

Introspection Exercise – Leaders Guide Project Mainstream

15 minutes

Initial Introspective and Interactive Exercises

Discussion: For learners with prior practical experience with patients/clients, ask them to describe their feelings about promoting behavior change. Display a list of their feelings. Ask them to comment further on any negative feelings. Draw out any implicit expectations they have about the process of behavior change.

Next, ask the learners to think about a risky or problematic behavior that they themselves have tried to change at some point. Reassure them that they will not be asked to divulge the nature of this behavior. Poll the group on: (1) how much time elapsed between the start of the behavior and the first time they recognized a risk or negative consequence; (2) how much time elapsed between the first time they recognized a risk or negative consequence of their behavior and the first time they made an earnest attempt to change their behavior; (3) whether anyone ever experienced a relapse of their undesired behavior.

Ask the learners to draw conclusions from the polls. Such conclusions might be:

- Behavior change takes a variable amount of time. It often takes lots of time.
- Knowledge of risks or negative consequences of a behavior is often insufficient to produce behavior change.
- Relapse is the rule, not the exception.

Demonstrate the difference between the learners' expectations as clinicians and their own experience with changing their own behaviors. Having more realistic expectations reduces frustration.

10 minutes

– Exercise – What's Helpful and Not Helpful in Promoting Behavior change?

Discussion: Ask the learners to think again of their behavior that they used for the exercise in Hour One. Record their responses to two questions: (1) Think of individuals who tried to help you change your behavior but were not helpful. What about their help was not helpful? Please respond with either verbs or adjectives – actions that were not helpful or ways they came across that were not helpful. (2) Think of individuals who were helpful to you in changing your behavior. What about their help was helpful.

Again, please respond in verbs or adjectives – actions that were helpful or ways they came across that were helpful.