

Group Four

NEGOTIATING HARM REDUCTION WITH PARTNERS

Skills to Be Taught

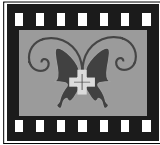
- **Harm Reduction Negotiation and Communication Skills**
- **Eroticizing Safer Sexual Practices**



COUNSELOR TOOL BOX

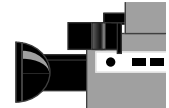
Multi-modal Presentation of Material:

Verbal Didactic presentation of material
Questioning
Group discussion

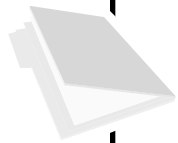


Visual Visual presentation of major points using slides
Group responses written on flipchart by counselor
Written/Pictorial handouts provided in Client Workbook
Video segments: 1) negotiating safer sex
2) handling resistance

Experiential Counselors role play elements of persuasion
Safer sex negotiation team game
Post-group quiz
Stress management/relaxation technique



Materials Flipchart and markers
Overhead projector and slides
Audio tape player and relaxation tape
TV, VCR, and video cued to first latex negotiation segment
Clock/timer
Pens/pencils
Prizes
“Loaner” Client Workbooks
Handouts:
Group agenda
Group quiz
How to Talk with Your Partner about Safer Sex
4 Role-play Scenario Cards for Latex Negotiation Game
Certificates of Achievement (as warranted)



Reminders Ensure that all material on quiz is covered well during group.
Quiz material is indicated by **QUIZ ITEM** in the text.
Instructions to counselors are provided in **this typeface.**



AGENDA

(Two-hour group: Adjust times based on beginning time)

- 0:00 **Begin Group** (5 mins)
- Introductions – Rules – Time keeper assignment
- 0:05 **Introduction to Topic: “Negotiating Safer Sex”** (5 mins)
- 0:10 **Negotiation Defined** (5 mins)
- 0:15 **Tips for Successful Negotiation** (10 mins)
- 0:25 **Elements of Persuasion** (10 mins)
- 0:35 **Personal Vulnerability** (5 mins)
- 0:40 **Video: Latex Negotiation and Purchase** (10 mins)
- 0:50 **Discussion: Response to Video** (5 mins)
- 0:55 BREAK** (10 mins)
- 1:05 **Review** (5 mins)
- 1:10 **Video: Role-play Negotiation Vignettes** (15 mins)
- 1:25 **Effect of Drug and Alcohol Use** (5 mins)
- 1:30 **Role-play Negotiation Team Game** (15 mins)
- 1:45 **Quiz and Feedback** (5 mins)
- 1:50 **Relaxation Tape** (10 mins)
- 2:00 **End**

BEGINNING OF EVERY GROUP (5 mins)

- Group members and counselors introduce themselves and welcome new members.
- Group rules are reviewed.

Visual

HHRP⁺
GROUP RULES RESPECT

R*elaxation* (complete quiet...no talking, shuffling of papers, or walking around during relaxation exercise)

E*ating* (No eating during group)

S*ober* (don't come to group high)

P*unctuality* (come to group on time)

E*veryone can't talk at once* (no crosstalk)

C*onfidentiality* (what's said in group, stays in group)

T*eamwork* (group members work together towards recovery)

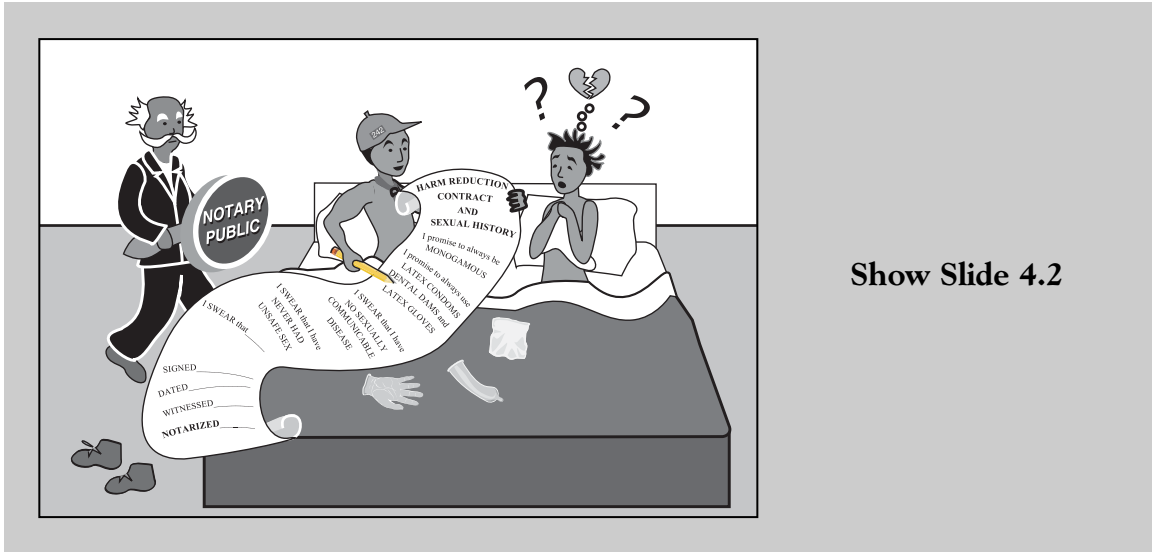
Show Slide 4.1

- Copy of agenda for today's group is distributed to group members.
- Ask for a volunteer to serve as time-keeper (to keep group on track and on time).
- Announcement of any graduates from the group today.
- Presentation of Certificate of Achievement to those who complete in good standing.

Verbal

Counselor provides introduction to today's topic (5 mins)

In the last group we talked about protecting your health and the health of your partner by using condoms and other latex protection. We focused on the importance of using latex condoms, dental dams, and water-based lubricants, and showed you how to use them correctly. However, it is not enough to know how to use latex and other safer sexual practices, each person has to agree to using these harm reduction techniques. Most people believe that they could easily convince their partner to use latex protection, or they say that if their partner refused, they would definitely leave the situation.



Show Slide 4.2

However, as this slide suggests, waiting until you are about to have sex to discuss harm reduction strategies will probably not work to your advantage. Despite good intentions to be safe, in the height of passion it may be difficult to come to an agreement. You or your partner may believe that latex reduces sexual pleasure, or you or your partner may doubt that latex use is necessary or that it is effective in protecting your health. You will therefore need to be prepared for responding to your partner's reluctance to use latex. The purpose of today's group is to teach you some negotiation skills and also some ways to eroticize safer sex, so that you can persuade your partner that latex is not only an effective barrier to infection which can protect your health, but it can also actually increase sexual pleasure.

Counselor leads a discussion on the definition of negotiation. (5 mins)

Discussion

Before we talk about how to negotiate safer sex, let's define what we mean.

Counselor writes group's responses to the following discussion questions on flipchart:

QUESTION: What does the word "negotiation" mean?

Answer: Negotiation is the process of achieving a desired goal through persuasion, bargaining, and compromise.

QUESTION: Can anyone give an example of a successful negotiation? An unsuccessful negotiation?

Examples: Negotiating with car dealer for a car; labor contract negotiations for higher salaries; negotiating with children for good behavior.

QUESTION: What made these negotiations successful? Or unsuccessful?

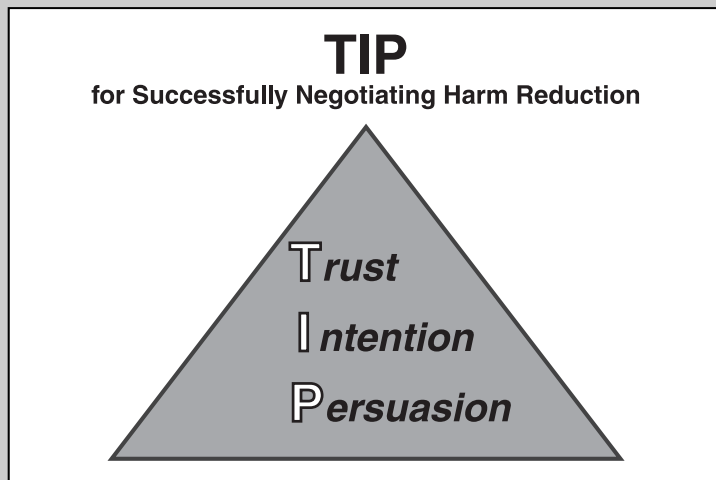
Verbal

Counselor provides TIPS for successful negotiations. (10 mins)

Successful negotiations occur when both parties come away from the negotiation transaction with something desirable. In business, this is called a **win-win** situation. Successful negotiation occurs when both parties feel heard and feel that they have gained something positive from the transaction. Unsuccessful negotiations occur when one or both of the parties feel that their best interests will not be served. These are **win-lose** or **lose-lose** transactions.

QUESTION: So how do you ensure a **win-win** negotiation transaction when it comes to safer sex? No, you don't have to whip out a lengthy harm reduction contract for your partner to sign each time you get into bed as shown in the slide, but you do need at least three things:

Visual



Show Slide 4.3

Successful harm reduction negotiation requires mutual **T**rust, a strong **I**ntention to be safe, and **P**ersuasive ability. **QUIZ ITEM** Let's go over each one of these:

QUESTION: What role does trust play in successful negotiation?

Answer:

a) There needs to be trust that both parties are concerned about the other's welfare—increase trust by reassuring your partner that you care not only about your own health but also about your partner's health and welfare.

b) Neither person should feel that use of latex reflects a lack of trust. Insisting on latex does not imply that either you or your partner has been unfaithful. Because you are HIV-positive, insisting on latex protection means reducing the risk of infecting your partner with HIV. However, even if your partner is also HIV-positive, you still need to use latex protection.

QUIZ ITEM Using latex will help reduce the risk that you will re-infect each other with more of the HIV virus or with a strain of the HIV virus that does not respond to new medications. It also protects both of you from other sexually-transmitted diseases, or infections that may be transmitted because you (or your partner) is an injection drug user. You or your partner could be infected with a blood-borne infection without having sex with someone else (for example, by sharing a needle with someone else or by some other means), and then sexually transmit this infection to each other. So insisting on latex does not mean that you believe your partner is having sex with other partners. The consequences of being infected with hepatitis or STDs is potentially serious for anyone, but can be life threatening for a person who is HIV-positive and whose immune system is compromised.

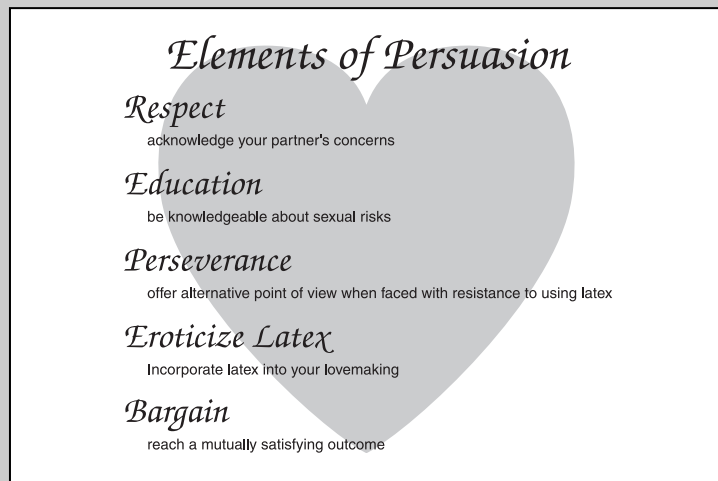
QUESTION: Why is the strength of your intention important in negotiation and how can you increase it?

Answer:

- The **stronger** your intention to protect your health and the health of your partner, the more likely you are to persevere in your negotiations, and to ultimately succeed in reducing the harm of sex to you and your partner.
- The **weaker** your intention to protect your health and the health of your partner, the more likely you are to compromise, and the greater the likelihood that you will engage in risky behavior.
- You can increase the strength of your intention by learning about the serious consequences of unsafe sexual practices, and the effectiveness of various harm reduction strategies. Then weigh the costs and benefits of using latex—the net benefit (benefits minus costs) is your health and the health of your partner.

QUESTION: What is needed for successful persuasion?

Visual



Show Slide 4.4

As shown on this slide, there are several elements to successful persuasion. We are now going to give an example of how you can use each of these elements in a sexual situation.

Demonstration

Counselors role-play the elements of persuasion shown on slide. (10 mins)

Imagine that we are a couple talking about safer sex:

Role play #1: Respect for partner's concerns

Counselors point to first element of persuasion on the slide and begin role-play:

Counselor #1: Condoms ruin sex for me; I just can't feel anything with those things.

Counselor #2: I understand what you're saying, and I want you to enjoy our time together. Could we try using lubricant to see if that helps?

Role play #2: Education

Counselors point to second element of persuasion on the slide and begin role play of a couple in which one partner has educated him or herself about the risks of unprotected sex:

Counselor #1: I don't care if you are HIV-positive, we've had sex before and I've never got it; it's my decision.

Counselor #2: I've been trying to educate myself about this virus, and I now regret that we ever had unprotected sex. Using latex is for the protection of both of us, so it's not just your decision. It is possible for you to get the virus from me and not know it for six months or so, and it's possible for me to get infections from you that you may not even know you have which, because I'm HIV-positive, could make me very sick. So I'm learning that using latex is a way to show how much we care about each other.

Role play #3: Perseverance

Counselors point to third element of persuasion on slide and role play how to offer an alternative point of view when confronted with resistance to using latex:

Counselor #1: Oral sex is safe. I sure don't want to be covered in latex for oral sex.

Counselor #2: On the other hand, why take chances with our health. Actually research has shown that oral sex isn't as safe as it was once believed to be. We've never used flavored condoms for oral sex. It could be fun. Perhaps we could give it a try.

Role play #4: Eroticizing latex

Counselors point to fourth element of persuasion on the slide and role play incorporating latex into lovemaking rather than interrupting lovemaking:

Counselor #1: Stopping to put on a condom ruins the mood; it really turns me off.

Counselor #2: I know ways to use condoms that will actually get you more turned on. Let me show you.

Role play #5: Bargaining

Counselors point to fifth element of persuasion on the slide and role play bargaining to achieve mutually desirable outcomes:

Counselor #1: I want to have sex with you, but I don't want to use a condom.

Counselor #2: I want to have sex with you, too. So we definitely want the same thing. So why don't we try using the lubricant with the condom to see if we can make it feel good for you? That way we'll both get what we want and in the process we'll be showing that we care about each other's health.

Verbal/
Didactic

Counselor instructs group members on personal vulnerability. (5 mins)

So, you are more likely to persuade your partner to use latex protection if you show respect for your partner's concerns, know how to eroticize latex, and have accurate information about the risks and how to reduce these risks.

QUIZ ITEM But why should you worry about all of this if you are already HIV-positive? If your partner is willing to take the risk, why should you be the one to insist on using latex protection?

Visual

Reasons to CARE, about SAFER SEX

Compromised Immune System *(HIV+ individuals are susceptible to other life threatening sexually transmitted infections)*

Altruism *(you can help protect others)*

Reinfection *(you can be reinfected with a strain of HIV virus that is resistant to new medications)*

Evidence *(Research shows that condoms reduce the spread of HIV and other sexually-transmitted diseases)*

Show Slide 4.5

You will see this slide frequently in this program because when you are in a situation that places you at risk, it is extremely important to remind yourself why you should CARE about diligently practicing harm reduction even if you are monogamous and your partner is also HIV-positive. **QUIZ ITEM**

C = Compromised immune system. When you are HIV-positive, your immune system, which helps your body fight infection, has been weakened. Exposure to any other infections is potentially very dangerous because your body has less ability to fight infection, and as a result can hasten the disease process. Your partner could unknowingly transmit an infection to you.

A = Altruism. That means having concern for the welfare of others—you don't want to spread HIV and other infections to your partner or unborn children.

R = Reinfection. By sharing needles or works or having unsafe sex, individuals with HIV could potentially become re-infected with a strain of HIV that is resistant to some of the newer treatments. Therefore, you may greatly reduce your treatment options or those of your partner.

E = Evidence. HIV is transmitted sexually by the sharing of body fluids (blood, semen, vaginal secretions, breast milk). Only abstinence can entirely **prevent** sexual transmission of infection and only the correct use of latex barriers can **reduce** the risk of sexually-transmitted diseases, including HIV.

So, there are very good reasons for an individual who is HIV-positive to **C.A.R.E.** about learning how to negotiate safer sexual practices.

(10 mins)

Demonstration/
Video

Excerpted, with permission, from “Norma & Tony following safer sex guidelines” Exodus Trust Copyright 1985 and The Complete Guide to Safe Sex Copyright 1988; Exodus Trust Sex Education Series, 1525 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109.

Show Video “Norma & Tony”

Visual

Counselor introduces video as follows:

In this video you will see a couple going through the process of negotiating safer sex with each other. It also shows how knowing how to use latex products can actually make you a better lover and increase your sexual pleasure.

Counselor shows video of a couple negotiating safer sex and going shopping together for latex and other products to increase their sexual enjoyment.

Negotiating Harm Reduction with Partners

Note: This is a brief segment (showing no sexual activity) taken from the beginning of a longer videotaped presentation which shows the negotiation, purchase, and use of latex in a sexually explicit manner. The original HHRP+ program showed this video in its entirety and it has been well received by group members. The group leader stops and starts the video during the sexually-explicit material to emphasize specific strategies for eroticizing safer sex and to encourage discussion while maintaining the psychoeducational context of the sexually-explicit material. Counselors may order the entire video from Exodus Trust at the address provided above at the discretion of their program.

Discussion

Counselor leads discussion about the video. (5 mins)

QUESTION: In what way did the couple in the video demonstrate successful negotiation?

Counselor writes responses on flipchart, including:

1. Mutual trust. Both were open about their sexual history and previous risk behaviors and showed respect for their partner's concerns and sexual desires.
2. Strength of Intention. Both people demonstrated a strong intention to reduce harm.
3. Persuasive ability: Both were persuasive because they shared accurate knowledge about risks and had knowledge about how to use latex to increase sexual pleasure.
4. Negotiations began well before they engaged in any sexual intimacy.
5. They purchased latex products together and talked about how they would use them to enhance sexual pleasure, thus further eroticizing these products.
6. Negotiations ended in a **win-win** situation.

Break

(10 mins)

Counselor reviews material covered before break. (5 mins)

Review

Before the break we talked about negotiating safer sex with your partner. We defined negotiation as the process of achieving a desired goal through persuasion, bargaining, and compromise, and we said that in order to be successful your negotiations should result in a **win-win** situation where both parties come away with a desirable outcome. When it comes to harm reduction, our TIP for successful negotiation was T= trust; there must be mutual trust; I=Intention; you must have a strong intention to protect your health; and P=persuasion skills. We talked about the five elements of persuasion: these are respect for your partner, education, perseverance, eroticizing safer sex, and bargaining. Your ability to persuade your partner is based not only on your communication skills but also on your knowledge about how unsafe sex can affect your health and your knowledge and skill using safer sex techniques. Then right before the break you saw a video showing a couple negotiating safer sex. In that video, both people wanted to reduce risk. There was no resistance to using latex.

In the next video you are going to see, a couple negotiates safer sex in a series of vignettes. However, in each of these vignettes, one of the people offers resistance to using latex, and you see how the other person handles this resistance. I'll be stopping the video after each of the three vignettes so that we can discuss it. Let's watch.

(15 mins)

Counselor shows video; stopping VCR after each of the three vignettes in order to lead group discussion of resistance to latex shown in the vignette and the level of skill demonstrated by the partner in responding to this resistance, as follows.

Demonstration/
Video

Show Video "Vignette No. 1"

Visual

Points for discussion following Vignette No. 1:

QUESTION: Why was partner resistant? How was resistance overcome?

- She doesn't want to use condoms because she is on the pill.
- He is knowledgeable about why condoms are important for protecting against infection (not just for preventing pregnancy)
- He perseveres, while showing respect for her feelings and her health.

Visual

Show Video “Vignette No. 2”

Points for discussion following Vignette No. 2:

QUESTION: Why was partner resistant? How was resistance overcome?

- He is resistant to using condoms; he says wearing a condom is like taking a shower wearing a raincoat, says it ruins the mood.
- She offers an alternative point of view.
- She talks about eroticizing latex.
- She perseveres. They both win.

Visual

Show Video “Vignette No. 3”

Points for discussion following Vignette No. 3:

QUESTION: Why was partner resistant? How was resistance overcome?

- He wants to use condom.
- She is insulted—thinks he is accusing her of sleeping around.
- He reassures her with his level of knowledge about the risks.
- He persuades her using examples of famous people who have contracted HIV.
- He respects her concerns.
- He demonstrates a desire to play it smart in order to protect them both.

Visual

Show Video “Vignette No. 4”

Points for discussion following Vignette No. 4:

QUESTION: Why was partner resistant? How was resistance overcome?

- The main point of this segment is that if you cannot agree on a safer alternative, then you **do not have sex**.

Verbal

Counselor leads a discussion on the effects of drug and alcohol use on negotiation skills. (5 mins)

QUESTION: Did anyone notice what the couples in the two videos had in common. For example, did the people seem high or intoxicated? Were they talking about whether or not to use condoms and other latex protection while they were in the height of passion?

Answer: The answer is no to both. And that leads to an extremely important component of negotiation—being sane and sober when you negotiate.



Show Slide 4.6

Being under the influence of any substance or being in the throws of passion means that **you** are not in control—you are being controlled by chemicals (those you put in your body or those that your body produces in great abundance when you are sexually aroused). At the time, you may believe you are still in control, but in fact your judgment can become quite impaired. It is simply not smart to make life and death decisions when you're not in control. And, make no mistake, deciding to have sex without latex protection can indeed be a life or death decision. As we've discussed in previous groups, the only way to completely prevent any harm is to abstain from drugs and sex. However, if you do continue to use substances and you are sexually active, then if you're smart, you will negotiate with your partner when you are both sober, before you have any sexual contact, and not when either of you are high or when you are in the height of passion. So unlike the guy in the first slide you saw who waited until he was in bed with his partner about to have sex before presenting her with a long list of demands about safer sex, be smart, have open discussions with potential partners about your attitudes towards safer sex before you have any sex contact and when you are both sober. **QUIZ ITEM** But what do you do if your partner still refuses to use latex?



Show Slide 4.7

If you both want to be sexually intimate, negotiate latex protection with your partner. If your partner refuses to use latex protection, suggest an alternative to sexual activity that does not involve the exchange of bodily fluids, such as massage, showering together, mutual masturbation and so forth. If your partner won't use latex protection for oral, anal, or vaginal sex even if there is no ejaculation, and also rejects any alternative activity, leave the situation. **QUIZ ITEM** No latex, no sex, no harm to you or your partner. Be smart, be safe, insist on latex protection.

**Experiential/
Negotiation
Role Play
Game**

(15 mins)

Materials:

- High risk sexual situation scenario cards
- Prizes (e.g., novelty latex products, female condoms, water-based lubricants)

Therapeutic goals of the game:

- Improve latex negotiation skills
- Encourage teamwork and appropriate social interaction

Instructions:

1. I'm going to divide the group into teams and give each team a card.
2. On this card is written a situation in which two people are deciding whether or not to have sex where one of the individuals does not want to use latex protection. You will have a five minute practice session during which you will elect two representatives from your team to role play this situation in front of the entire group demonstrating appropriate safer sex negotiation skills. During this five minutes all team members will participate in coming up with ideas for the role-play (you cannot help your representatives during the actual demonstration); participation by all team members during the five-minute practice session earns a bonus point for your team.
3. After the five-minute practice session, each team takes turns to read aloud the scenario written on their card to the entire group and have their two representatives role-play safer sex negotiation in this situation.
4. I will assign a point for each negotiation skill demonstrated. The team whose members participated the most during the 5 minute practice session also earns a bonus point. During the role play demonstration, the other teams should watch closely so that they can assist in the assignment of points.
5. The team with the most points wins the game and a prize.

Counselor divides the group into two or three teams depending on size of the group, provides instruction, and allows five minutes for each team to elect two representatives and to practice the role-play. At the end of five minutes, the two representatives from each team perform the role play in front of the entire group. The counselor evaluates the role-play using the scoring criteria below. Criteria and points awarded for each team are written on a flipchart by counselor during demonstration (hidden from view of the group until all teams have provided their demonstrations). Once all the teams have completed their role-plays, the counselor provides feedback to each team (inviting input from the other team members). The winning team is announced and prizes awarded to each team member in the winning team.

Scoring Criteria

	Points
Respect for partner's concerns	1
Knowledge about risks to health	1
Knowledge about risk reduction strategies	1
Offered alternative point of view	1
Eroticized latex products	1
Bargained to achieve a mutually satisfying outcome	1
Refused to have sex without latex	1
Suggested alternatives to sex	1
Other skills demonstrated: e.g., Acknowledged effect of drug/alcohol use on partner's high risk decisions	1
Subtotal	x/9
Bonus point (all team members participated in practice)	1
Total points awarded to each team	xx/10

QUIZ WITH IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK (5 mins)

Quiz

As you know, we end each group with a quiz and a ten minute relaxation exercise. I'm going to pass around the quiz now.

Counselor distributes the quiz (attached), and reads the items aloud, providing sufficient time for group members to mark their answers.

Detailed feedback:

Counselor re-reads each item aloud to the group, providing the correct answer after reading each item.

1. What does successful negotiation depend on? The answer is **(d)** all of the above—mutual trust, intention, and persuasive ability (TIP).
2. What should you do if your partner refuses to engage in safer sex? The answer is **(a)** refuse to have unsafe sex.
3. How are you more likely to persuade your partner to use latex? The answer is **(d)** all of the above—show respect for your partner's concerns, know how to eroticize latex, and have accurate information about risk and risk reduction.
4. When should safer sex negotiations begin? The answer is **(c)** when you are sober.
5. Is condom use unnecessary if both you and your partner are HIV-positive? The answer is **(b)** false. Even if both of you are HIV-positive there are still many reasons to use latex protection.

**Stress
Management**

STRESS MANAGEMENT/RELAXATION EXERCISE (10 mins)

We are going to conclude by doing a brief relaxation exercise. I'll be dimming the lights and playing an audiotape. I'd like you to get comfortable in your chair, uncross your legs, and sit quietly with your eyes closed and just follow along with the tape as it asks you to imagine various relaxing scenes. Remember that learning to relax is a skill that takes practice, so if you feel restless at first, just remind yourself that this is a ten minute gift of quiet time that you give to yourself and to the other members of the group. With practice, you can use this technique in many areas of your life.

Counselor dims the lights, says "quiet please," and begins the tape.

END SESSION