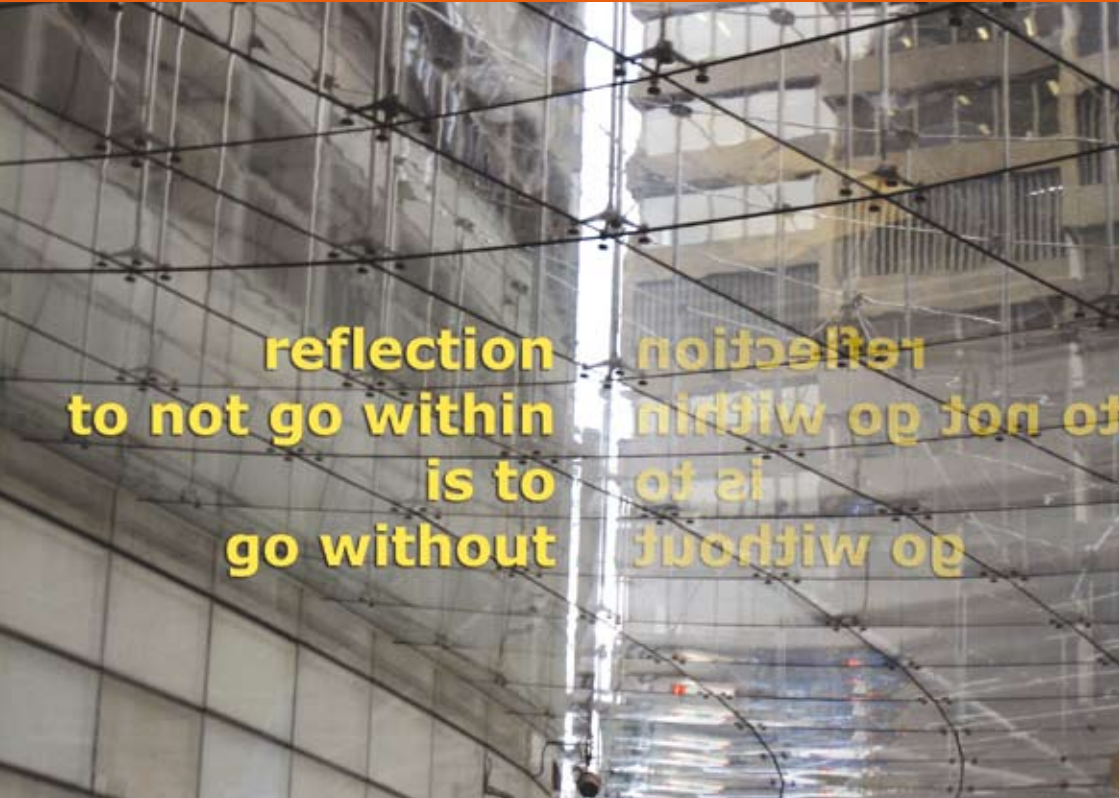


POSITIVE LIFE COLLECTION

Simple Pleasures

Workshop guide



reflection
to not go within
is to
go without

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is to
go without

GETTING ON WITH IT
AGAIN

Living longer with HIV

Simple Pleasures

Workshop guide

This guide will help you run the workshop series *Simple Pleasures*. The series is designed to be used with HIV positive peer support groups or in HIV support groups facilitated by healthcare workers. It combines a problem-solving and information sharing approach and aims to:

- Support the sharing of personal strategies and perspectives on living longer with HIV.
- Act as a catalyst to network people living longer with HIV.
- Link participants into existing social networks and ongoing support and health-care systems.
- Support participants to build confidence to identify and make changes in their lives.

It is recommended you run the workshop over five weeks to give people the opportunity to reflect on changes and to build confidence in their decisions. Each one hour session can also be run as separate one-off workshops.

The workshop outline is a guide only. We encourage you to be flexible and adapt the workshop sessions to include content which supports your participants' needs (e.g. you may not want to do *Where we have come from*, but include a session on volunteering and starting work or a session on building relationships).

Tips for facilitators

A good facilitator does not have all the answers. Focus more on reflecting back people's opinions, and occasionally reframe negatives in a positive light to help with problem solving. Manage the diversity of opinion and experience within the group and ensure it's a safe space for everyone. Successful facilitation of the group does not rely on what you know, but more on how you encourage participants to draw on each other's experience. Recap and sum up the group's discussion at the end of each session to bring a sense of closure and value to the discussion and participant contribution. Take notes if it helps you to do this.

You may find it useful to use a variety of icebreakers or warm up activities throughout the series, especially at the beginning of each session. Many handbooks for trainers include activities like this. You can also search online for activities (see www.icebreakers.ws).

If you are interested in training in group work and facilitation the following contacts are useful:

- Sydney Community College www.scc.nsw.edu.au
- The Centre for Community Welfare Training www.acwa.asn.au/ccwt/
- TAFE Technical and Further Education (NSW Dept of Education and Training) www.tafensw.edu.au

The Workshop Series is made up of five sessions:

Session 1: Where we have come from

Session 2: Steps to change

Session 3: Balance in your life

Session 4: Healthy and older

Session 5: Starting a new chapter

The workshop series builds on material presented in a booklet **GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN Living longer with HIV**.

Participants will benefit from reading the suggested sections of the booklet before each session.

Copies are available from Positive Life NSW (02 9361 6011 / 1800 245 677) Freecall in NSW) or you can download a PDF version from www.positivelife.org.au

Session 1

Where we have come from

Aim: To encourage the telling of our stories, reflecting on achievements, learning and skills.

Pre-reading: GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN – *Where we have come from (our history)* pp 2-9.

Materials: Whiteboard or flip chart, and note pad, pen and a copy of GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN for each participant.

Activity 1 Introduction/Housekeeping 5 minutes

Activity 2 Icebreaker 10 minutes

Use an exercise from your repertoire that helps people get to know each other and sets the tone for the group. Here is an example:

Getting to know each other

Pair people off with someone they don't know. Participants take turns telling each other about themselves – a short life history, a hobby, recent holiday, their work etc. Make it clear that the information will be reported back to the group.

Each person has a few minutes to talk and a few minutes to listen. Ask the group to re-form. Each member gets a chance to introduce their partner and talk about them. Provide an opportunity for each report to be corrected or confirmed by each partner.

Activity 3 Expectations, hopes and fears 10 minutes

Ask the group – What are your (1) expectations and hopes and (2) concerns or fears for this workshop? Participants write their hopes and fears anonymously and place in a bowl. Facilitator reads and discusses responses with the group.

This exercise will lead to the development of a **Group Agreement**. Discuss what rules they would like the group to sign up to (e.g. confidentiality, being non-judgmental, respect, listen to each other, the right to 'pass', more confident people allowing quieter people the space to speak etc)? This **Group Agreement** will provide a consensus statement which supports a sense of ownership and safety.

Activity 4 Timeline 15 minutes

Ask participants to write a timeline. Include six significant points in your life (either good or bad). This does not need to be just about HIV.

Ask group members to take turns to talk about their timelines.

Some guiding questions to assist the facilitator as people talk about their timelines:

- What have been the toughest and happiest times for you?
- Does getting through difficult times make us strong and shape who we are?
- Looking back, when did you show strength and resilience?
- What do you feel most proud of?
- Where is the timeline going?

If people focus on 'lost years' following their HIV diagnosis refocus them to the positives. What did they learn from those times?

Activity 5 How you see yourself and how others see you 10 minutes

- (1) In one minute write down words that describe how you think other people see you.
- (2) In one minute write down words that describe how you see yourself.
- (3) Ask each person to nominate three skills or things they are good at. Discuss.

Activity 6 Closing 10 minutes

Recap and sum up the group's discussion. Ask each participant in turn (1) if there is anything he/she wants to say in closing and (2) name something he/she will take away from this experience.

Keep it short, positive and up-beat, and make sure everyone gets a chance to speak.

Session 2

Steps to change

Aim: To share the experience of making changes in our lives, highlighting the value of peer support.

Pre-reading: GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN – *Steps to change* (pp 18-19); *Think about the skills you have* (p21), *Developing new interests* (pp 22-23) and *Talk- friendships and peers support* (pp 36-37).

Materials: Whiteboard or flip chart, and note pad, pen and a copy of GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN for each participant.

Activity 1 Check in 5 minutes

Revisit the group's discussion from the previous workshop. Highlight key things people said they would take away from the session.

You may want to include an icebreaker at the beginning of this activity.

Activity 2 Change 20 minutes

Write on a piece of paper (1) what worries you about change and (2) what is exciting about change? This is done anonymously. Responses are placed in a box and the facilitator pulls them out and facilitates a discussion on each issue with the group. Questions you may consider asking during this discussion include: Does anyone else feel this way? Has anyone found a good way to deal with this fear?

Activity 3 Overcoming barriers 15 minutes

Acknowledge that change is not always easy. Ask the group to name some barriers (e.g. depression, grief and loss, financial, confidence, lack of support) to taking the first step in changing your circumstances. What steps can you take to overcome these barriers? You can also refer back to earlier discussions the group has had.

Activity 4 Steps to change 10 minutes

Work with your neighbour and identify some steps you have taken over the last twelve months to make any change in your life. Participants write down their personal steps and discuss, focusing on the strength and resilience they have shown.

Activity 5 Closing 10 minutes

Recap and sum up the group's discussion. Ask each participant in turn (1) if there is anything he/she wants to say in closing and (2) name something he/she will take away from this experience.

Check in on the *Expectations, hopes and fears* chart the group put together to see how much was real or not, fulfilled or not.

Keep it short, positive and up-beat, and make sure everyone gets a chance to speak.

It's about finding something that you're willing to pursue that gets results; finding the thing that actually makes a difference. New interests make me feel like someone who is part of a bigger picture. Robert

Session 3

Balance in your life

Aim: To explore strategies for dealing with stress and finding balance in life.

Pre-reading: GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN – *Balance Bernard* (pp 11-12).

Materials: Whiteboard or flip chart, and note pad, pen and a copy of GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN for each participant. Print out scenarios for Activity 4.

Activity 1 Check in 5 minutes

Revisit the group's discussion from the previous workshop. Highlight key things people said they would take away from the session.

You may want to include an icebreaker at the beginning of this activity.

Activity 2 Stress and quality of life 10 minutes

Discuss the following questions in pairs and then bring the group back together for a sharing of the ideas discussed.

- (1) What are the things that trigger stress in people?
- (2) What are some of the ways people deal with stress? (e.g. going to the gym, going for a walk, eating, drinking alcohol, spending time with pets, talking with a friend ...).
- (3) Is there such a thing as good stress? Give examples.

Activity 3 Communicating our needs 15 minutes

Sometimes we bottle up our feelings and do not deal with them assertively, and this can be a common cause of stress. This activity is about finding ways to constructively communicate our feelings, what we want and how to change our circumstances. Facilitated discussion: How do we talk about a problem?

Brainstorm strategies for asserting ourselves in difficult situations (e.g. listening to another viewpoint, acknowledging different opinions, being calm, thinking it over before responding etc).

Activity 4 Practical scenarios 20 minutes

Develop scenarios based on discussions that have come up in Sessions 1 and 2. Discuss the scenarios in pairs and report back to the group. How would you change the situations described to improve quality of life? Ask participants whether they have experienced similar situations.

The following scenarios on work may be a useful guide:

- (1) My friend asked me why I don't look for work. I can't be bothered talking to him anymore. He doesn't understand how hard it is. I feel more and more people don't understand what it's like for us.
- (2) I have time to cook and keep the house clean and nice. Everything is balanced, but I'm bored and a bit lonely sometimes.
- (3) I have got a really busy job, long days and I feel kind of tired. I have a life to live and have bills to pay, but it's not much fun anymore. What am I working for and how much money do I need?
- (4) I have started work, love the job, but I kept getting the flu last year. I had a bit of time off. Maybe I have made the wrong decision going back to work full-time?
- (5) I am about to start part-time work. It gives me extra income, but I'm not that much financially better off. Is it worth it?

Other scenarios may include: sexuality, relationships, drug and alcohol issues, family ...

Activity 5 Closing 10 minutes

Recap and sum up the group's discussion. Ask each participant in turn (1) if there is anything he/she wants to say in closing and (2) name something he/she will take away from this experience.

Keep it short, positive and up-beat, and make sure everyone gets a chance to speak.

It always comes back to the issue of quality of life. *Bernard*

Session 4

Healthy and older

Aim: To identify the challenges and benefits of growing older with HIV and share strategies for looking after ourselves.

Pre-reading: GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN – *An everyday life is just as important* (pp 24-25), *Healthy and older* (p26), *Getting help - looking at other parts of your health* (p 27), *Being involved and helping others* (p33).

Materials: Whiteboard or flip chart, and note pad, pen and a copy of GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN for each participant. Print out sentences for Activity 4.

Activity 1 Check in 5 minutes

Revisit the group's discussion from the previous workshop. Highlight key things people said they would take away from the session.

You may want to include an icebreaker at the beginning of this activity.

Activity 2 Simple Pleasures 10 minutes

Take a few moments to think back over how you spent yesterday. Maybe it was a breeze, maybe you had a difficult day, but see if you can identify three things you did or experienced that were positive, supportive or especially enjoyable.

Activity 3 Getting older – challenges and benefits 10 minutes

Discuss the following in pairs or groups of three then report back and have a facilitated discussion:-

- (1) What is good about getting older?
- (2) What are the challenges of getting older?
- (3) How do we look after ourselves as we get older?

Activity 4 Peer Support 10 minutes

What is peer support? What are the ways of accessing peer support? Who is a peer (e.g. someone who is the same age, gender, lives in the same geographical area, been through a similar experience)?

Talking about your hopes can be a first step, and sometimes it helps to talk to someone apart from your partner, family or friends. If you want to initiate a change one good strategy is to talk to someone who has taken steps themselves. Being able to bounce ideas and thoughts off someone who's been through the same situation can help you improve how you feel about yourself and open up new options and choices in your life.

Hand out the following unfinished sentences to participants. Add more if needed. Give people a minute to complete them:

- Peer support can be depressing when
- Friendship has its limitations because.....
- Talking to other people can help to.....
- A counsellor can't help to
- A counsellor can
- I would rather talk to

Reassure participants there are no right or wrong answers. Sentence beginnings are constructed to promote discussion.

Activity 5 Friendships and support 15 minutes

Draw a circle and include all the people who support you in your life now in whatever way.

Draw a circle on the outside and include the additional people you need to make bigger changes in your life.

If some people say they already have support – acknowledge that and discuss. Others may need to make new contacts. Discuss.

Activity 6 Closing 10 minutes

Recap and sum up the group's discussion. Ask each participant in turn (1) if there is anything he/she wants to say in closing and (2) name something he/she will take away from this experience.

Keep it short, positive and up-beat, and make sure everyone gets a chance to speak.

Session 5

Starting a new chapter

Aim: To discover ways of setting personal goals and to share strategies for achieving them.

Pre-reading: GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN – *Facing forward Tim* (pp. 38-39), *Starting a new chapter – summary of strategies* (pp 40-41).

Materials: Whiteboard or flip chart, and note pad, pen and a copy of GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN for each participant.

Activity 1 Check in 5 minutes

Revisit the group's discussion from the previous workshop. Highlight key things people said they would take away from the session.

You may want to include an icebreaker at the beginning of this activity.

Activity 2 Starting a new chapter 20 minutes

Introduction: Our lives have been extended by treatments and this throws up all sorts of questions:

- How do I want to live?
- What do I want to do with my future?
- What are my goals?
- How am I going to achieve them?

Ask participants to do the following, and give them time to do each task before telling them what the next one is:

Task 1 If your life was a book what would the next chapter in the book be called?

Task 2 Under this chapter heading write down three things that need to happen. These are like personal goals. They can be big or small, ordinary or exceptional, but encourage participants to make their goals realistic.

Task 3 Prioritise these three actions / goals.

Task 4 Participants share what they have written. Have a facilitated discussion, drawing on earlier discussions (e.g. Ask them what support they would need? Will peer support help? Do they already have it? What skills can they use? How will they take care of themselves?...).

Activity 3 Balancing work, stress and quality of life 10 minutes

Have a facilitated discussion on the value of personal goals. Draw on key themes discussed in previous sessions on stress, support, skills and simple pleasures. Focus on 'what is quality of life' in these discussions? Refer also to strategies on pp 40-41 of GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN.

Activity 4 Where to from here? 15 minutes

Recap and sum up the group's discussion. Ask each participant (1) if there is anything he/she wants to say in closing and (2) name something he/she will take away from this experience. Have practical information at hand which may be useful for referral. See pp 43 – 45 in GETTING ON WITH IT AGAIN.

Keep it positive and up-beat, and make sure everyone gets a chance to speak.

Activity 5 Evaluation 10 minutes

A few simple strategies to evaluate the Workshop Sessions include: graffiti sheets, simple scale sheets (e.g. easy/difficult to understand, helpful/ not helpful), using the recap from the last session, capturing informal conversations and your facilitator's notes.

Questions to keep in mind for participants:

- **What support do you need?**
- **What are the practical implications of your decisions?**
- **Who can you talk to?**
- **How have other people dealt with this issue?**
- **What have been your successes?**
- **How have you overcome barriers in the past?**

We learn from our experiences. Find people you blossom around; visit the places that make you grow. *Tim*

Do something that gets you out of the house. Explore the city – its parks, gardens and galleries. It's the simple pleasures that matter. John

Don't look at what you can't do, look at what you can do. Tim

I never want to forget the hard times they've shaped who I am. They've made me the strong person that I am, and I have to remember that I am strong. Elaine



www.positivelife.org.au

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