need to know about somebody before you trusted them enough to tell them?

ENCOURAGE RESPONSES AND WRITE THEM UP ON NEWSPRINT. IF SOME OF THE QUESTION LISTED BELOW DO NOT COME UP, YOU MAY WANT TO ASK PARTICIPANTS WHAT THEY THINK OF THE QUESTIONS.

QUESTIONS ABOUT PEOPLE YOU MAY WANT TO TELL

WHAT DOES HE/SHE KNOW ABOUT AIDS?

WHAT ARE HER/HIS ATTITUDES TOWARD AIDS?

WHAT ARE HER/HIS ATTITUDES TOWARD ME?

CAN SHE/HE KEEP A SECRET?

DOES SHE/HE HAVE SOMEONE SHE/HE CARES ABOUT WHO HAS AIDS?

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THIS PERSON DIDN'T KEEP MY SECRET?

WOULD THIS PERSON TRY TO HARM ME?

HOW WOULD I FEEL ABOUT SHARING MY SECRET WITH THIS PERSON?

WOULD THIS PERSON BE A SUPPORT TO ME?

IS SHARING MY SECRET WITH THIS PERSON GOING TO BE A RELIEF?

Thank you for those ideas.

DIVIDE THE GROUP INTO PAIRS.

I want you tell your partner what you already know about someone you are thinking of telling that your mother has AIDS.

What don't you know, also?

ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR SHARING.

Let's take the next step which is being sure what our goal is.

Could I have two volunteers to help do a brief scene?

SELECT THE VOLUNTEERS. GIVE THEM THE SCRIPT AND HAVE THEM READ IT.

MY COUSIN THE NURSE

ROBERTO GOMEZ: Aren't you my cousin, the nurse.

COUSIN VICTOR: Am I?

ROBERTO GOMEZ: Sure. You're my mother's sister's kid. Aunt Eugenio's kid. Victor. Right?

COUSIN VICTOR: So what if I am?

ROBERTO GOMEZ: Look, Victor. My mother has got AIDS.

COUSIN VICTOR: I'm sorry to hear that but why are you telling me?

ROBERTO GOMEZ: You work in this hospital. She's been here before. When my mother comes in again, I want you to look after her. See that she gets good care.

COUSIN VICTOR: There's not much I can do about that. I'm just a nurse. I don't run the hospital. You let me know she's in here, and I'll try to go see her.

ROBERTO GOMEZ: Thanks. Thanks a lot.

COUSIN VICTOR: I can't promise much.

ROBERTO GOMEZ: She'll appreciate it. Me too.

COUSIN VICTOR: Part of the family. Really sorry to hear it.

THE END

Thank you.

That was great!

GIVE OUT STROKES TO THE PLAYERS.

In this little scene Roberto knew why he wanted to tell his cousin Victor.

What do you want?

What are your goals for telling the person you are thinking about?

Remember that each of you has different needs and goals.

Tell your partner why you want to tell this person.

ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR SHARING.

Now we want to practice "Listing the Actions I Might Take."

Let me give you a problem to work on.

Julia has a boy friend - Gabriel - who is very negative toward people with AIDS.

She really loves Gabriel.

She wants to tell Gabriel because she needs someone to talk to - someone to help her feel better.

Julia is very upset over her mother's having AIDS.

She needs Gabriel, but she is afraid of his reaction.

Sooner or later he will find out.

Would it make a difference if he found out from someone else?

Come up with a big list of things Julia could do.

Don't judge them or screen anything out at this point.

What are your ideas?

WRITE THEM ON NEWSPRINT. COACH IF NECESSARY. A POSSIBLE LIST MIGHT LOOK LIKE THIS:

- Don't tell him
- Tell him face to face
- Write him a letter
- Ask her mother to tell him
- Have her mother go with her to tell him
- Find somebody else to talk to for comfort
- Get a new boy friend
- Try to change his attitudes about AIDS

Now we need to think about evaluating the possible actions we came up with.

First, let's make a list of the advantages and disadvantages of telling anyone about mother's condition.

DIVIDE THE GROUP IN HALF. HAVE ONE GROUP TAKE FOUR MINUTES TO THINK OF ADVANTAGES WHILE THE OTHER GROUP COMES UP WITH DISADVANTAGES. THEN ASK THE GROUPS TO REPORT BACK. EXAMPLES OF LISTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

#### AGAINST TELLING

- MAY LOSE PEOPLE YOU CARE ABOUT
- CAN'T BE 100% POSITIVE HOW PEOPLE WILL REACT
- THE OTHER PERSON MAY NOT KEEP THE SECRET
- NEED TO PROTECT FAMILY AND FRIENDS
- FAMILY AND FRIENDS MAY WANT TO KNOW ABOUT DRUG HABIT AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOR
- PREJUDICED PEOPLE MAY RETALIATE
- WHEN TELLING OTHERS, I FEEL GUILTY AND BAD
- FAMILY MAY SUFFER FROM STIGMA AND REJECTION IF OTHERS FIND OUT
- IT MAY LEAD TO A FRIGHTENING DISCUSSION OF GETTING SICKER

FOR TELLING

ALLOWS OTHER PEOPLE TO BE SUPPORTIVE  
DON'T HAVE TO CARRY THE BURDEN ALONE  
MAY MAKE FOR A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OTHER PERSON  
CAN THEN DEVELOP COOPERATIVE WAYS TO HANDLE DEMANDS  
CAN PLAN FOR THE FUTURE WITH PEOPLE CLOSE TO ME  
THE PERSON BEING TOLD COULD LEARN FROM OTHERS IN A SHOCKING AND  
HURTFUL WAY  
REDUCES LONELINESS, STRESS, DENIAL, AND ISOLATION  
DON'T HAVE TO BE ON GUARD AS MUCH  
PEOPLE MAY RESENT YOU IF THEY HEAR IT FROM OTHERS  
CAN PROVIDE ACCURATE INFORMATION  
FAMILY CAN BE LESS ISOLATED AND GET SUPPORT FROM  
OTHERS

Those are good lists of advantages and disadvantages.

Are there others you want to add?

ENCOURAGE MORE IDEAS.

Now meet with your partner again and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of telling the person you have been considering talking to.

ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR SHARING.

Now we want to practice making a decision.

Let's take two of the options that Julia came up with.

One is not to tell Gabriel.

The other is have mother go with her to tell Gabriel.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of each and which one would you choose?

ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION AND MAKING A CHOICE.

Remember also you need to think of where and when to tell and what you are going to say.

That was really good.

You did a great job on the whole thing of taking all the steps.

Exercise 4: How Can I Get Rid of Tension?  
(5 minutes)

**[The purpose of this exercise is to reduce tension that has built up in the session. A relaxation sequence is the preferred method.]**

We need to take a few minutes to relax after all that work on telling someone.

I will take you through a little relaxation.

RELAXATION INSTRUCTIONS: A SPECIAL PLACE

Settle back in your chair. PAUSE

Take a deep breath PAUSE

and let it out slowly. PAUSE

Close your eyes if you wish.

Let your legs begin to feel warm and heavy.

Warm and heavy.

Warm and heavy. PAUSE

Now let your arms feel warm and heavy.

Warm and heavy. PAUSE

Now imagine that you are floating.

Can you feel yourself floating? PAUSE

Somewhere there is a special place.

A place where you feel safe and comfortable.

A place you love to go to.

Picture that place.

A few feet ahead is the entrance to that special place.

As I count, you will move closer and closer.

10...9...8...7...6...half way there 5...4...3...2...1

Now you have entered that special place.

See the colors there. PAUSE

Hear the beautiful sounds. PAUSE

Feel the air in that special place. PAUSE

Smell the aromas. PAUSE

Touch the textures in that special place. PAUSE

Sense how wonderful you feel in that special place. PAUSE

Let all those good feelings sink into your body and mind.

LONG PAUSE

Now we will leave that special place.

This is a place you can return to at any time.

As I count, you will gradually return to here.

1...2...3...4...5 half way back....6...7...8...9...10

Now slowly open your eyes.

Yawn and stretch.

Yawn and stretch.

Exercise 5: How Do I Tell Someone My Mother Has AIDS?  
(25 minutes)

**[The purpose of this exercise is to improve the youths' skills in telling someone about their mothers' conditions. Role playing is the approach taken.]**

Now we are going to practice telling either the person we have chosen or telling another group member..

First, I want to go over some guidelines for telling.

HAND OUT THE GUIDELINES FOR TELLING.

GUIDELINES FOR TELLING THAT YOUR MOTHER IS LIVING WITH AIDS

1. THERE IS NO ONE RIGHT WAY.
2. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT  
TO TELL AS MUCH OR AS LITTLE AS YOU WISH  
TO SHOW YOUR EMOTIONS  
TO STOP AT ANY TIME
3. DECIDE WHERE AND WHEN YOU WANT TO TELL.
4. PRACTICE WHAT YOU PLAN TO SAY.
5. BE HONEST AND DIRECT.
6. EXPECT ANY KIND OF REACTION AND IMAGINE AHEAD OF TIME HOW YOU  
COULD COPE WITH DIFFERENT RESPONSES.
7. PAY ATTENTION TO HOW THE OTHER PERSON IS REACTING.
8. ASK HOW THE OTHER PERSON IS FEELING.

- |                                             |
|---------------------------------------------|
| 9. SHOW THAT YOU UNDERSTAND.                |
| 10. END WITH A DISCUSSION OF THE NEXT STEP. |

Let me take a minute and comment briefly on the guidelines.

"THERE IS NO ONE RIGHT WAY." It has to fit you and the person you are talking to.

"YOU HAVE THE RIGHT  
TO TELL AS MUCH OR AS LITTLE AS YOU WISH  
TO SHOW YOUR EMOTIONS  
TO STOP AT ANY TIME"

Don't get pushed into saying more than you want to - stay in charge.

"DECIDE WHERE AND WHEN YOU WANT TO TELL." Think carefully about the best time and place to talk to the person you have chosen.

"PRACTICE WHAT YOU PLAN TO SAY." Prepare yourself. What are you going to say? Practice saying it in front of the mirror.

"BE HONEST AND DIRECT." Try not to play any games. If you are honest and direct, it will encourage the other person to act that way also.

"EXPECT ANY KIND OF REACTION AND IMAGINE AHEAD OF TIME HOW YOU COULD COPE WITH DIFFERENT RESPONSES." What kind of response will you get? Try to figure it out and be ready.

"PAY ATTENTION TO HOW THE OTHER PERSON IS REACTING." Being aware of how the other person is responding will allow you to make changes if needed.

"ASK HOW THE OTHER PERSON IS FEELING." Check out the other person's feelings. If you ask, the person will realize that you care about their feelings also.

"SHOW THAT YOU UNDERSTAND." If you let the other person know that you have got their message, the other person will be more sympathetic.

"END WITH A DISCUSSION OF THE NEXT STEP." What next? Do you want the person to do something? Make your expectations clear.

Now we are going to practice telling someone by doing some role playing.

You have three choices:

1. Pretend that your partner is someone you are thinking of telling and act it out. Tell your partner who the person is ahead of time.
2. Pretend that your partner is someone you should be able to trust like a doctor or a priest and tell that person.
3. Tell your partner that your mother has AIDS.

DIVIDE THE GROUP IN HALF AND THEN INTO PAIRS. A FACILITATOR GOES WITH EACH SMALL GROUP. GIVE EACH PERSON A TURN TO DO THE TELLING.

IF HAVE THE PERSON DOING THE TELLING IS PRETENDING TO TELL SOMEONE OUTSIDE OF THE GROUP, HAVE HER/HIM INDICATE WHEN AND WHERE SHE/HE WOULD HAVE THIS CONVERSATION TAKE PLACE.

ALLOW ABOUT THREE MINUTES A ROLE PLAY. AFTER EACH ROLE PLAY OBTAIN FEEDBACK. AN EXAMPLE OF GETTING FEEDBACK IS AS FOLLOWS:

Now I want the person doing the telling to say how you felt.

Also what one thing did you do that you liked and what one thing would you do differently?

ENCOURAGE SHARING.

I would like the rest of you to indicate what one thing you liked that the teller did and what one thing would you do differently.

OBTAIN FEEDBACK.

WHEN EVERYONE HAS HAD A CHANCE TO PRACTICE TELLING, BRING THE GROUP BACK TOGETHER AGAIN.

Let's come back together again.

How did you experience the role play?

What was easy and what was hard to do?

ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION.

Exercise 6: What Is Next?  
(15 minutes)

**[The purposes of this exercise are to improve self-esteem, to build group support, and to set goals for applying what was learned in real life. Giving appreciation and goal setting are the ways to do this.]**

We are at the end of the session on whether to tell.

First, I want to thank you for a really hard working session.

In the next session we will work on dealing with prejudiced reactions from others.

This morning we talked about some tasks you could accomplish between sessions.

The goal should be realistic, clear, not too much or too little, and easy to see if you did it.

What are some ideas from this session on whether to tell?

I can think of a couple: 1) pick a person you might tell and ask them questions to see if you could trust them; 2) make a list of possible people to tell; 3) pick a person and go through the problem solving steps around that person.

Think of what goal you would choose.

WAIT A MINUTE OR TWO FOR EACH PERSON TO SELECT A GOAL.

Let's go around and here what you have chosen to do.

GO AROUND THE GROUP AND SEE WHAT GOALS THEY HAVE CHOSEN. HELP OUT AND MAKE SURE THE GOALS MEET THE CRITERIA.

For now I would like us to show appreciation to each other for their contributions this morning.

ENCOURAGE SHOWING APPRECIATION. MAKE SURE EVERYONE IS INCLUDED.

Have a nice week.

I'll see you at \_\_\_\_\_ (time and place) on \_\_\_\_\_ (day and date).

END OF SESSION ON TELLING OTHERS

SCRIPT ON TELLING OTHERS

BILLY: We are good friends, aren't we?

FRANK: Sure. Why did you ask?

BILLY: Just wondered.

FRANK: You must have had a reason.

BILLY: What would make you stop being a friend?

FRANK: I don't know.

BILLY: What if I told you something terrible about myself and my family?

FRANK: It wouldn't matter. I have my own secrets. What are you worried about?

BILLY: I'm worried about your reaction.

FRANK: No, I mean what is it you think I won't like?

BILLY: I just found out something terrible.

FRANK: What is it?

BILLY: You promise you won't tell?

FRANK: Of course.

BILLY: And you won't say, "See you later, my man?"

FRANK: Come on. Tell me.

BILLY: I'm scared.

FRANK: Tell me.

BILLY: My mother has AIDS.

FRANK: No shit!

BILLY: Does it change what you think of me?

FRANK: That's terrible. I really feel sorry for you. And for her too. It's nothing to be ashamed about. I know people who have AIDS.

BILLY: But do you still want to hang out with me?

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FRANK:           What kind of friend do you think I am?

BILLY: A good friend. That's why I could tell you.

FRANK:           Then, be real. I'm not cutting out on you because your mother's got AIDS. If my mother had it, would you stop being a brother?

BILLY: No.

FRANK:           Then stop worrying about it. I'm not saying anything to anybody. What can I do to help?

THE END

FEELING THERMOMETER ON TELLING

100           VERY UNCOMFORTABLE  
90  
80  
70  
60  
50  
40  
30  
20  
10  
0            COMPLETELY COMFORTABLE

SITUATIONS

TEMPERATURE  
READING

1.     Your best friend says your mother looks ill and asks you if she has AIDS. You say "no."
  
2.     You go with your mother to the clinic and when you come out together, you see someone you know.
  
3.     When you tell a teacher that your mother has AIDS, she promises not to say a word. Later you find out she told another teacher.
  
4.     You decide not to tell anyone - even your best friend - that your mother has AIDS.
  
5.     Your mother asks you to tell your sister that she has AIDS. You tell your sister about your mother, and she cries and cries.
  
6.     You hear about another teenager whose mother has AIDS and talk to her about your situation.

## THE STEPS IN PROBLEM SOLVING

1. GET READY.
2. DEFINE THE PROBLEM.
3. GET INFORMATION ON THE PROBLEM.
4. FIGURE OUT THE GOAL.
5. LIST ACTIONS YOU MIGHT TAKE.
6. JUDGE THE POSSIBLE ACTIONS.
7. DECIDE ON A COURSE OF ACTION.
8. DO IT!
9. REVIEW IT.

### THE PROBE SYSTEM

**P** = PROBLEM. WHAT IS IT?

**R** = RESULTS. WHAT RESULTS TO YOU WANT?

**O** = OPTIONS. WHAT ARE YOUR ALTERNATIVES?

**B** = BEST. WHICH OPTION IS BEST?

E = ENACT IT. TRY IT AND REVIEW IT

MY COUSIN THE NURSE

ROBERTO GOMEZ: Aren't you my cousin, the nurse.

COUSIN VICTOR: Am I?

ROBERTO GOMEZ: Sure. You're my mother's sister's kid. Aunt Eugenio's kid. Victor. Right?

COUSIN VICTOR: So what if I am?

ROBERTO GOMEZ: Look, Victor. My mother has got AIDS.

COUSIN VICTOR: I'm sorry to hear that but why are you telling me?

ROBERTO GOMEZ: You work in this hospital. She's been here before. When my mother comes in again, I want you to look after her. See that she gets good care.

COUSIN VICTOR: There's not much I can do about that. I'm just a nurse. I don't run the hospital. You let me know she's in here, and I'll try to go see her.

ROBERTO GOMEZ: Thanks. Thanks a lot.

COUSIN VICTOR: I can't promise much.

ROBERTO GOMEZ: She'll appreciate it. Me too.

COUSIN VICTOR: Part of the family. Really sorry to hear it.

THE END

GUIDELINES FOR TELLING THAT YOUR MOTHER IS LIVING WITH AIDS

1. THERE IS NO ONE RIGHT WAY.
2. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT  
TO TELL AS MUCH OR AS LITTLE AS YOU WISH  
TO SHOW YOUR EMOTIONS  
TO STOP AT ANY TIME
3. DECIDE WHERE AND WHEN YOU WANT TO TELL.
4. PRACTICE WHAT YOU PLAN TO SAY.
5. BE HONEST AND DIRECT.
6. EXPECT ANY KIND OF REACTION AND IMAGINE AHEAD OF TIME HOW YOU COULD  
COPE WITH DIFFERENT RESPONSES.
7. PAY ATTENTION TO HOW THE OTHER PERSON IS REACTING.
8. ASK HOW THE OTHER PERSON IS FEELING.
9. SHOW THAT YOU UNDERSTAND.
10. END WITH A DISCUSSION OF THE NEXT STEP.