

HIV SUPPORT GROUP PROGRAM

"HIV is a Manageable Disease"



Developed by

BAY AREA HIV SUPPORT AND EDUCATION SERVICES

PROGRAM PURPOSE:

The purpose of this program is to provide a process by which HIV positive individuals can work through their AIDS issues from when they test positive or are diagnosed to a point where they take a proactive, productive action plan for living with HIV disease.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS:

All Roundtable Discussions (RTD) are optional and are to be used if the group does not come up with a topic. It is suggested the facilitators keep the program moving in a self-awareness direction. Participants can then begin to recognize their value and start looking forward.

BUDDY DIRECTORY SYSTEM:

The purpose of this system is to provide a process in which people with life threatening diseases have a support system to improve the quality of their lives. It is not to replace professional services that can help the person process issues in their lives, but to provide an identified resource person in which a safety net is available when a support group member needs help.

Support group facilitators are not the main component of the Buddy Directory System (BDS). The BDS is for the group members. The group members make a decision to start a directory of each others telephone numbers, and distribute them amongst themselves. During times when the support group members need to talk to someone, their support buddies will be the immediate contact persons. In the event a group member is not able to contact the above individuals, the support group facilitator should be contacted.

The Buddy Directory System offers resources and alternative support systems for support group members when they are in a crisis situation.

Purpose of Module One

The goals of Module One are to build Trust, Bonding, and Support between members. Support group members are asked to examine their feelings about HIV and being seropositive, look at past and present accomplishments, decide on future accomplishments, and form personal support systems.

Handout One

Expectations for the Support Group

1. **Attend every week if possible.**
 - ♦Regular attendance is important to maintain group solidarity and continuity. The program is designed for ten weeks of meetings for Module One. Groups members will then decide to continue or not as a closed group/add new members from other groups who have gone through the ten week program for a second phase of 15 additional weeks (Module Two).
 - ♦The group is not the same if you are not there for the meeting.
 - ♦It is optional to continue the program to the second phase Module Two.
2. **Be on time for each meeting.**
 - ♦This is a courtesy and shows respect to others in the group.
 - ♦The meetings will start and end exactly on time each week.
3. **Call in advance if you are going to be late or absent.**
 - ♦This is also a courtesy to the group; others may worry if you are not present and have not called in advance.
 - ♦Please be respectful of your fellow members. If you are ill, e.g. with something contagious, call in and do not attend that weeks meeting.
4. **Don't come to group meetings under the influence of any non prescribed drugs or alcohol.**
 - ♦You will be asked to leave by all group members for the rest of the meeting.
 - ♦The support group meets for issues around HIV/AIDS. Although substance abuse can be involved in discussions of HIV/AIDS, it is not appropriate to focus on substance abuse. If you feel you need a support group for substance abuse as well as matters of HIV, please advise your facilitator. A referral can be made.
5. **No physical or verbal violence.**
 - ♦It's okay to get angry and to disagree, but it is also important to respect one another's individual differences and point of view.
 - ♦We are not here to try to make everyone think or act the same way. Don't condemn anyone for the ideas, beliefs, or feelings s/he holds.
6. **Don't interrupt others and no side conversations.**
 - ♦This is a courtesy to others in the group.
 - ♦These are disruptive to the group and disrespectful to the person who is talking.

Expectations for the Support Group (continued)

- 7.. **People are free to speak their minds, and they are equally free not to talk if they don't feel like it.**
 - ◆Remember to use "I" statements and refrain from put-downs.
8. **Let everyone have equal time to talk.**
 - ◆We recognize that some people are more shy or reserved than others, and that we all deserve equal time to talk if they want.
 - ◆Don't monopolize the conversation.
9. **Confidentiality: Never talk about what goes on in the group in a way that might reveal the identity of a group member.**
 - ◆It's okay to discuss the general content of the group meetings with others, but never disclose any information about a group member which might give a clue about the identity of that persons
 - ◆If you ever happen to see someone from the group in public, be discreet, to the point of being overly cautious.
 - ◆All the information you provide us at the agency is kept strictly confidential. The only reason you are asked to provide information about yourself is for the purpose of funding accountability. Even then no names or addresses are given to funders.
10. **If a facilitator believes a group member is at crisis of any of the following in the very near future, s/he will consult with his/her supervisor, and may be required to contact persons or services outside the group in an effort to keep it from happening:**
 - ◆Threat of suicide*
 - ◆Threat of physically injuring self or someone else
 - ◆Assisting with someone else's suicide.**
 - * If placed in a situation where a suicide plan or desire is expressed and threat of harm is real, facilitators must call Suicide Hotline and inform his/her Program Coordinator.
 - ** It is still a felony in the State of California to assist with suicide.
11. **We all have responsibility to maintain the group expectations.**
12. **If a member leaves the group for any reason other than illness or relocation, it is requested they provide the group facilitators with the reasons.**
 - ◆This will allow us to determine if there are program problems which need to be corrected.
13. **If a group member is unable to follow each of the above expectations, s/he may be asked to leave the group at any time.**

Support Group Meeting Format

Each group meeting should last the same length of time: 1 1/2 hours.

Each meeting should start exactly on time, and end right on time.

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Format for each meeting

1. Read as a group expectations of the group. Pass around the Phone List. Brief announcements (up to one minute per announcement)
2. Brief mention of any absent group members, including any information about their absence.
3. Check-in (2-3 minutes for each group member).
4. Post-check-in: Any comments or reactions to things mentioned in the check-in.
5. Discussion of topics of interest or concern to the group.
6. Wrap-up: Feedback about the meeting (final 10 minutes).

**Volunteer Group Facilitator
Task and Responsibilities**
General Information

The facilitator's job is not to direct the group or to be the main source of support for the group members. Instead, his/her job is to maintain the expectations and to offer emotional support and guidance when needed so that the group members can best support one another in the group.

Also, the facilitator is not there to get support in dealing with his/her personal issues or concerns. Although it is alright for the facilitator to disclose personal information about him/herself if chosen, it is not appropriate for the discussion to focus on the facilitator's personal situation or concerns.

Routine tasks and responsibilities for each group meeting include:
(in the order they occur in the meeting)

1. Start the group meeting on time.
2. Ask if there are any brief announcements. (up to 1 minute)
3. Briefly mention the circumstances of any absent group members (if you happen to know about them), or ask the group if they have any information about absent members.
4. Conduct the check-in.
5. Conduct the post-check-in process.
6. Facilitate discussion of topics of interest or concern to the group.
7. Conduct the wrap-up (feedback about the meeting).
8. End the group meeting on time.
9. Secure office by enforcing closing process (windows closed, food or snacks put away, doors locked, etc.).

MODULE I
Positive Outlook

Week 1

TITLE: Getting together.

Section 1. Expectations, Program Overview and Outline

Orientation:

- ◆ Pass out handouts to be read: (Purpose of Module One, Expectations, format, facilitator responsibilities).
- ◆ Introduce yourself and co-facilitator
- ◆ Answer questions, if any, about the above mentioned handouts.
- ◆ Have everyone in the group introduce themselves and share some background.

Module Overview and Outline:

- ◆ Explain 5th week activity is decided by group (it is not mandatory. A roundtable group can be done in its place.)
- ◆ Explain the Buddy Directory Support System. Ask group if they want a phone sign-in sheet. If so, start one.

Section 2. Administrative and Housekeeping Information

- ◆ Ask if everyone has completed a Consent to Participate form, If not please have them do so.
- ◆ Ask if everyone has completed a Client Intake form. If not have them do so.

Section 3. Roundtable discussion - **What are my needs and expectations of a support group**

Section 4. Wrap Up

- ◆ During the week, have members write down anything they want to discuss for the next meeting.

Week 2

TITLE: Living with the infection

Section 1. Introduction:

- ▶ Pass out handouts to be read (Purpose of Module One, Expectations, format, facilitator responsibilities).
- ▶ Introduce yourself and co-Facilitator
- ▶ Check-in

Section 2. Roundtable discussion - **How do I feel about living with HIV?**

Section 3. Wrap Up

Week 3

TITLE: Personal Belief Systems

Section 1. Announcements and Check-in

Section 2. Roundtable discussion - **How has HIV made me feel about myself?**

- ▶ Self Image/How do I see myself
- ▶ How you feel others look at you

Section 3. Wrap Up

Week 4

TITLE: Surfacing emotions about HIV

Section 1. Announcements and Check-in

Section 2. Roundtable discussion - **What emotions surface when you think about your HIV status?**

Preparatory list for facilitator: Check all that come up and write down those emotions mentioned that are not on the list.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| ▶ Depression | ▶ Anger |
| ▶ Hate | ▶ Blame |
| ▶ Confusion | ▶ Fear |
| ▶ Abandonment | ▶ Loneliness |
| ▶ Betrayal of trust and security | ▶ Love |

Section 3. Wrap Up - discuss week 5 options (see below)

Week 5

Section 1. Activity/social Week, continuation of Week 4 Roundtable or take the week off. Group decides in week 4.

Week 6

TITLE: Motivation

Section 1. Announcements and Check-in

Section 2. Roundtable discussion - **What keeps me going ?**

Section 3. Wrap Up

Note: The Bay Area HIV Support and Education Services S.W.A.T. (Sex With A Twist) Playshop can be used as an educational tool should group decide it would benefit from the presentation/information(held on week 9).

Week 7

TITLE: Life changes with HIV

Section 1. Announcements and Check-in

Section 2. Roundtable discussion - **What I enjoyed doing before HIV.**

♦What HIV has brought to my life.

♦Difficulties in the changes/letting go.

Section 3. Wrap Up

Week 8

TITLE: Looking Forward

Section 1. Announcements and Check-in

Section 2. Support group structure

- ◆ Plan for a 10th week activity/regular meeting
- ◆ Does group wish to continue to Module Two
- ◆ Stay together/adding new members
- continue to use the Buddy Phone Directory

Section 3. Roundtable discussion - **Look back on one's accomplishments and direction before HIV.**

- ◆ Make a list of what one wants to accomplish now and in the future.

Section 4. Wrap Up

Week 9

TITLE: Complimentary Therapy or S.W.A.T. Workshop
(as decided by group)

Section 1. ◆ Acupuncture & Meditation

- ◆ Holistic Medicine
- ◆ Herbs & Vitamins

Section 2. How to keep healthy

Section 3. Wrap Up

Week 10

TITLE: Closure (Pot Luck)

Section 1. Review accomplishments and achievements

- ◆ Where was I, where am I?

Section 2. Roundtable discussion- **How do I feel about myself now?**

- ◆ Have I learned anything about my feelings and how to deal with them?
- ◆ Feedback on the 10 week program (what have I gained)

Section 3. Wrap Up (discuss outside guest for legal affairs)

MODULE II

Going Forward

MODULE II. Support Group 200

The goals of module II are to empower group members to take responsibility for daily living. Support group members will focus on personal goals and planning, legal and treatment options, relationships and lifestyle changes

SESSION I. - Support Group 201

Week 1

TITLE: Taking Inventory

Section 1. Review Handouts

Section 2. Announcements & Check In

Section 3. Distribute & complete "Self Analysis Profile" (Appendix F)

Section 4. Roundtable discussion - "Self Analysis Profile"(SAP) - Using the SAP, the discussion should focus on questions like
Where am I now? Where would I like to be?

Section 5. Wrap up

SESSION II. - Support Group 202/Social Impact

Week 2

TITLE: Relationships.

Section 1. Announcements & Check In

Section 2. Exercise: Relationship Chart (RC/Appendix G)

Section 3. Roundtable discussion - (This discussion should focus on how people on the RC support the member's action plan emotionally, spiritually, physically, and socially. It should also look at how the people on the chart cause or relieve stress and if anything is missing from the RC. Types of relationships: Family/Extended Family, Personal/Social, Sexual, etc.).

Section 4. Wrap up

Week 3

TITLE: Family/Extended Family

Section 1. Announcements & Check In

Section 2. Roundtable discussion - (This discussion should focus on how family/extended family on the RC support the member's action plan emotionally, spiritually, physically, and socially. It should also look at how the people on the chart cause or relieve stress. Trust and disclosure issues surrounding HIV).

Section 3. Wrap up

Week 4

TITLE: Personal/Social/Sexual Relationships
(friends, acquaintances partners)

Section 1. Announcements & Check In

Section 2. Roundtable discussion - (This discussion should focus on how personal/social & sexual relationships support the members action plan emotionally, spiritually, physically, and socially. It should also look at how personal/social relationships cause or relieve stress. Trust and disclosure issues surrounding HIV). Also how have my relationships changed with some of these people.

Section 3. Wrap up - Discuss week 6 options

Week 5

TITLE: Wants and Needs.

Section 1. Announcements & Check In

Section 2. Roundtable Discussion - What I want from my relationships. What I need from my relationships. How I achieve it.

Section 3. Wrap up

Week 6

TITLE: Social event/ Activity , continuation of relationships sessions or week-off. Group decides in week 5.

SESSION II. - Support Group 203/Technical Information

Week 7

TITLE: Treatment Information

Section 1. Announcements & Check In

Section 2. Q & A on medical treatments and alternatives. (This session should work in conjunction with Treatment Inservices held throughout the module.)

Section 3. Wrap up

Week 8

TITLE: Future Planning.

Section 1. Announcements & Check In

Section 2. Roundtable discussion - What are my priorities?, What are my needs?, What are my resources? Complete Priorities Worksheet - future goals. (PW/Appendix H)
(This discussion should cover the following areas:
Priorities: Things of importance in my life.
Goals: Completion of certain things in life.
Needs: What I need to feel whole.
Resources: What I see available to help me meet my objectives).

Section 3. Wrap up - Use worksheet to create an interim life plan and be prepared to talk about it at a later time.

Week 9

TITLE: Legal Affairs

Section 1. Announcements & Check In

Section 2. Q & A on legal matters, rights, responsibilities, wills, power of attorney. (This session should work in conjunction with Legal Inservices held throughout the module.)

Section 3. Wrap up

Week 10

TITLE: Lifestyle Choices and Keepsakes

Section 1. Announcements & Check In

Section 2. Roundtable discussion - What items, activities and habits I had, still have and/or have started. Preparatory list for facilitator: Check all that come up and write down those habits/items/activities mentioned that do not appear on the list.

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| ▶Diet | ▶Substance Abuse |
| ▶Vitamins | ▶Exercise |
| ▶Accupuncture | ▶Cigarettes |
| ▶Stress | |

Section 3. Wrap up

Week 11

TITLE: Long Term Survival

Section 1. Announcements & Check In

Section 2. Q & A with outside guest on long term survival and ways to enjoy a more fulfilled life handle it.

Section 3. Wrap up

Week 12

TITLE: Getting in Touch (Outside Guest)

Section 1. Announcements & Check In

Section 2. Exercise: Non-sexual touching of self and others, mutual massage, visualization and affirmations. (Group members volunteer to be worked on or sit back and learn.)

Section 3. Wrap up

Week 13

TITLE: Normal Nutrition?

Section 1. Announcements & Check In

Section 2. Q & A on Nutrition and HIV. (This session should work in conjunction with Nutrition Inservices held throughout the module.)

Section 3. ♦ Plan for a 15th week Potluck Social or Group Activity
♦ Does group wish to continue to Module Three
♦ Stay together/adding new members continue using the Buddy Phone Directory

Section 4. Wrap up

SESSION IV - Support Group 204

Week 14

TITLE: Looking Back?

Section 1. Announcements & Check In

Section 2. Roundtable discussion - Review group members life plan and the changes made over the last 14 weeks. Also distribute and complete the SAP again and compare the 1st one to the last one.

Section 3. Wrap up

♦ Distribute program evaluation form (Appendix I)

Week 15

TITLE: Potluck Social or Group Activity

MODULE III
Onward Positively

MODULE III. *Onward Positively*

Module III is designed for group members maintaining and continuing the development of a productive lifestyle. Members will be asked to utilize the Buddy System much more frequently. The group will also make the decision to keep its Facilitators for ongoing support, planning, and crisis resolution or to run itself independently with a monthly check-in to facilitators.

SESSION I. - Support Group 301

Week 1 - 15

TITLE: *Onward Positively.*

Section 1. Explain Module III.

Section 2. Check the Buddy Directory to make certain it is up to date. Make corrections to directory when necessary. This list should be given to all group members and facilitator(s).

Section 3. The group is to meet once a week. If you choose to be an independent group, check in with facilitator(s) at least once a month. (Clinical Supervisor will meet with group prior to facilitator separation for the weekly meetings.)

Section 4. Make decision to continue to meet at agency site or meet at group members homes or any combination of the two.

Section 4. Make it clear that the facilitators are always a resource to you in any situation and that the Program Coordinator is available to all group members. (The program coordinator's number should always be on the Buddy Directory List.)

SESSION II. - Support Group 302

Section 1. Getting Together

- ◆Group makes a commitment to meet once a week. Social Events and Activities.
- ◆Check-in subjects will become Roundtable Discussion Topics.

Section 2. Topics that can be discussed

- ◆What do you think keeps you going
(Attitude, treatment, extent of care)
- ◆Care giver mentality (What are your networks? What do you want? When do you need them?)
- ◆Short and Long term medicine use
- ◆People, pets and energy (Who gets less or more attention as you change.)
- ◆The Role of family (Of choice and chance)
Family coming to you vs. you going to family
- ◆Abandonment (i.e. death of partner(s), retirement from work)
What happens in a relationship when both partners are infected
- ◆Sharing referrals
 - Meds - Treatments
 - Diet - food
 - hope and ability - what you do for you
 - Yoga - meditation - religion

IF YOU ARE HIV POSITIVE

**The Bay Area
HIV Support and Education Services
(BAHSES)**

**Will begin a new support group
on APRIL 2, 1992
For 10 Weeks**

**Thursdays, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
For Those Living with HIV Disease
(Other groups are in progress; however, if Thursday is
not convenient for you, call for information about
upcoming groups during the day as well as
evenings.)**

**The purpose of this program is to provide a safe environment in which a
person can work through HIV issues and continue or return to a
productive way of living**

**If you or someone you know is interested in becoming involved in our
HIV Support Program, please feel free to contact
BAHSES at (415) 749-6714**

****** ALL INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL ******

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**BAHSES SERVES OAKLAND AND
SAN FRANCISCO COMMUNITIES**

A Project of Black and White Men Together / Men of All Colors Together (BWMT/MACT)