

celebrating

LIFE

*Dr. Aravind*



students handbook

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celebrating  
**LIFE**



MYRADA





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## Foreword

Life has to be celebrated. Not celebrating it makes it a life led in vain, a life that is not only joyless but even purposeless. People may choose to celebrate life in different ways, and as long as the paths taken are within the ambit of the laws of the land and the code of good ethics, there are no rights and wrongs. One of the things that we are made aware of very early in life is that it is both legally and ethically wrong to act in ways that can cause hurt to others. And so, most of us grow up knowing the boundaries that we shall not transgress in our relationships with others, lest they cause hurt and attract legal and societal sanctions. But what about causing hurt to oneself?

Adolescence and youth are periods of discovery that are distinctly different from childhood and adulthood. New facets of self are discovered that have physical, psychological and social dimensions. There is a wholly new awareness of the other, and of the range of pressures and possibilities that can trouble as well as tantalise. There are temptations too difficult to ignore, and peers who egg you on to 'grow up'. In all this, what young people are never told or taught is how not to cause hurt to oneself. Between the moralizing and rule-making parents and teachers, and the pressures of peers to break free of morality and rules, the neo-adolescent has no one to tell him/her that 'breaking free' carries a cost that need not be legal or societal but that can be tremendously self-injurious.

Like exploring sexuality and ending up with HIV. It is in this context that CDC, INSA, Myrada and TANSACS have brought out Celebrating Life, a timely and very youthful set of three books that set out to tell young people exactly that: that responsible behaviour is a favour to society but even more, it is a favour to oneself. The Primer Module Phase is a short and catchy 3-hour session of exercises, dialogue and analyses that serve to whet young appetites to know more about young adulthood, sexuality, and protection from HIV infection. The Ten Commitments Phase explores these themes in smaller groups and in greater detail, conducted over 10 modules of 1 hour each. The Student Handbook completes the set and is a purely private journal that can be maintained by each student. It contains plenty of information and individual exercises, and enables each student to personalise the ten commitments in his/her own way.



Aloysius P. Fernandez  
Executive Director  
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### **Abbreviations used**

- AIDS** :- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
- C-Life** :- Celebrating Life
- FA** :- Friendly Advisor
- HIV** :- Human Immuno Deficiency Virus
- ICTC** :- Integrated Counselling and Testing Centre
- NGO** :- Non Government Organisation
- PLHA** :- People Living with HIV and AIDS
- RRC** :- Red Ribbon Club
- SACS** :- State AIDS Control Society
- STIs** :- Sexually Transmitted Infections
- VCTC** :- Voluntary Counselling & Testing Centre
- WHO** :- World Health Organisation

## INTRODUCTION



### CELEBRATING LIFE!

What comes to your mind when you hear these words? We hope that it will evoke a promise of enthusiasm and eagerness - this is exactly what the Celebrating Life (C-Life) programme aims to do - channel young people's zest and curiosity towards becoming responsible youth.

Now that you have this handbook with you, you have already taken the first step forward. You will see as you go along with the C-Life programme that a few critical facts, the right attitude and critical life skills are what you need to equip yourself to face today's world and all the risky situations it includes.



## **You are the centre of the C-Life programme**

It's a proven fact that the youth in India face the risk of getting infected with diseases such as HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). More than 30% of those infected in our country today are below the age of 25 years!

The reasons for this alarming situation are a combination of ignorance coupled with a lack of life skills to address the risk factors that increase young people's vulnerabilities. Peer pressure, cultural influences and gender biases are some of these risks we need to understand and learn to face, to prepare for a safe and healthy life.

## **The C-Life programme**

This programme has been designed to allow you to have fun while learning. Now if you had already undergone the Primer module of C-Life curriculum, you may have realised that the exercises and activities have helped you to understand issues and concepts better and that they are more interesting than just reading a book or listening to a boring lecture!

After the primer, we have the more detailed 'Ten Commitments Programme' in one hour modules. This programme will help you to understand the facts even better, and will enable you to use critical skills to help you celebrate your life in a safe and healthy manner. We hope that you will attend this programme with gusto and enthusiasm. This handbook will help you follow the 10 modules so that you can make the following 10 commitments:

- **I enjoy college life responsibly - Understanding adolescent growth and development.**
- **I prevent STIs, HIV and AIDS - Basic facts about STIs, HIV and AIDS.**
- **I deal healthily with socio-cultural influences - Gender, media, culture and their influences.**
- **I value myself - Self worth and self esteem.**
- **I have defined my boundaries - Reducing vulnerability to HIV and other risky situations.**
- **I face challenges with courage - Saying 'NO' assertively.**
- **I develop life skills to prevent HIV infection - Life skills development.**
- **I care about everyone - Reducing stigma and discrimination.**
- **I exercise my rights with responsibilities - Human rights and sexual rights.**
- **I plan for my future - Looking ahead beyond college life.**



Check out the college notice board or at your Red Ribbon Club office to find out when the 'Ten Commitments Programme' sessions are scheduled, and sign up to attend! Only fifty can enroll in a batch so, first come -first served!! Don't miss out on this chance - you may have to wait till next year, which may be too late!

We welcome and value your feedback: What do you think of the ideas and contents of this handbook? Please complete and return the Evaluation Form at the end of the book. You can drop off the Evaluation Form into the C-Life box placed at your college campus.

**CELEBRATING LIFE programme is an opportunity for you as a young college student to:**

- understand the special time of adolescence.
- gain knowledge on STIs, HIV and AIDS.
- recognise your possible vulnerability to HIV infection.
- understand the relationship between media, gender, culture and their influences on your vulnerability to HIV infection.
- believe that you are a precious and unique being.
- begin sharing with your friends on how to be responsible and make safe choices about preventing HIV infection.
- make healthy decisions to set your own boundaries now and beyond college life.

*Only fifty can enroll in a batch so first come first served!!*

*Don't miss out on this chance !!!*

*You may have to wait till next year, which may be too late!*

## RESOLVE TO PARTICIPATE

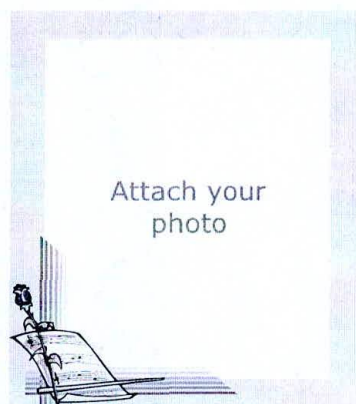
Make your choice to PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY in the C-Life programme.  
Participating with commitment means you are willing to:

- Participate honestly and frankly in discussions.
- Share doubts and fears.
- Agree to disagree if that is what the situation demands.
- Listen attentively and learn from the programme.
- Internalise the values that would help you make healthy choices.
- Respect friends who share views different from yours.
- Allow others also to participate.
- Solve puzzles and fun sheets from this handbook.
- Make time to participate in the full Ten Commitments Programme.

*This is my book and it is my time to spend on celebrating life!*

Sign.....

*Here I am after  
my resolution  
to celebrate life.*





# I ENJOY COLLEGE LIFE RESPONSIBLY

Understanding adolescent growth and development

1





Let's begin with a reality check. Be sincere and honest to yourself. You may choose not to scribble on this page, if you want to keep your responses secret. Just figure out if your answer to most of the questions below is either YES or NO. Begin now.

### **Feelings Sheet**

If your answer is YES, place a tick alongside the statements.

#### ***Do you:***

- feel you are not a child?
- feel you are not an adult?
- feel that you want to decide what your beliefs are nowadays? (You do not go by what your lecturers or parents tell you)
- feel your values are decided by your independent choices?
- want to decide what you wish to accomplish in life?
- feel self-conscious?
- keep evaluating and comparing yourself with others who you think are 'better' than you?
- get moody often?
- fluctuate/swing between moods of deep sadness at times and extreme happiness at other times?
- consciously take more time to dress up than when you were eight years old?
- feel strong sexual urges?
- feel attracted to or fall 'in love' with different people at different times?
- feel pressurised sometimes?
- feel stressed quite often?
- feel you have no one to go to for answering deep and real personal questions?



These feelings and thoughts are normal because you are in the stage of adolescence.

### **UNDERSTANDING the period of ADOLESCENCE**

Students in college, like you, are neither children nor adults. Like others in the age group between 10 and 21 years, you are in a developmental phase called adolescence. Everyone goes through this process. This period is divided into early adolescence which begins at 10 years of age, and late adolescence, from 15 to 21 years. You are currently in the period of late adolescence.



*'You' at different stages - attach your photographs.*

Adolescence is a time of great physical, social and emotional power - raw, untested power. It is also a very personal phase of development where you establish your own beliefs, values and plan your ambitions and goals in life. During this time, it is normal to constantly and realistically appraise yourself, and be extremely self-conscious.

Adolescence is the crucial time in a person's life. It is a transition from a carefree childhood to a responsible adulthood. During this period, a young person undergoes tremendous pressure due to various rapid changes taking place in him/her. These changes are characterised in the five dimensions of adolescence: physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual.

### EMOTIONAL CHANGES

Haven't you heard your friends say, "Hey I feeeeeeel like.... Or I don't feel like..." ever so often? Everything seems to depend on our moods. In the period of adolescence, we experience intense mood swings. At one time, we are deliriously happy, and then suddenly, we become morose. We often do not recognise these mood-swings on our own.

### TRY OUT THIS MOOD CHECK



Have you felt happy one moment and suddenly found yourself feeling depressed or sad?

Have you felt sooooo good that even the advice/scolding from your parent or lecturer made you laugh?



Do you feel mooooooody?

Is your answer YES to the above questions?



If your answer is YES, YOU ARE A NORMAL ADOLESCENT! Mood swings are not only associated with adolescents. They are also there among adults, but are much more common among adolescents. These mood swings are actually a normal phase you are going through as adolescents.

### Why do we experience mood swings?

Our bodies produce chemicals (hormones) that help transform us from children to adults during the period of adolescence. Sometimes, the levels in the body are not always balanced - they swing from low to high. When they are low, we feel low / depressed / sad / hurt. When high, we feel hyper / happy / high. So our emotional states and feelings also depend on the levels of hormones in the body at that time - nothing we can control. This situation stabilises around the age of 21 years, when the hormone levels stabilise and are more balanced. It is important to understand this, so that we can also comprehend mood swings that occur. Other emotional changes linked to hormonal changes is the feeling of sexual attraction. There are hormones responsible for these strong sexual feelings. Your body is designed for pleasure along with the feeling of sexual attraction. Physical signs such as an erection (penis becoming hard and stiff) in boys and moistness (excess secretion in the vagina) in girls occur. All these are normal changes.

All of us need to recognise that our feelings can change all the time. To truly CELEBRATE LIFE, recognise your feelings, be in touch with them and choose safely.

- You can choose to respond or ignore them.
- You can choose whether to be impulsive or not.
- You can choose to act with or without thinking.

Let's look at this situation to understand a little more about the emotional changes. Use your imagination to fill in the blanks, and then go back and read out the story to yourself.

### THE INCOMPLETE STORY

#### ***Complete the following story by filling in the blanks***

The college boy's name is \_\_\_\_\_. He is \_\_\_\_\_ years old. He is studying in \_\_\_\_\_. The college girl's name is \_\_\_\_\_. She is \_\_\_\_\_ years old and studying at \_\_\_\_\_.

On Sunday there is a picnic to a tourist spot.  
\_\_\_\_\_ (The boy) desperately wants to ask  
\_\_\_\_\_ (the girl) to come with him to the picnic. He wonders how she'd react if he tried, and thinks about ways to convince her to come along with him.

He does not know what to do and considers asking for advice on how to ask her. He knows that if he asks his father his reaction would be \_\_\_\_\_ and if he asks his mother, her reaction would be \_\_\_\_\_. He considers asking his \_\_\_\_\_ for advice. SHE SAYS YES!

The day of the picnic arrives; the friends meet, and get ready to leave. She arrives later. She would have liked to inform her loved ones of where she was going and with whom. She considers telling her mother and thinks that her reaction would be \_\_\_\_\_ or her father whose reaction would be \_\_\_\_\_, or her lecturer \_\_\_\_\_ who would say \_\_\_\_\_. Finally, she tells \_\_\_\_\_. During the journey, which was more than two hours long, they talk about \_\_\_\_\_.

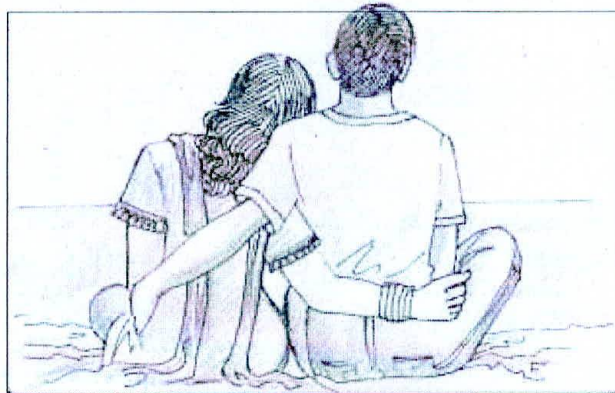


Finally when they arrive, their friends notice that they continue talking to each other. The boys tease him saying \_\_\_\_\_. When they start crossing the river, he offers his hand to help her cross. When their hands touch he feels \_\_\_\_\_ and she feels \_\_\_\_\_.

After the picnic, the journey back home was \_\_\_\_\_. At the end of the day they reach near her home. No one is on the street when they arrive. At night her thoughts of him are \_\_\_\_\_. His thoughts of her are \_\_\_\_\_. The next day \_\_\_\_\_.

I'm sure you came up with various feeling words for different people in this story. These feelings are normal and part of growing up. No one should be ashamed or scared of these feelings.

***Let's take an example:***



Raja and Rani are attracted to each other. They find that they would like to spend more time together.

Is this normal?

How do we manage these feelings of attraction in order to Celebrate Life?

During adolescence it is normal to feel attracted to other persons. We feel closer to our friends than to our parents, family members and lecturers.

### **SOCIAL CHANGES**

We change during adolescence **socially**. We find that:



We distance ourselves from the family and form new relationships. During adolescence we are in search of our distinct identity. We want to be independent. In order to fulfill this we gradually distance ourselves from parents and start strengthening bonds with friends. What our friends / peers

say holds more weight than what our parents say.

We take risks and show a sense of bravado.

Most adolescents like experimenting with new ideas. Sometimes this adventure could be risky and even dangerous. Our romantic being makes

us fall "in love" with another person (of the opposite or same sex) and sometimes we are ready to do anything to please this special partner/friend. Often we persuade each other to do things we ourselves would not have done, like smoking, drinking, stealing, practising unsafe sex, etc. Sometimes, we are forced into these practices by our friends because we do not want to displease them.



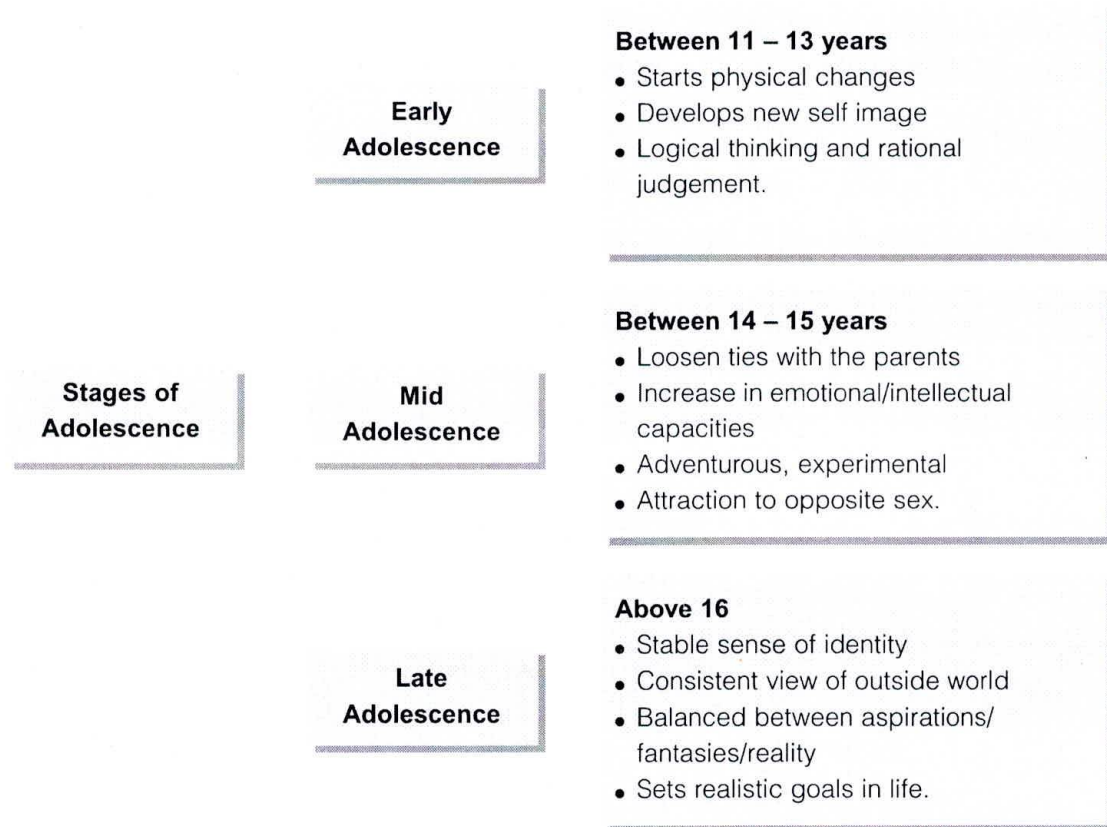




# Understanding Adolescence

ADOLESCENCE is a time of great physical, social and emotional power. It is the raw, untested, un-tempered power.

Adolescent maturation is a personal phase of development where children have to establish their own beliefs, values and what they want to accomplish out of life. Because adolescents constantly and realistically appraise themselves, they are often characterized as being extremely self-conscious. However, the self-evaluation process leads to the beginning of long-range goal setting, emotional and social independence and the making of a mature adult.



Adolescence is the crucial time in a person's life. It is a transition between a carefree childhood to a responsible adulthood. During this period an adolescent undergoes tremendous pressure due to various rapid changes taking place in him/her. These changes are **emotional, intellectual, spiritual, social and physical**.

## AN INCOMPLETE STORY

The boy's name is \_\_\_\_\_. He is \_\_\_\_\_ years old. He is studying in \_\_\_\_\_. The girl's name is \_\_\_\_\_. She is \_\_\_\_\_ years old and studying at \_\_\_\_\_. They both are part of the same \_\_\_\_\_.

During free time, \_\_\_\_\_ {the boy} and his gang hang around the \_\_\_\_\_ grounds watching \_\_\_\_\_ {the girl} and her friends. On Sunday there is a picnic to a tourist spot. \_\_\_\_\_ (The boy) desperately wants to ask \_\_\_\_\_ (the girl) to come with him to the picnic. He wonders how she'd react if he tried, and thinks about ways to convince her to come along with him

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

At the other end of town \_\_\_\_\_ (the girl) is also thinking of the picnic hoping that \_\_\_\_\_ (the boy) is planning to go to the picnic too. Her mind is tormented with the thought that he might go with some other girl. She thinks \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ ways \_\_\_\_\_ like

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ in which she could let to him that she'd prefer his company.

\_\_\_\_\_

As the week goes by, the boy becomes increasingly nervous about the whole thing, he cannot make up his mind about what to do, he wishes that no other boy would ask her to the picnic.

He is also scared that the following things would happen if he asked her \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ He considers asking his \_\_\_\_\_ for advice on how to ask her. He knows that if he asks his father his reaction would be \_\_\_\_\_ and if he asks his mother, her reaction would be \_\_\_\_\_. He considers asking his \_\_\_\_\_ teacher for advice and thinks that her/his reaction would be \_\_\_\_\_.

Finally, he decides that whatever happens, he'd at the very least try. He thinks of the following \_\_\_\_\_ ways \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ ask her \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SHE SAYS YES!**

The day of the picnic arrives; the friends meet, and get ready to leave. But the girl has still \_\_\_\_\_ not \_\_\_\_\_ arrived. The \_\_\_\_\_ boy \_\_\_\_\_ thinks that \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

She arrives later. She would have liked to let her loved ones know where she was going and with who. She considers telling her mother and thinks that her reaction would be \_\_\_\_\_ or her father whose reaction would be \_\_\_\_\_, or

her \_\_\_\_\_ teacher who would say "\_\_\_\_\_. Finally, she tells \_\_\_\_\_ During the journey, which was more than 2 hours long, they talk about \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Sitting next to him makes her feel \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ makes him feel \_\_\_\_\_

Finally when they arrive at Mahabs, their friends notice that they never stop talking to each other. The boys tease him saying \_\_\_\_\_

They start crossing the river when he offers her his hand to help her across. When their hands touch he feels \_\_\_\_\_

And she feels \_\_\_\_\_

Sometime at noon, the boy sees a few of his friends drinking beer and he thinks \_\_\_\_\_ At the same time, He \_\_\_\_\_ She

she sees some of her friends smoking. She thinks \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ After the picnic, on their way home, they talk about \_\_\_\_\_

The \_\_\_\_\_ journey back home was \_\_\_\_\_

They finally reach her home. No one is on the street when they arrive. At night her thoughts of him are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ His thoughts of her are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_\_

THE END!



## The Process

Adapting the definition of Health by the World Health Organisation, INSA-India defines adolescent education as a process that leads individuals in the age group of 10–21 years towards socio-cultural, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being and supports their transition from childhood to healthy adulthood and does NOT merely concentrate on sex education.

The objective of HIV/AIDS prevention education is basically to address behavioural change in the adolescents. Hence, the five-dimensional approach was evolved centering on the significant changes that persons undergo during adolescence. The impact of these changes on youth provides guiding principles for communicating and working with them.

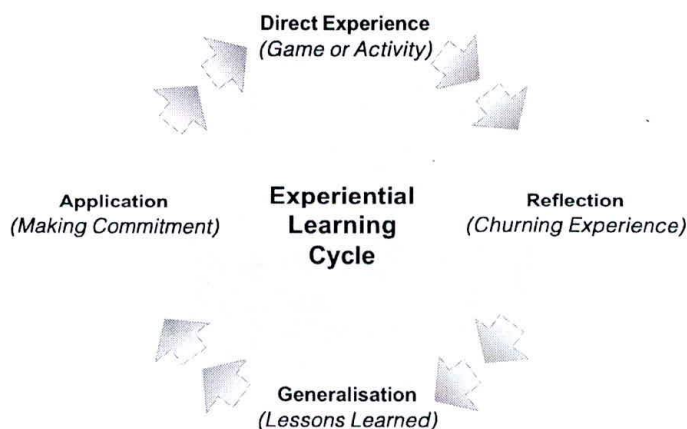
The five dimensions are:

- **Emotional Changes:**  
Adolescents continue to exhibit emotional maturity and instability, as well as, the reverse of both these emotions.
- **Intellectual Changes:**  
There is a considerable increase in their capacity to comprehend and reason out thoughts and deeds, both in personal and family matters, besides their academic activities.
- **Spiritual Changes:**  
Based on personal experiences, they develop a feeling of oneness to strengthen their will power and imbibe values, attitudes and beliefs.
- **Social Changes:**  
Adolescents believe in choosing their own circle of friends and look for relationships beyond the family.
- **Physical Changes:**  
Physiological changes and hormones contribute to a great deal of physical changes.

Adolescents are virtually packs of energy. They like activity. They learn by doing things. Especially when the goal is not only exchanging essential information but imparting some useful skills, it is better to follow a learner-centred, participatory methodology in which transformation is triggered off and accomplished by the learner him/herself. Keeping this in view, a Rights-based approach to our HIV/AIDS prevention education was designed, which, is in accordance with the ethical code agreed upon.

## An Approach Design

The exercises used by INSA-India follow an approach similar to the **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE**. Given below is a graphical representation:



## Emotional Changes in Adolescents

All emotions are instant plans for handling life. The very root of the word 'emotion' is 'motere', the Latin verb for 'to move', plus the prefix 'e' to connote 'move away'. This suggests that a tendency to act is implicit in every emotion. Our emotions have a mind of their own; one that can hold views quite independent of our rational mind.

- **Concern about the appearance**

Most adolescents grow concerned about their appearances. They want to look attractive. They compare the size and shape of their bodies with others. They keep worrying if they do not conform with accepted norms.

- **Curiosity**

Curiosity about sex is a natural part of growing up and is essential in preparing for adulthood. Sexual fantasies are common and normal. Due to hesitation in clarifying their doubts, they find answers from their friends and other sources.

- **Distancing themselves from family and forming new heterosexual or same sex relationships**

Adolescents are in search of their own distinct identity. They want to be independent. In order to fulfill this they gradually distance themselves from their parents and start strengthening bonds with their peers.

- **Taking risks and showing a sense of bravado**

They like experimenting with new experiences. Some times this adventure could be risky and even dangerous. They become romantic in their expression of love towards the opposite/same sex and are ready to do anything to please the partners/friends. Very often, they coax each other to indulge in activities, like smoking, drinking, stealing, unsafe sex, etc.

### **Changes in Thinking**

What is important to me should  
be important to others.  
Everyone's looking at me  
and talking about me...  
Why can't you all  
understand me?

### **Changes in Experience**

Why am I controlled?

### **Making Decisions**

Let me do what I want to do.  
You don't worry about me.

There is a frequent fluctuation between emotion – peaks of excitement and depths of moodiness that confuse the adolescents. If not explained, this could lead to isolation from the community and lack of involvement in social activity. This, in turn, leads the adolescents to feelings of being ignored and not needed and to the depths of depression.

## Watch Out

It is important for teachers and parents to be alert to the warning signals of depression in adolescents and render assistance to overcome their dilemma. Following are some symptoms:

- ♦ Showing or describing their mood as sad
- ♦ Being irritable
- ♦ Poor appetite or overeating
- ♦ Insomnia or hypersomnia (no sleep or too much of sleeping)
- ♦ Low energy level or fatigue
- ♦ Low self-esteem
- ♦ Poor concentration or difficulty in making decisions
- ♦ Feeling of hopelessness
- ♦ Low level of interest
  - ♦ Self-criticism, with the self-concepts of being uninteresting, incapable or ineffective
    - ♦ Feeling rejected or alone or disrespected
    - ♦ Withdrawal from friends and usual activities.



## 10 I, Me and My Body

**Objective:** To increase our self awareness of the uniqueness and preciousness of each individual.

**Material needed:** Paper and pen for each student.

**Group size:** 20 – 30

**Time:** 15 – 30 minutes

### Process:

- Ask students to make three columns in their books
- Get them to name the columns as follows: the left column 'beautiful', the middle column 'okay' and the right column 'ugly'
- Tell them that this is an exercise for evaluating themselves. Encourage them to think and evaluate themselves truthfully without discussing with others. Assure them that what they write will remain private.
- Then call out the parts of the body in a neutral tone as follows and ask them to simultaneously tick mark in one of the columns according to their assessment of that part of the body for them.

- |                   |                                    |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Head           | 14. Fingers                        |
| 2. Hair           | 15. Nails                          |
| 3. Forehead       | 16. Chest for men/breast for women |
| 4. Eyes           | 17. Stomach/waist- line            |
| 5. Ears           | 18. Penis for men/vagina for women |
| 6. Cheeks         | 19. Thighs                         |
| 7. Nose           | 20. Buttocks                       |
| 8. Lips and Mouth | 21. Height                         |
| 9. Teeth          | 22. Legs                           |
| 10. Neck          | 23. Feet                           |
| 11. Shoulders     | 24. Toes                           |
| 12. Arm           | 25. Complexion.                    |
| 13. Hands         |                                    |

- Ask the participants to total how many they have ticked marked in each column.
- Remind them to keep what they have tick marked as private and the need to respect each person in the room.

### Note for Facilitators:

- A full length mirror will encourage students to view themselves as others see them. You will find children coming better dressed to school.
- Young peoples' perception of themselves directly affects their self worth and sexuality.

### Points for Discussion:

Ask the group who had marked themselves 25 out of 25 in the 'Beautiful' column. Allow for the silence that may prevail. Then ask about 24 out of 25, and continue 23, 22....15...10...5...3...1...0 out of 25 in the 'beautiful' column'.

Begin a debate on what 'beautiful' means to them. Is it the commercial connotation of 'beautiful'?  
Would it be good if all looked alike ? Mr World? Or Miss Universe??

*Each one of us has some common needs*

**We all want to**



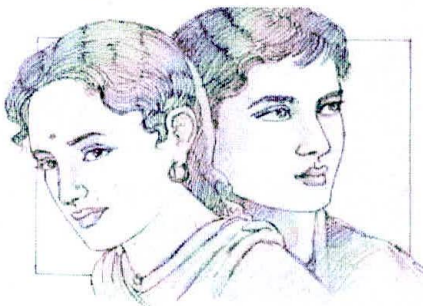
**Be loved and recognised.**

**We all want to**



**Live amicably in a community.**

**We all want to**



**Find out our role in life.**

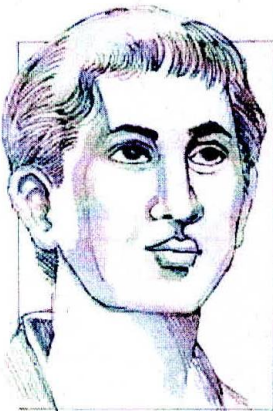


**We all want to**



**Develop satisfying  
relationships.**

**We all want to**



**Build an identity  
separate from our roots.**

We need to accept that this is a normal stage that we are going through. It is a crucial and sometimes an unpredictable stage. We can easily become very vulnerable. While we are eager to please our friends, are we in the process of harming ourselves? When we are in a situation like Rani and Raja, how can we manage our feelings and relationships safely?

Here are some tips for healthy relationships.

- Have a wide circle of friends, which will help you understand both the genders better.
- It is important to understand the attitudes and thoughts a person has about males and females. Does a boy think of a female as a "chick" or "item" and a girl think of a male as a "hunk" or a "hulk?" Both these attitudes are negative and you may be treated as a "thing" rather than a "unique, precious person".

***When you think you are in love with someone***

- Identify if the person you "love" has both self-respect and respect for you. If this is lacking, then it is better to avoid getting into a serious relationship.
- Being "in love" does not mean that it will always continue forever. Do not assume that every relationship ends in marriage. At this age, even when you feel you are in love, keep your limits and just be friendly. The hormones in your body make you feel strongly attracted to the other person. By the next month you may be "in love" with somebody else. Remember - you are an adolescent. This is normal!
- If the person you love says things like, "Only if you .... (kiss me, come to a movie with me, write records or do my homework for me) I will know for sure that you love me". These conditions are not part of real love. It may lead to abuse. You do not need to do what you do not want to do, even if the person you "love" asks you to. If this is happening with your friends (Raja and Rani) caution them.
- Meet in groups rather than meeting alone. A public place is safer than a private place because there are limited chances of abuse when you are in a crowd rather than being alone with the other person.

**THE BOTTOM LINE:**

**NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU LOVE A PERSON,  
REMEMBER... YOU ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THAT PERSON.  
KEEP YOURSELF SAFE. ENJOY LIFE SAFELY.**



## PHYSICAL CHANGES

Adolescence is not just about feelings and mood swings. Many changes occur in the body. How much do we understand of terms such as periods, wet dreams and masturbation ?

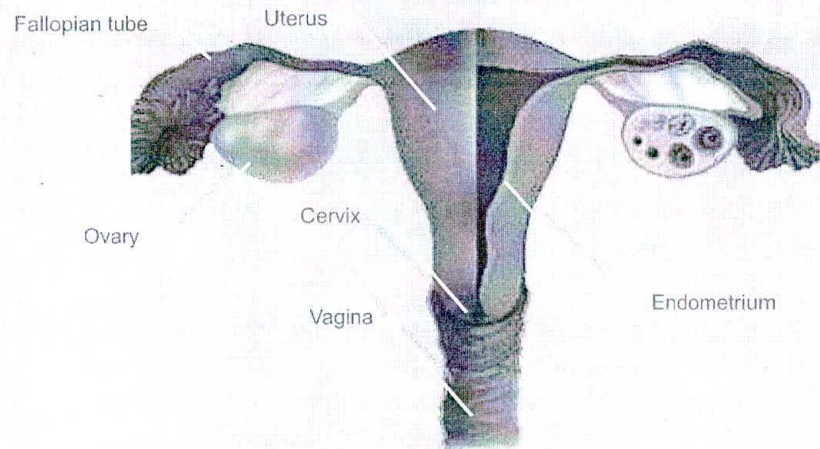
### SITUATION 1



Reshma is talking to her friend that her menstrual periods are not regular. What's happening to Reshma?

Here's what happened in Reshma's life. When Reshma was in standard eight, 13 years old, she attained puberty, her first menstruation (periods). At the time of puberty and before the first menstruation, the pituitary gland stimulates the ovaries in the female body to produce a hormone called 'oestrogen' which is responsible for the physical changes in Reshma and all other young women. The first change that is visible is the development of breasts (sometimes one breast may be larger than the other – this is normal). Then, hair begins to grow in the pubic area (private parts) and underarm. The pelvic bone widens and fat deposits around the hips, breasts, arms and thighs provide the adult female shape.

All these changes in a girl begin around two years before 'menarche' or the first menstruation. Menarche occurs around 13 years of age. However, menstruation may begin as early as 10 years or as late as 18 years.



What exactly are menstrual periods? From the time just before menarche, an egg in the ovary (one egg from one ovary once a month) is ripened and released into the tubes nearby. This egg waits to be fertilised by a sperm from the male. (Sperms enter the female body through an act of sexual intercourse where the male penis is inserted into the vagina of a female). Meanwhile, the uterus (or womb) forms a cushion in its inner lining to receive the fertilised egg. (It is like we arrange the sofas for the guests to sit more comfortably).

If there was no sexual intercourse, then fertilisation does not happen. The egg dies, and the uterus destroys the cushion it had made. This is thrown out of the body through the vagina as blood. It takes 3-5 days for all the destroyed lining and egg to come out of the body. This time is called the menstrual period. This repeats once a month on an average till the age of around 45, when the ovary stops producing any more eggs. If the bleeding is very irregular, or heavy, it must be checked by a doctor.

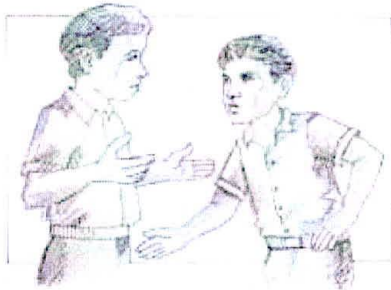


It is important to prevent anaemia (low levels of good blood) in young women by eating good nutritious food that is rich in iron (green leafy vegetables, ragi, etc).

Just before the period starts, girls may experience a feeling of bloating and painful breasts. Mood swings, depression and irritation, along with stomach cramps can also occur. These are normal. If you cannot tolerate it, then please see a doctor.

**What then about males? Do they undergo changes apart from their voices changing?**

#### SITUATION 2



15 year old Ranjan was telling his friends of how he has very sexy dreams at night and finds his pants wet. He feels guilty and thinks he is a bad person.

What's happening to Ranjan?

When Ranjan was about 12 years or so, the pituitary gland in his brain released the gonadotrophin hormones, which in turn, stimulated the testes to start producing sperms. A year later, the testes also began producing testosterone, the male hormone that is responsible for the physical changes in any male. Hair began to grow in the pubic area, in the armpits and on the face as beard and a moustache. The thickened vocal chords led to the "breaking of the voice" making it lower pitched. A sudden spurt of growth occurred, and Ranjan grew tall and thin with disproportionately big hands and feet. Later, more hair grew on his arms, legs, chest and back. These kinds of changes are normal for any young adolescent male.

This growth process usually begins around 12 years, and reaches completion anytime between 18 and 21 years.

One major concern for boys like Ranjan at this time is the maturing of the genital organs. With the production of sperms, the testes become larger (one can be bigger than the other), and the skin on the scrotum changes in colour and texture. The penis also grows to its full size (may tilt to one side) and is more erectile. It is very important to know that the size of the penis has got nothing to do with the ability to have an erection or ejaculation (release of sperm). This is the time when boys, including Ranjan, have 'wet dreams' or nocturnal (night) emissions of semen, which is normal and nothing unusual. It is the body's way of getting rid of old sperm and making place for fresh sperm.

### **INTELLECTUAL CHANGES**

Intellectual changes allow us to become more analytical and think more logically. Along with our independent streak, this mental growth prompts us to be more curious and take risks. While this is good, we must be careful about what risks we can take. We must also remember that an adolescent has still not understood how to measure the consequences of risks as yet – therefore, the young boy may want to ride his bike at 100 miles per hour only thinking of how fast he can make his bike go (and not the possible risk of an accident), while a young girl may like to entice a boy with revealing clothes to show off her beautiful body (and not understand the possible risk of him getting the wrong message that she wants to have sex with him).

### **SPIRITUAL CHANGES**

Spiritually, young girls and boys begin to understand that there is a power above their parents and teachers. All this time religion was what was drilled into them. Now they want to explore their own thoughts and beliefs.



This is important for them as they learn that they have to live with a conscience, which can make them feel quite guilty at times.

*We cannot give you all the details about the changes in adolescence. You could take the time to go to the library and read up a little more so that you can understand what you are going through.*

**THE IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR YOU IS THAT  
ALL THESE CHANGES ARE NORMAL!**

*It is how we manage these changes in adolescence that determines if we are ready to celebrate life in a healthy and safe manner.*

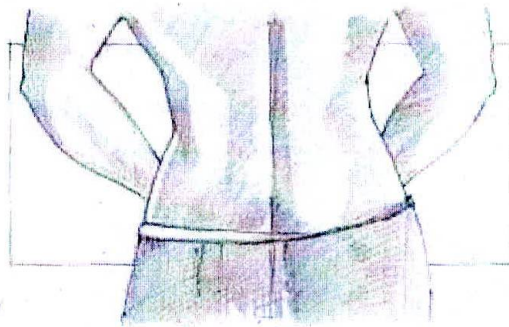
## MYTHS & FACTS

Here are a few myths (marked x) followed by the actual facts (marked ✓)



x *Wet dreams or nocturnal emissions indicate a sexual disorder.*

✓ *Wet dreams are semen that comes out during the sleep or during dreams that are erotic in nature. They are normal to any adolescent boy. It is the body's mechanism to expel the old semen.*



- ✗ *Frequent masturbation can lead to sexual inadequacy, loss of strength and vigour, pimples, insanity, mental retardation and diminishing size of the penis.*
- ✓ Masturbation is a natural sexual behaviour and is common in both males and females. The frequency of masturbation will not lead to any problems at all, certainly not sexual inadequacy, loss of strength nor mental retardation.
- ✗ *A male with a larger penis is sexually more potent and offers women greater sexual gratification.*
- ✓ Size does not matter - since it is only the outer one-third of the vagina which is sensitive to sexual stimulation.





- ✗ *A female is unclean during menstruation and therefore, having sex at this time is unsafe. She should be kept out of the house, kitchen, places of worship, away from crops, etc.*
- ✓ Menstruation is a normal, natural and healthy function of the female body. Most can carry on all the regular activities of everyday life. Every girl should know that the menstrual function is a normal manifestation of womanhood of which she can be proud. Age-old restrictions, taboos and superstitious beliefs placed on menstruating females have no scientific basis. However, it is important for all girls to maintain good personal and genital hygiene during this time.



- ✗ *Mood swings in adolescents is an attention-seeking behaviour.*
- ✓ Mood swings are influenced by sudden changes in hormonal activity which also affects the body and the mind. Adolescents can understand these mood swings if they are aware of these hormonal changes.

**Recognise that you are going through  
simultaneous changes NOW !**

**Emotional  
changes**

**Social  
changes**

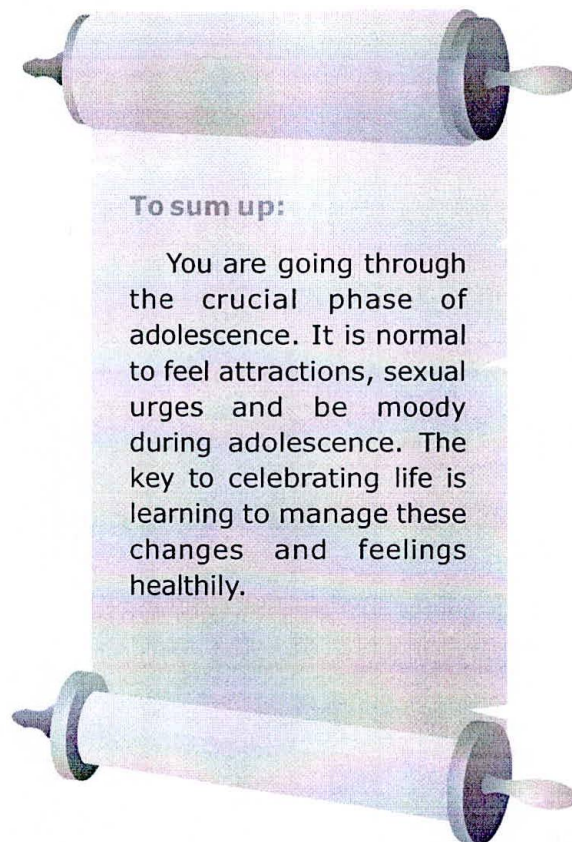
**Physical  
changes**

**Intellectual  
changes**

**Spiritual  
changes**

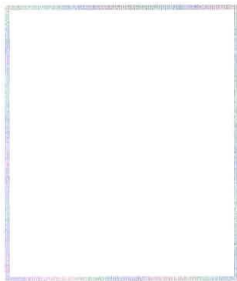
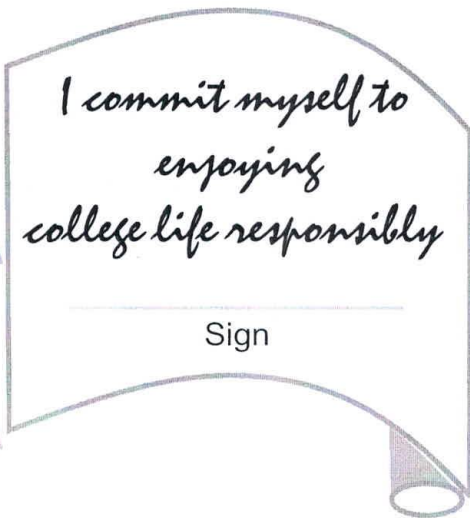




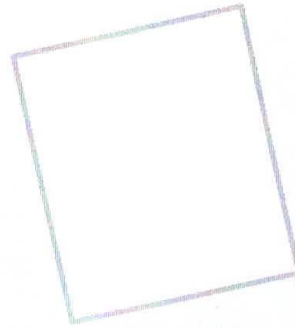
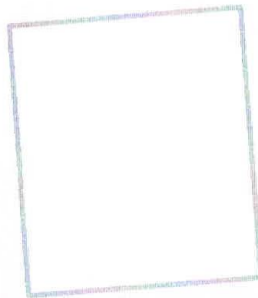
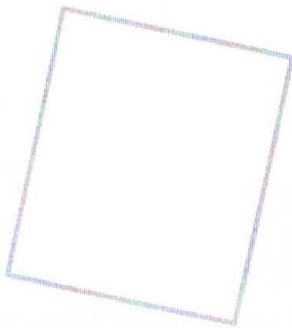
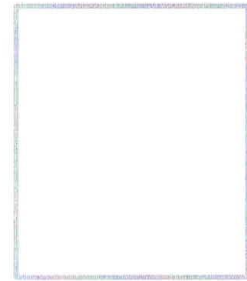


**Adolescence is one of the most fascinating periods of life that marks the transition from being a dependant child to becoming an independently functioning adult.**

## Commitment 1



Stick photographs of your  
friends who share  
your commitment 1



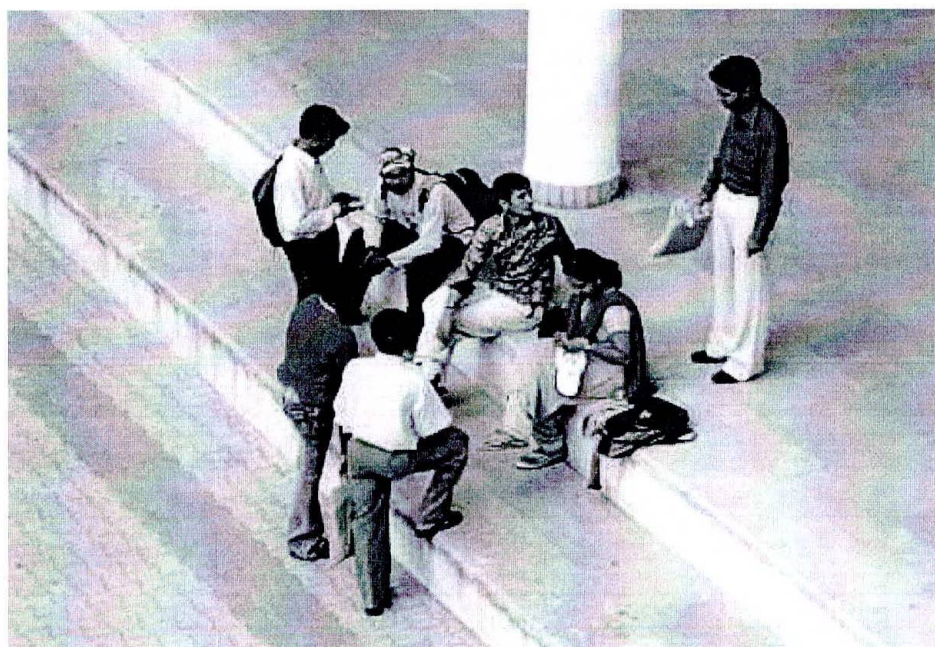


## My notes for enjoying college life responsibly

# **I PREVENT STIs, HIV AND AIDS**

Basic facts on STIs, HIV and AIDS

2





We are going to discuss a set of infectious diseases that you have definitely heard of, and perhaps know a lot of. The reason we want to focus on these diseases is that the only way out is understanding how you get them and focussing on prevention – and that is in your hands. Let's start with HIV and state a few facts:

Today, India has around 2.5 million people with HIV infection! The age group that is maximally affected is between 15 - 44 years – our precious youth and young adults who are the bread winners and young parents in the family.

### ***HIV causes the disease AIDS.***

In India, the most common route of infection is through sexual intercourse (87%). While there is no cure, new medicines can prolong and improve the quality of life of a person living with HIV infection (ART – Anti Retroviral Therapy is now available in India). Anyone can get HIV infection. The only true way out is prevention. Prevention is based on an individual learning how to avoid risky behaviours (finally, it is upto you to learn and adopt safe behaviours).

### **Frequently asked questions**

#### **WHAT IS AIDS?**

It is the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. AIDS is a condition that destroys the body's ability to fight infections. AIDS is not hereditary.

#### **WHAT CAUSES AIDS?**

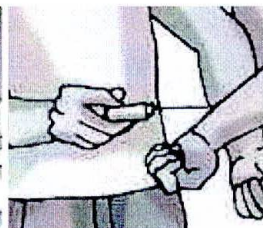
A virus called Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). This virus lives only in human beings. It attacks the resistance-providing cells in our body (the Cd<sub>4</sub> cells).

### HOW IS HIV SPREAD?

There are four common ways of getting HIV from an infected person. They are:



Unprotected sex with an HIV infected person.



Using unsterilised needles and syringes.



Getting blood / organs from an infected donor.



Infected mother to her child during pregnancy, delivery & breast feeding.

*Images courtesy: I-TECH*

### CAN WE RECOGNISE AN HIV INFECTED PERSON?

NO, they can look normal for 6 to 10 years. But they can still pass on HIV infection to others through the above-mentioned ways.

### IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIV INFECTION AND AIDS?

Yes there is. From the time a person is infected, it takes around 6-10 years approximately (for some much less, for others much more) before there are any serious medical problems. He or she looks and feels normal and healthy. After around 6 - 8 years, they begin to get simple infections more frequently than others. These are called opportunistic infections. But they can still work, dance, sing and choose what they want to do.... In brief, live normal lives. They are not ill. It is only after around 8 - 10 years that their immunity is so low that they may get AIDS. At this time, they are sick and unable to manage regular work. During the stage of AIDS they look ill. They may have a collection of symptoms or diseases. These include rapid loss of weight, severe loose motion (diarrhoea), fever for more than a month, and other opportunistic infections like tuberculosis, pneumonia, fungal infections, skin cancers, brain infections, etc. People living in the initial stage of infection are called People Living with HIV infection.



Stick a group photo of your friends or people you like (music group, film stars, etc).

The group above looks normal and healthy. People with HIV infection also look normal and healthy. It is important to note that even when HIV infected people look normal and healthy, they can pass the HIV to you through the ways explained earlier.

**Remember HIV 'does not' spread by any of the following ways:**



Sharing the same toilet or using a public swimming pool

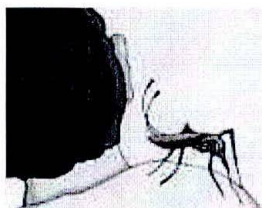


By touch



Sharing the same utensils

Images courtesy : I-TECH



Mosquito or other insect bites



Sitting next to a person living with HIV infection

### ***How do we find out if we have HIV infection?***

The only way to find out if you have HIV infection is through a blood test. This is a simple blood test which takes a few minutes only. Both before and after the test is done, a counselor will explain about the test and the possible results. It is important to get this test done at a place which has both counseling and laboratory facilities. In our country, these are called the Integrated Counseling and Testing Centres (ICTC) or the Voluntary Counseling and Testing Centre (VCTC). Remember this test is voluntary - no one can force you to do it. It's a good idea to get your blood tested for HIV. If you are willing, go ahead to any VCTC or ICTC close to you. There is no need to be scared. Your result could be either negative or positive. If negative, wonderful - always live a safe and healthy life and continue to remain negative. If positive, it is also okay. You are healthy still. When you fall ill there are medicines and care services to help you have a long and productive life (just like a person with diabetes who needs to choose to have life-long medicines). Choose to live a healthy lifestyle.

### ***So what's the big deal about HIV infection?***

People with HIV infection look normal and can work or study. However, they need to change their lifestyle; they need to work at remaining healthy. Just like people with diabetes, they need to work to stay healthy. Unlike diabetes, they can pass on their infection to others if they do not practise preventive methods. Therefore, they too have to avoid risky behaviour and be responsible not to infect others or reinfect themselves.

The other big deal about HIV infection is the stigma and discrimination associated with it. We are going to learn how to deal with this stigma and discrimination in the 8th Commitment. But till then you can do your bit by informing others how HIV is spread, and more importantly how it is not spread. Also know that we should not shun people living with HIV and AIDS (PLHAs) but offer them care and support – would you recoil from a diabetic or someone suffering from cancer? No! Then why the special negative treatment for HIV? Anyhow, you are not going to get it unless you have unprotected sex with that person or somehow that person's blood enters into your blood stream!

You, as a young person, could pave the way to enlighten others about the facts about HIV and remove their myths. Here are common myths that we hear often.

#### *Have you heard these statements?*

##### **These are misconceptions**

AIDS is a punishment from God.

Your sympathy depends on how the person got the infection.

Only people with low morals get infected with HIV.

People who die of AIDS deserve it.

It is dangerous to have people with HIV in the community.

Having sex with a pig can cure you of HIV and AIDS.

A child who is HIV positive should not be given admission in a school in order to protect other children.

A person who is HIV positive should be removed from the workplace to protect other workers.

It is not necessary for a Club or an NGO to have a HIV workplace policy.

**The only way out is PREVENTION.**



### *How can we prevent HIV infection?*

If you know how you can get HIV infection, then it is easy to understand how you can prevent getting infected. Follow these steps to be "SAVED":

#### **S – Safer Practices**

- ☐ Choose abstinence – the safest way to prevent sexual transmission of HIV.
- ☐ Choose to nurture a mutually faithful sexual relationship. Be faithful!
- ☐ If you are already sexually active, use condoms correctly and consistently.
- ☐ Use disposable or sterilised needles and syringes for injections, tattooing, etc.
- ☐ Insist on receiving tested HIV negative blood for any blood transfusion.
- ☐ Say 'No' to intravenous drug use.
- ☐ Pregnant women living with HIV infection can protect their babies from infection by accessing special medical care at the PPTCT (Prevention of Parent to Child Transmission Centre).
- ☐ Practise universal medical precautions for health care.
- ☐ Health care providers can access post-exposure prophylaxis if they have been exposed to HIV infection.

## **A – Anti-retroviral treatment**

For those who are living with HIV infection are on medication, adhering to prescribed ART, once begun, helps prolong the HIV infection stage and prevents early onset of AIDS.

## **V – Voluntary Testing and Counseling**

Barely 1% of the 2.5 million estimated people living with HIV infection know that they are infected, because the others have not yet got tested. Remember, if you are negative, you could celebrate life by staying negative and avoiding risky behaviours.

Those who are tested positive for HIV, can get medical care and be responsible not to get reinfected or pass on the infection.

## **E – Empowerment**

We know all about HIV prevention and yet have no ability, motivation or skills to prevent HIV infection. As you go through this book you will find ways to practise skills to ensure that you enjoy every moment of your life and prevent HIV infection.

## **D – Drugs**

There are drugs for infections associated with HIV and AIDS and for basic health care.

Some germs take the opportunity to infect a person living with HIV infection because their resistance is lowered. These are called Opportunistic Infections. Preventing opportunistic infections is one of the important ways to ensure that a person living with HIV infection does not progress into the stage of AIDS.

**SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER:  
BIRTH CONTROL PILLS DO NOT PROTECT FROM HIV INFECTION**

## Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

STIs are communicable infections, which are transmitted by an infected man / woman to his/her partner during sexual intercourse. They are quite easy to contract. STIs are serious and painful. Gonorrhoea, herpes, chlamydia, syphilis, HIV and AIDS are the most common STIs in India.

### How can we recognise an STI?

A person with an STI may look and feel healthy, but can still infect.



### What happens if an STI is not treated?

There may be various complications due to STIs, if proper treatment is not given. They include:

#### Complications in adults

- ☐ Infertility: inability to have a baby
- ☐ Hepatitis: disease causing jaundice and damage to the liver



☐ Dementia: diseases leading to mental problems

☐ Cancer of the uterus, cervix

#### Complications of pregnancy

☐ Congenital syphilis leading to stillbirth or deformed baby

#### Complications in infants

☐ Infection with gonorrhoea causing blindness

☐ Pneumonia in the newborn baby

☐ Heart and other congenital defects.

#### *How are STIs treated?*

☐ All STIs (except Herpes and HIV) can be cured.

☐ Treatment requires taking special medicines (antibiotics) only given by a trained doctor.

☐ Treatment should be as early as possible (within 48 hours of getting the symptoms)

☐ The medicines given only lasts for that one episode.

☐ You can get another or the same STI again if you do not take preventive measures.

☐ Also make sure that your partner/s get treated.

### *Can we prevent an STI?*

**Abstinence (no sex at all)** is the only 100% fool proof method of preventing STIs.

### *Is there any relationship between STI and HIV?*

Yes. HIV is primarily a sexually transmitted infection. The relationship between STIs and AIDS is two fold:

- The same high-risk behaviour causing STIs also causes HIV infection (unprotected sexual intercourse).
- HIV transmission is easily spread in a person who has genital ulcers or sores caused by STIs.

- S** Sore in the private parts (genitals) even if it disappears on its own
- T** Tenderness i.e. pain during touch. Pain in the private parts during the act of sex or passing urine.
- I** Itching or irritation with or without foul smelling discharge in the private parts.
- S** Swelling in the private parts.

STI is a short form for Sexually Transmitted Infections.  
Most STIs are curable.

### *Have you heard these statements?*

**N  
O  
T  
T  
R  
U  
E**

Tell everyone that they are NOT true:

- ✗ Men with STIs believe that having sex with a virgin will cure them.
- ✗ Disappearance of symptoms without treatment means that the STI is cured.
- ✗ A person can get an STI by using a public toilet.
- ✗ Burning sensation during urination is due to body heat, which needs to be released by having sex.

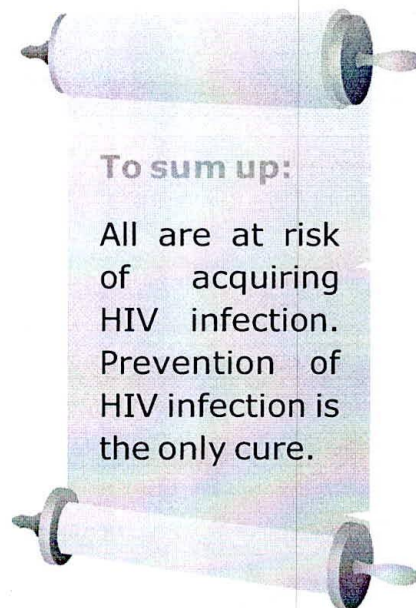


- ✗ A person cured of STIs cannot contract STIs again.
- ✗ Masturbation causes STIs.

**The correct answers are**



- ✓ Sex with a virgin does not cure STIs. Instead you can also infect the virgin.
- ✓ Disappearance of symptoms does not mean that the STI is cured. It only means that the external sign has gone, but the germ is still in the blood and the person needs treatment.
- ✓ A person cannot get STIs by using public toilets.
- ✓ Burning sensation during urination means that there is an infection, which needs treatment, and the body is in need of more fluids.
- ✓ A person cured of STIs can get it again if exposed to infection.
- ✓ Masturbation is a normal behaviour, and does not lead to STI infection. Only unsafe sex leads to infection.



**To sum up:**

All are at risk  
of acquiring  
HIV infection.  
Prevention of  
HIV infection is  
the only cure.



Try out this puzzle on adolescence, STIs, HIV and AIDS. Reading this book could help you complete the puzzle too. The answers can be found horizontally, vertically, diagonally or zig-zag.

A	L	L	M	A	B	P	N	M	O	G	L
C	Y	W	O	N	O	R	M	A	L	R	O
Q	U	E	S	T	I	O	N	-	B	O	X
U	Y	N	C	S	E	G	D	C	O	U	I
I	E	P	I	S	A	E	P	I	L	P	E
R	S	W	E	Q	V	S	E	X	E	S	M
E	I	K	B	C	U	T	A	G	H	J	O
D	Z	B	T	N	G	E	N	D	E	R	T
A	B	C	B	D	E	R	C	V	Y	M	I
F	L	K	J	O	K	O	U	R	E	A	O
V	B	N	T	C	N	N	N	A	E	D	N
A	T	S	E	I	A	E	O	C	A	O	S

**ACROSS:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ are at risk for HIV infection {3}
2. A person with HIV infection looks \_\_\_\_\_ and healthy {6}
3. All students can use the \_\_\_\_\_, for clearing their doubts on HIV prevention {8-3}
4. Both \_\_\_\_\_ are vulnerable to HIV infection because of gender {5}
5. \_\_\_\_\_ is the sociological difference between males and females {6}

**DOWN:**

1. HIV infection is \_\_\_\_\_ {8}
2. A hormone responsible for the sexual maturity of female is the \_\_\_\_\_ {12}
3. Say \_\_\_\_\_ to preventing HIV infection and caring for those living with HIV infection and AIDS. {3}
4. Choose going out in \_\_\_\_\_ when in a relationship of love. {6}
5. Management of \_\_\_\_\_ is a life skill to prevent HIV infection {8}

**TRICKY {LOOK SIDEWAYS/IN ANGLES / ZIG-ZAG TO FIND THE WORDS}:**

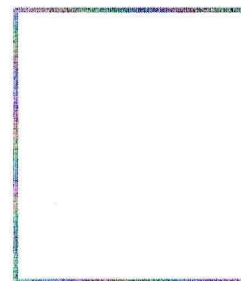
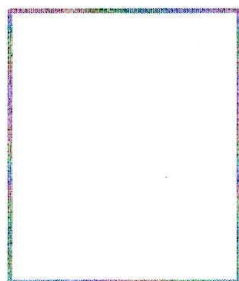
1. A symbol for commitment to care and support of people living with HIV infection is the \_\_\_\_\_ {3-6}
2. One clear way to live positively is to visit the \_\_\_\_\_ for counseling and testing {4}{acronym}
3. Take time to enjoy life safely. Choose \_\_\_\_\_ the surest way to prevent the sexual transmission of HIV {10}
4. The ability to say \_\_\_\_\_ assertively is a life skill to protect us from HIV infection {2}
5. We must protect ourselves from HIV infection because we are \_\_\_\_\_ and precious human beings. {6}

## Commitment 2

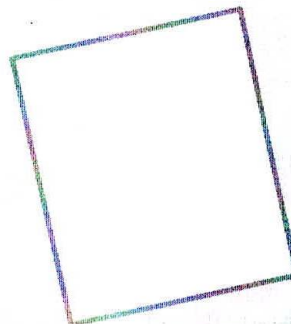
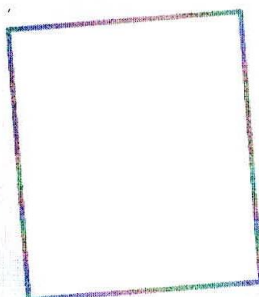
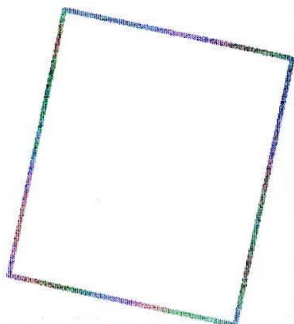


*I commit myself to  
preventing  
STIs, HIV and AIDS*

Sign



Stick photographs of your  
friends who share  
your commitment 2





## My notes for preventing STIs, HIV and AIDS

# I DEAL HEALTHILY WITH SOCIO-CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Gender, media, culture and their influences

3



In the previous commitment, you saw that prevention of HIV seems very simple. Why is it not so in reality? There are several other influencing factors that increase our vulnerabilities such as culture, media and gender.

*In what way can culture and gender be associated with the risk of HIV infection?*

Let's do an exercise to check if we understand the difference between sex and gender.

List down five characteristics of what you think an ideal male and an ideal female should have.

Ideal Male	Ideal Female

Go through your list and check if these really are the most important characteristics of an ideal male/ideal female. If your answer is 'yes', then scratch out the heading 'Ideal Male'. In that place write 'Ideal Female' and scratch out the heading 'Ideal Female' from the second column and write 'Ideal Male'. Once again look at the characteristics you had written for 'Ideal Male' and see if these could be female characteristics too. Similarly, look at the second column and check if they are characteristics that would apply to males too.

You will find that those characteristics that are not physical in nature are interchangeable.

The characteristics that are interchangeable are referred to as Gender.



**Gender** refers to widely shared ideas and expectations (norms) concerning women and men. These include ideas about 'typically' feminine or female and masculine or male characteristics and commonly shared expectations about how women and men should behave in various situations.

These ideas and expectations are learnt from family, friends, opinion leaders, religion, advertising and the media. They reflect and influence the different role, social status, economic and political power of women and men in society.

**Sex** refers to physiological attributes that identify a person as male or female.

- ☐ Type of genital organ (penis, testicles, vagina, womb, breasts).
- ☐ Type of predominant hormones circulating in the body (estrogen, testosterone).
- ☐ Ability to produce sperm or ova (eggs).
- ☐ Ability to give birth and breast feed children.



A simple way to remember the difference between sex and gender is that **sex is biological** and **gender is social**.

Gender sensitivity does not mean that we no longer recognise differences between men and women. Some differences remain because of biology. We may choose to retain others even in equal relationships (e.g., men choosing to drive the car or women choosing to cook dinner). The key reason to talk about gender is because both male and female need to exercise their choice (e.g., if the man wants to cook dinner, it's fine or if the woman wants to drive the car, it's fine).

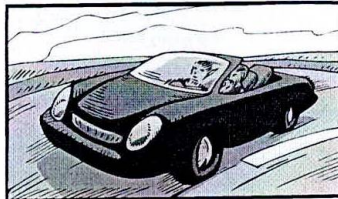
**Let's understand how gender and culture increase our vulnerability to HIV infection.**

<b>Gender issue</b>	<b>Few examples of gender biases</b>	<b>Vulnerabilities due to gender influences</b>
Gender has to do with relationships, between and among men and women.	Mothers teach daughters not to contradict men; fathers teach sons 'not to act like women' by crying when they are hurt.	Women do not raise their voices even when sexually abused.
Gender defines who has more power.	Females are soft and helpless; males are strong and powerful.	It is taken for granted in some societies that men can have multiple sexual partners.
Gender applies not only to people who are heterosexual, it also affects people who are bisexual, homosexual or lesbian and people who choose to abstain from sex.	Men who have sex with men are seen negatively by society (gender).	The He-man gender-version of a male socially permits him to demonstrate his power by having pre marital and extramarital relationships, while society would never condone a woman if she did so.
Men and women can manipulate gender-based ideas and behaviour for their own benefit, presumably without harming anyone but at the same time reinforcing stereotypes.	Women are weak and men are strong.	Women are viewed as objects of sexual pleasure, putting her at risk for HIV infection and sexual abuse.
It is difficult to be 100% gender-sensitive; almost all of us are influenced by gender in our ideas and actions.	If a male is infected with HIV, he is seen as immoral. If a female is infected with HIV she is seen as a victim.	Women are not allowed to demand the use of a condom, making her more susceptible to HIV infection. Women's dependence on men's decision-making powers makes her susceptible to HIV infection.

Solve the riddle given below to understand this statement

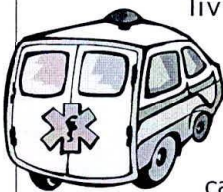
### Riddle

A nine-year-old boy was very happy when his father had a day off. He asked his father whether they could go out for a ride. The father was also extremely excited at spending time with his son. They got into their green dinky car and drove away. The father drove fast. The son got anxious and said, "Daddy, don't go so fast, we will have an accident." The father replied, "Let's enjoy, son." He continued driving even faster.



saw that the father was instantaneously dead with the steering wheel pierced into his ribs. The boy was bleeding through his ear.

They met with an accident! A crowd immediately gathered. Luckily the car had dashed against a wall of a famous neuro-surgery hospital in which there was a world-renowned neuro-surgeon. The hospital had taught the community how to save lives in emergency situations. The moment the crowd heard the bang they rushed to the car. Looking in, they



Recognising the bleeding as a sign of head injury, they immediately transferred him to the emergency of the hospital. The emergency team quickly summoned the famous neuro-surgeon to operate on the boy. The nurses shaved his unconscious head. The boy was wheeled to the operation theatre, where the nurse had all the instruments ready for surgery.

The famous neuro-surgeon walked into the operation theatre, looked at the boy and walked away saying, "I cannot operate. This is MY SON!"



**HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE? WRITE ALL YOUR ANSWERS HERE.**

\*The answer to this riddle is somewhere in the book. You have to read the book to find the answers!!!



### ***How does our community view girls/ women?***

Some will say: they should be caring, gentle, passive, respectful and obedient; or be responsible for domestic chores and child care. Speak and dress modestly, please and obey men, control their sexuality, behave responsibly and not show their sexual feelings.

### ***What does our community say about men/ boys?***

They may say, men / boys make important family decisions, for example about house expenditure, how many children to have, marry and provide for their family, be strong, not to show their emotions, take the lead in relationships and in sex.

What do you think would happen if they interchanged the roles? Would our community accept these reversals? Would your friends agree? Would you accept them yourself?

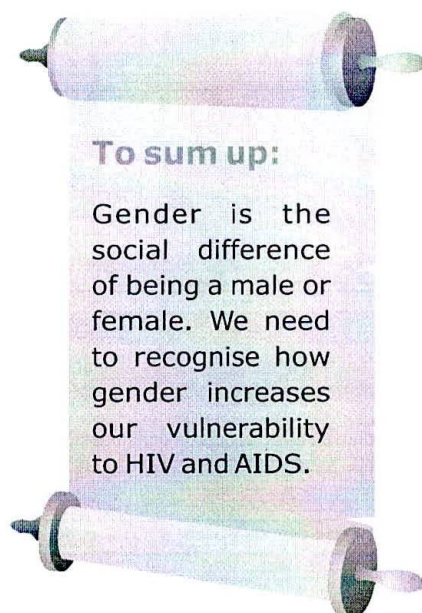
### ***What does gender have to do with HIV?***

Traditional gender roles make both men and women vulnerable to HIV in the following ways:

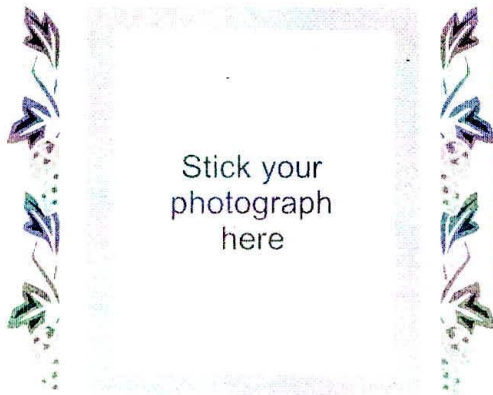
- ☐ Boys are expected to show off their manliness and indulge in pre marital sex so that “practice will make them perfect” by the time they are married.
- ☐ Men will decide on what day or time they want to have sex; and if their wife is either pregnant or sick, it does not matter, they will find some “other” woman - it’s their right as a man to satisfy themselves.
- ☐ Women cannot negotiate when to have sex or how many children they want.

- ☞ Women are not expected to show their sexual feelings as they will be considered promiscuous.
- ☞ Women cannot say 'no' because they must be obedient.
- ☞ Women cannot demand condom use by their husbands even if they know their husbands have been unfaithful.

Don't you think that all these will make a person vulnerable to HIV infection? Even if you know the methods of prevention but cannot practise them because you will not be allowed to, then you are at risk.

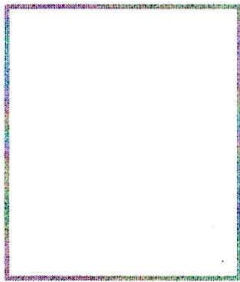


### Commitment 3

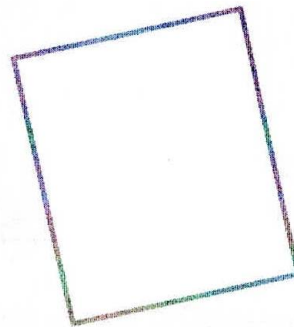
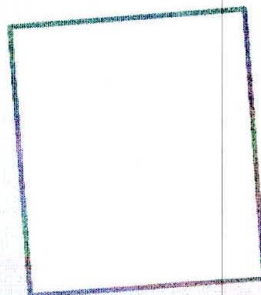
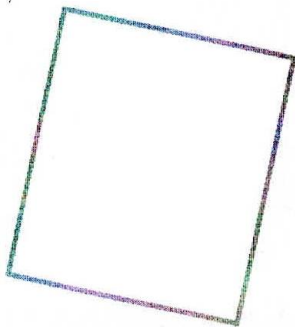
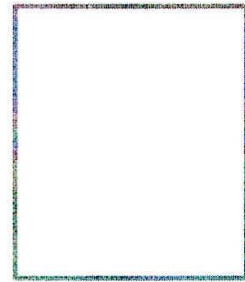


*I commit myself to dealing  
healthily with  
socio-cultural influences.*

Sign

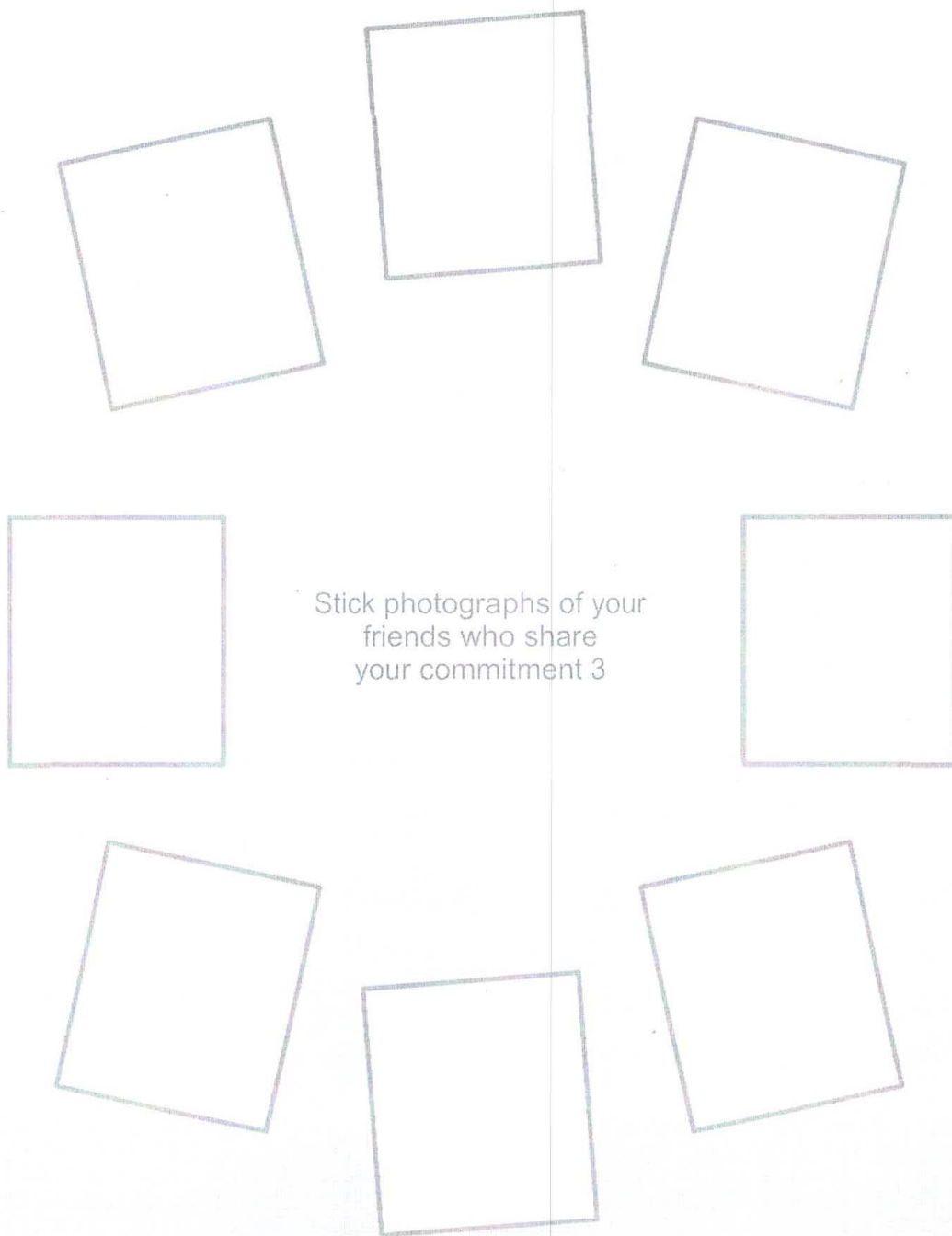


Stick photographs of your  
friends who share  
your commitment 3





## My notes for dealing healthily with socio-cultural influences



# I VALUE MYSELF

Self worth and self esteem

4





Now that we have made three commitments, let's take the fourth commitment to CELEBRATE LIFE....

Here is an interesting exercise you can do when you are free.

- ☐ This is an exercise to evaluate yourself truthfully without discussing your ideas with others. Anyway, you can use a pencil so that you can rub off what you have written to keep your thoughts private.
- ☐ Place a tick mark alongside to express how you rate that part of your body. You could feel excellent about that part, just ok about it or not good at all. Whatever the answer, let it be an honest one.

Sl No.	Particulars	Excellent or beautiful	OK	Not good or ugly
1	Hair			
2	Face (eyes, nose, ears)			
3	Hand			
4	Skin (complexion and colour )			
5	Figure (height, weight & shape)			
6	Stomach			
7	Waist			
8	Chest for men and breasts for women			
9	Penis for men and vagina for women			
10	Thighs			
11	Bravery			
12	Intelligence			
13	Commitment			
14	Responsibility			
15	Confidence			
	<b>Total</b>			

Then total each column. Remember, what you have ticked is personal and confidential.

### Explanation

What is your total count in the "Excellent" column? Is it 15? Or less?

If you have marked all 15 in the "Excellent" column, you have an extremely positive self esteem. Keep it up! Remember you are beautiful, every part of you!!

If you haven't marked all excellent, then read on: very often, we distance ourselves from our real self. This internal separation begins from childhood.



**At 9 months to a year** - an experience of getting spanked, when the baby touches his or her genitals in the normal process of discovering his or her body. If the genitals were not covered people would tease saying, "Shame!"

This small child slowly learns that this part of his/her body is not beautiful.

In truth, our genitals are the organs that give us pleasure and through which a new life is born. It is very natural and normal and there is no need to be ashamed of it. Shame of body is a social norm taught to us.

**At 3-5 years** - an experience or experiences of hearing your parents or teachers or any elder saying, "Hurry up, lazy children! Is this how you write? Look at this alphabet? Is it going to heaven? How many times have I told you to write neatly?" and so on! In truth, handwriting is a skill that needs fine muscle coordination, which a child develops slowly with practice around the age of six.

**Even now:** hearing your friends or near and dear ones say

"What a boy you are...boys don't cry!"

"You must be a tom-boy to want to climb trees."

"Such a terribly long nose you have!"

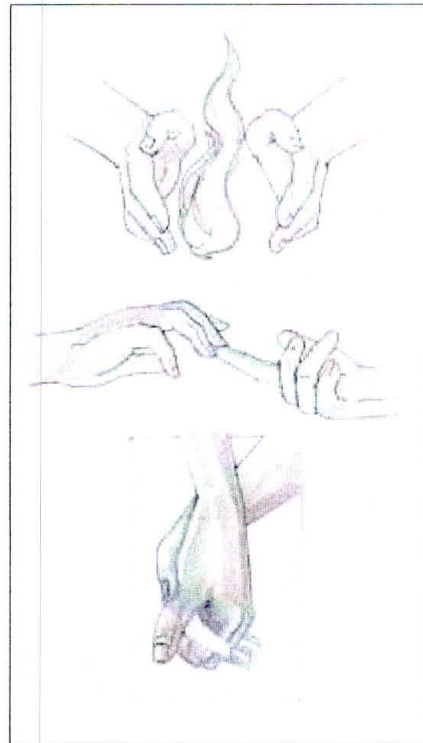
"Better to cover your ugly face with a beard

**THE ACTUAL TRUTH: YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL!**

Look at your beauty and goodness within. Everything in nature is unique and beautiful. Why do we not agree with that? Every part of our body is made BEAUTIFUL.

Take your hands for example and think of what it does for you. It can pick up things, feel hot / cold, can sense pain, can give pleasure, and coordinate with your eyes, brain and muscles. It is more efficient and fascinating than the latest new model mobile phone that we desire!! Think of every part of your body. It is precious. More precious than the most precious thing you own.

Learn to respect your self – physical self by remaining fit and eating nutritious food; and emotional self by respecting your thoughts and feelings.

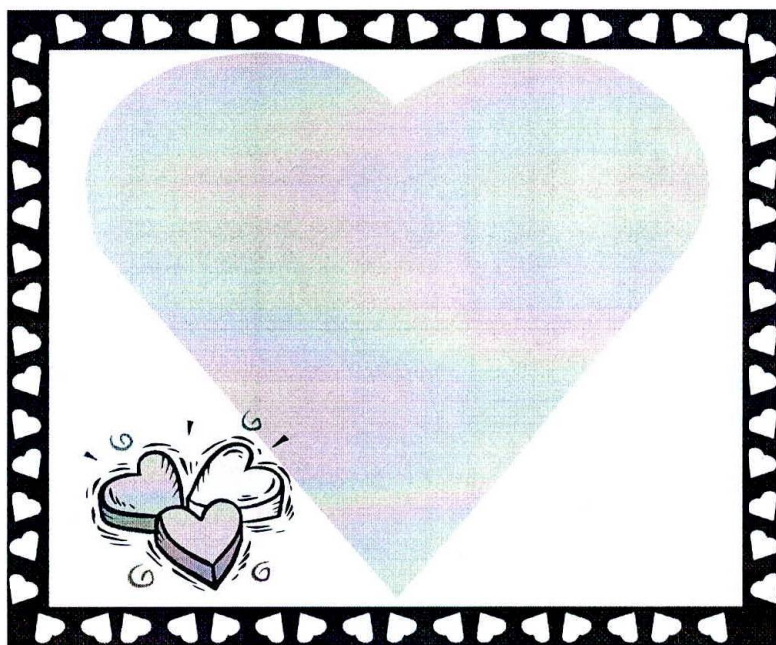




It is only when we respect our body that we avoid risky behaviours such as use of tobacco, intravenous drug use, consuming alcohol, etc.

An important factor in preventing HIV infection is the ability to value our bodies as precious. Give yourself time to think about this and believe you are unique and precious. In your book there is a heart. We want you to put your fingerprint there when you can. No one in the world has a fingerprint like yours. You are that unique. Believe it!

Unless we value ourselves as beautiful, how can we protect our body? How can we truly say NO or make safe choices? Set our own boundaries for preventing HIV and AIDS? This is possible only when we value our bodies as unique, beautiful and precious.

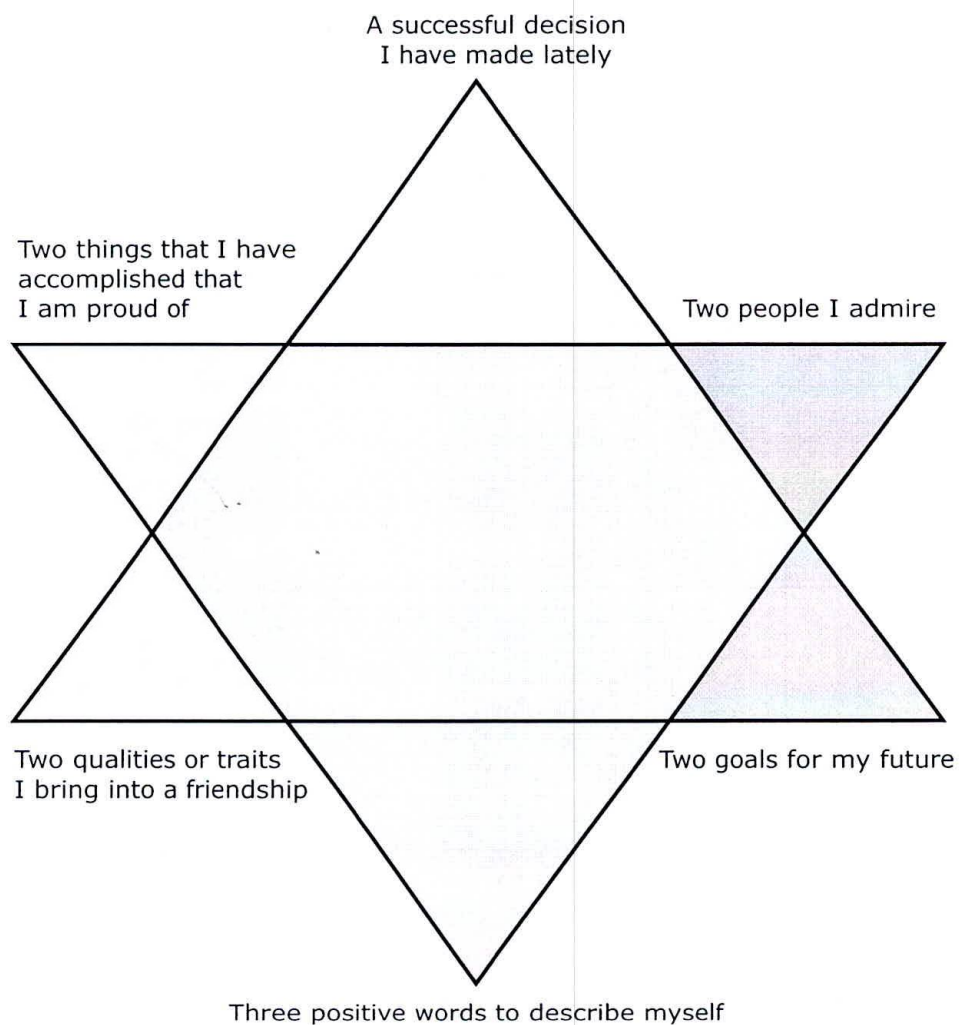


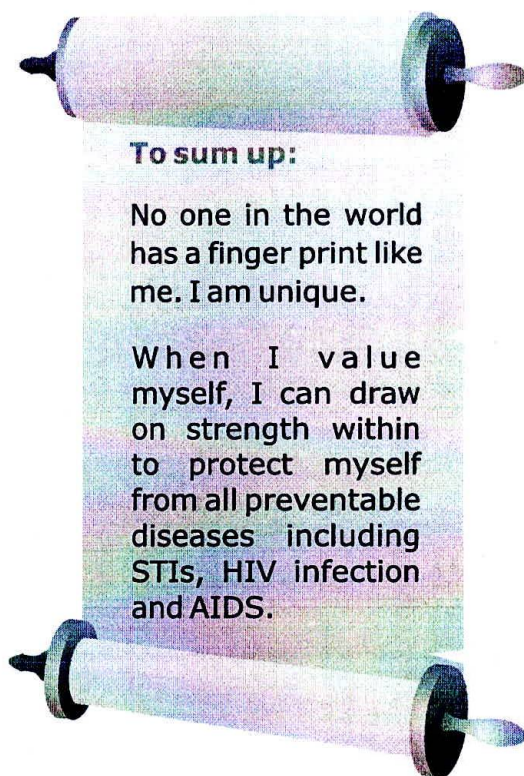
I am unique, handsome and precious !!

FILL IN THE SELF ESTEEM STAR BELOW.

In the centre, put your picture or your name in big letters. Then complete the 6 statements in each of the surrounding triangles.

### MY SELF ESTEEM STAR





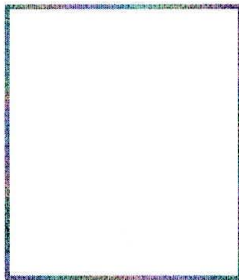
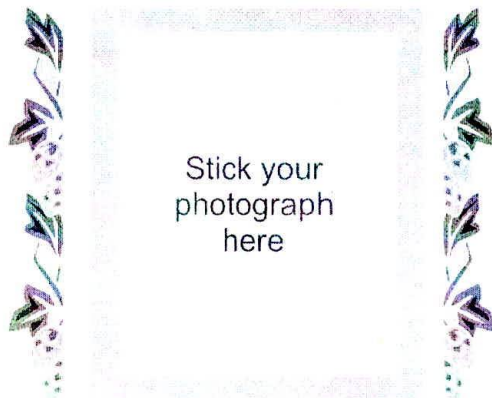
**To sum up:**

No one in the world  
has a finger print like  
me. I am unique.

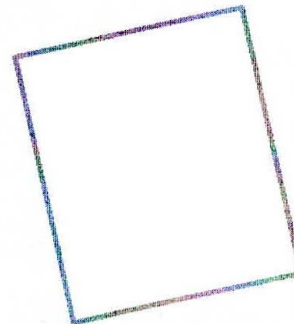
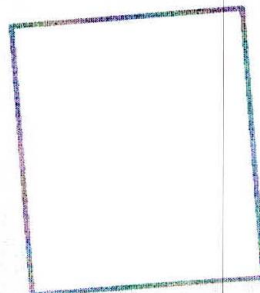
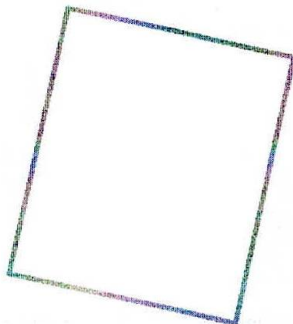
When I value  
myself, I can draw  
on strength within  
to protect myself  
from all preventable  
diseases including  
STIs, HIV infection  
and AIDS.



## Commitment 4



Stick photographs of your  
friends who share  
your commitment 4



## My notes for valuing myself

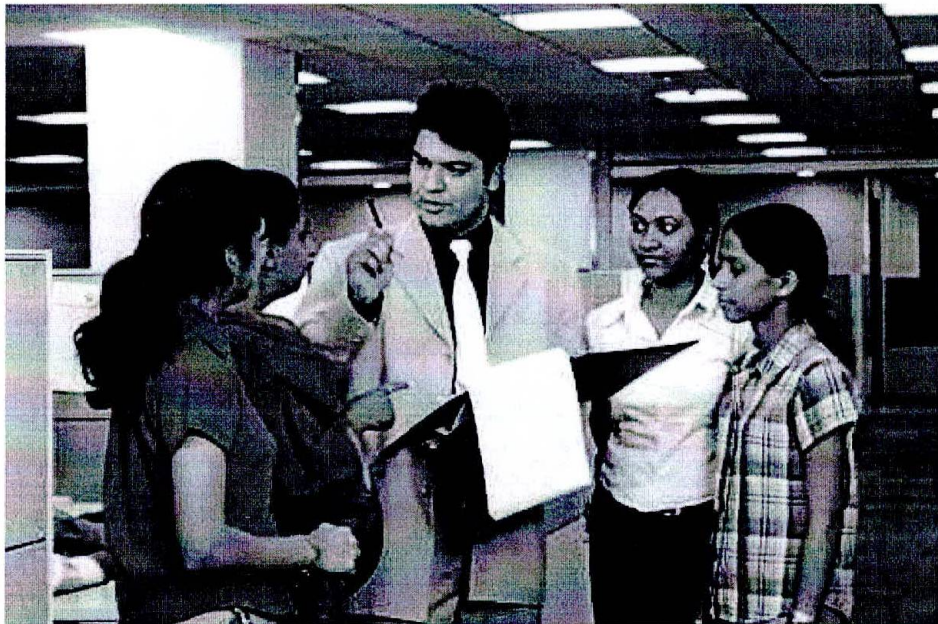
## My notes for valuing myself



# **I HAVE SET MY BOUNDARIES**

Reducing vulnerability to HIV and other  
risky situations

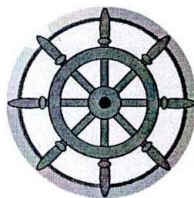
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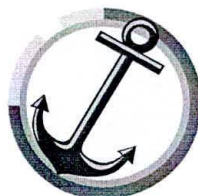
Since you are unique and precious, you need to celebrate life and protect yourself. One important way to do this is to first understand the available options or choices as well as to know what limits you set for yourself. Does this sound confusing? Simply put, you are responsible for the decisions you make. Out there in the big wide world there are many options. If you have learnt how to respect yourself, you will be able to make the appropriate choices in a logical manner, and stick to them. So how do you go about making the right choice and still protect yourself?



Look at each option.  
Weigh the pros and cons of each.



Set a boundary limit for  
the option you select.



Respect that boundary and  
guard it with your life.

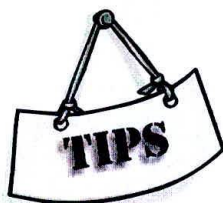
**A boundary is a limit I draw up for myself, which helps me value my personhood, my freedom and my choices. This limit or edge defines me as separate from other people.**

***My boundary is violated*** when anyone trespasses and tries to control my feelings, attitudes, behaviour, choices and values.



**FACT:**

If we do not set our own BOUNDARIES, others will set them for us. Setting healthy boundaries for yourself shows that you care for yourself, treasure yourself and protect yourself from risky situations.

**Tips to set healthy boundaries:**

Respect others' boundaries as you respect yours.

If you are not comfortable when others touch you, tell them openly and move away if necessary.

Form or join a group or club to protect from negative peer pressure.

Debate issues related to HIV and AIDS and your perceived risk when someone takes advantage of you.

**Your boundaries are challenged when:**

You are being taken advantage of.

Someone is being overly helpful and decides for you.

Someone you love is looking at you as an object of pleasure or as a showpiece.

Someone wants you to be different according to his/her wish.



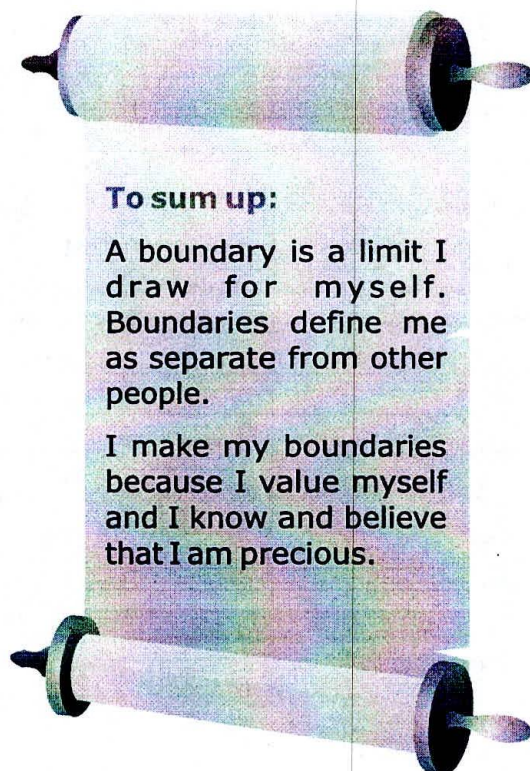
**Start preparing your own boundaries for healthy relationships today**

Questions you may have	Tips for choosing healthy boundaries
Should I tell her / him all my secrets?	Consider the person's level of interest and caring before opening up to him / her.
Should I talk intimately in the beginning?	Try not to overwhelm them in the beginning. It is better to go step by step. First be sure you are being trusted as much as you trust.
I have fallen in love with a new acquaintance* ? What do I do?  <small>* someone you have just met and do not know well.</small>	Love needs time to develop. Stay in touch with your feelings, it's okay to feel attracted. First plan to get to know the person better before declaring to the person that you are 'falling in love'.
Should I act on my first sexual impulse?	Ask yourself, "Will I feel good about myself later?" Will it be good for me now and in the long run? Remember to value yourself and respect your feelings before making a decision.
What do I do when someone wants to get too close to me?	Be wary of someone who wants to get too close too soon. Are you ready for this? Once they get close, it is difficult to go backwards, both physically and emotionally.
Should I accept food / gift / touch or sex?	If you are sure you are happy to receive what is being offered, and confident that the consequences are safe, then you can make your decision. If not, then stop and decide.

**Some boundaries I have decided to keep  
to protect myself from HIV infection.**

		<b>If 'YES' tick the appropriate column</b>				
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Yes / no</b>	<b>With person whom I love</b>	<b>With close friends</b>	<b>With family</b>	<b>With general friends</b>	<b>With others / anyone</b>
Going for picnics without supervision						
Playing games						
Sharing personal thoughts						
Going for parties / movies						
Drinking alcohol						
Close dancing						
Kissing						
Having sex						
Having sex with condoms						

Share your boundaries with your friends close to you.  
Strengthen your boundaries by adding some more actions at the space given above.



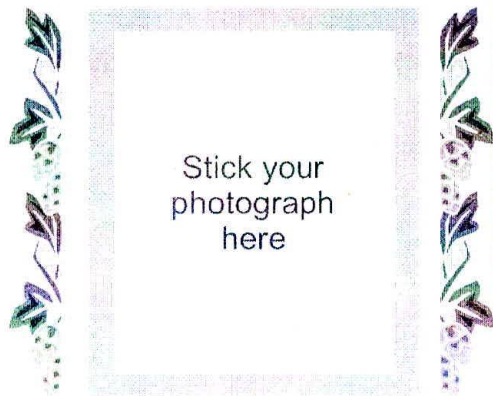
**To sum up:**

A boundary is a limit I  
draw for myself.  
Boundaries define me  
as separate from other  
people.

I make my boundaries  
because I value myself  
and I know and believe  
that I am precious.



## Commitment 5

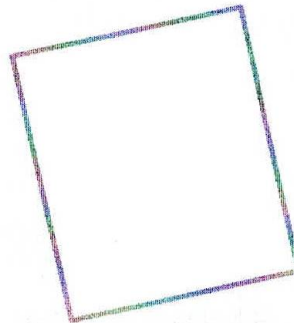
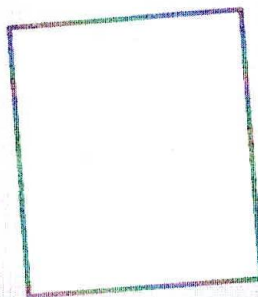
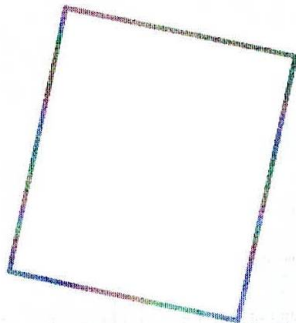
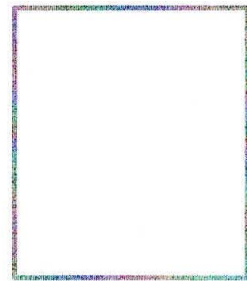


*I commit myself to setting  
and  
keeping my boundaries*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sign



Stick photographs of your  
friends who share  
your commitment 5

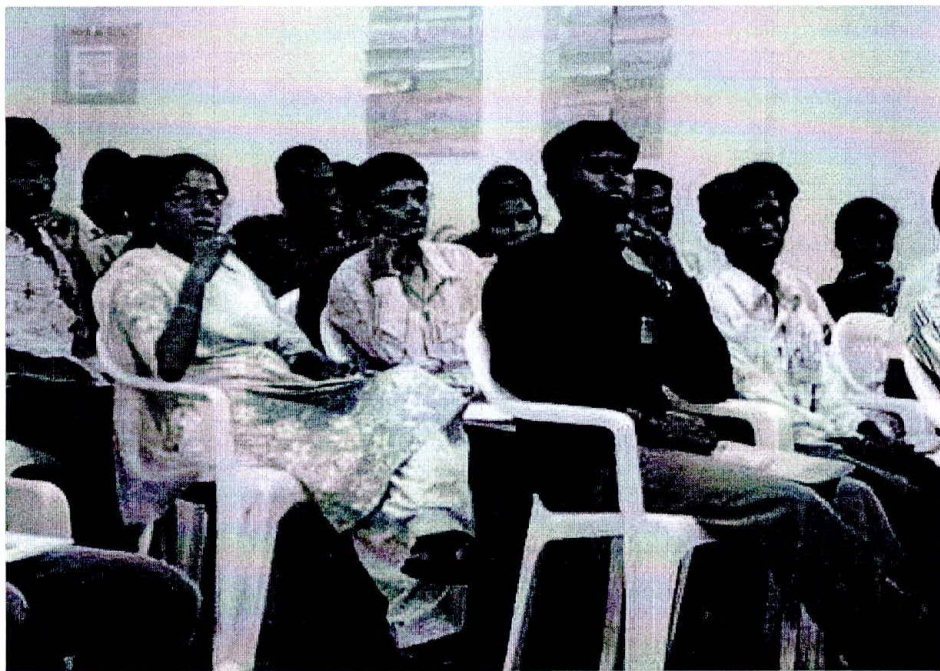


## My notes for setting and keeping my boundaries

# I FACE CHALLENGES WITH COURAGE

Saying 'No' assertively

6





We've come half way through, making five commitments so far to Celebrate Life.

*What else can you learn to help you face vulnerable situations? Sometimes, we may value ourselves, and set appropriate boundaries (Commitments 4 and 5), but give in when finally faced with a difficult situation.*

*How does one stay strong and learn to say 'No' without hurting others and without compromising with oneself?*

**Have you had any of these thoughts in the recent past?**

- ☐ I find it hard to manage my mood swings.
- ☐ I feel powerless when I am with the person I love.
- ☐ I feel I must have sex to show how modern I am.
- ☐ I feel I am worthless. I have not set any boundaries for myself.
- ☐ I have a sore in my private parts; but am too shy to seek treatment for it.
- ☐ I am not bold enough to question a doctor when he / she uses an unsterile syringe for injection.

If you have answered YES to any of the above statements then you need to realise that you have been exposed to a risky situation. How can you face these risks with courage? Remember you are precious and unique. It is hard to manage feelings but we can learn to SAY 'NO' ASSERTIVELY! What does assertiveness mean?

Fill in the dictionary meaning of 'assertive' here

Now fill in what **you understood** about the meaning of being 'assertive':

Being 'assertive' is healthy. There are two other ways you could react, both of which are not healthy. They are by being aggressive (angry and abusive) or being submissive (passive and giving in). Either way, you either hurt someone or you compromise yourself.

### TIPS FOR BEING ASSERTIVE - PRACTISE HOW TO SAY 'NO'

You can say NO by being assertive and still be accepted by your friends. Assertively saying NO is when you are able to express yourself honestly and feel comfortable about it. It is your ability to exercise personal rights without insulting, embarrassing, hurting or degrading another.

#### Self test

Imagine a situation like this - Someone you like invites you to an all-night party; but you do not want to be alone with him/her.

*Match the responses given below with one of these three choices:*

a) Aggressively 'No'; b) Submissively 'No'; c) Assertively 'No'

- 1) "I don't want to go out today. Maybe you can join our gang of friends for that show we are going for next week?"
- 2) "I don't feel comfortable. But, it's alright, I will come with you."
- 3) "How dare you ask me? You really are cheap to think I will come out with you! I have my limits. How dare you!! You @!! @@!"

Answer: 1c. 2b. 3a.

*Being assertive is a way to respect yourself and your friend.*

More tips on how you can say 'No' and still have your true friends.

**1**

**Polite refusal**

**E.g.** Can I get you a drink (whisky)?  
**Answer:** "No thanks".

**2**

**A broken record answer**

**E.g.** Come, let's have a smoke.  
**Answer:** "No thanks."  
Come on! Don't be a chicken, try it!  
"No thanks."

**3**

**Give an alternative**

Suggest an action that gets you out of the situation. Let it be positive and realistic.  
**E.g.** Let's go upstairs to my room.  
**Answer:** "I'd rather stay here and watch T.V."

**4**

**Walk away**

**E.g.** Hey, do you want to have a drink?  
**Answer:** "No", and walk away immediately.

**5**

Say or do something that breaks the mood or cools down the situation or give you more time to think.

**6**

**Reverse the pressure**

**E.g.** Let's go upstairs to my room.  
**Answer:** "I don't think you heard what I said. Were you not listening?"

**7**

**Do not take responsibility for others' feelings**

**E.g.** Do it for my sake. It will make me happy.  
**Answer:** "I am not responsible for the way you feel. Only you are!"

**9**

**Strength in numbers**

Hang around with people, who support your decision **not** to use drugs, etc.  
**E.g.** If a new acquaintance asks you out on a date, it would be wiser to go out in a group (if you choose to go).

**8**

**Avoid the situation**

If you know that certain situations or people could pressurise you into doing things you do not want to do, just stay away.

**10**

**Give a reason**

**E.g.** Give me a kiss  
**Answer:** Not just now, let's play with our friends there.



When you are totally, truly and completely attracted to someone you choose from the following options:

### **Become 'friends'**

You can choose not to tell the person you like him/her. Before you choose to express your feelings of attraction, you can choose to be friends with the person. Meet as you would a friend. Keep the level and depth of communication free with no obligations on either side.

### **Build a foundation for a strong and successful romantic relationship**

A strong romantic relationship begins with respecting yourself and the person you like. Three elements go into making a relationship romantically successful. They are

- ☞ Keeping communication honest and saying what you want, so there will be no room for doubt.
- ☞ Taking time to build the relationship. Remember this is another unique, precious person! Take time to find out more about the person, enjoying traits as well as affable characteristics. You are not in this relationship to be a judge of whether that person is good or bad. Instead of interpreting every action by your own, clarify and communicate. Talking and showing that you want to keep a good relationship going helps
- ☞ Plan the future of the relationship through talking and communicating honestly about what you want and listening attentively to find a path agreeable to both.

### **Choose abstinence**

Abstinence can be a sign of real emotional maturity and integrity. It requires courage, maturity and honesty to resist the pressure of

someone you love in order to make a decision consistent with the boundaries you have set for yourself. Abstinence is 100% safe from sexual transmission of HIV infection and STIs.

Abstinence shows you can resist peer pressure. If you do love someone, you may find that delaying sexual intercourse contributes in a positive way to your relationship. You have time then to develop a deeper friendship. Abstaining can be the true test of love.

### **Going one step further??**

**Scenario #1:** You are thinking about having sex but not comfortable talking about it with the person you are attracted to.

**Solution:** Having sex is an intimate experience. If you can't talk about it, how are you going to feel comfortable doing it? Maybe one of you thinks that talking about sex kills the mood or that sex should just happen naturally when the moment is right. Nothing can be more wrong! Talking about sex is one of the best ways to reduce your anxiety and risk. That's because talking about sex can help build trust and respect between you both. Most importantly, it helps you plan ahead so that if you do decide to have sex, you can establish your sexual boundaries together and you can decide how you are going to protect yourselves against HIV infection and STIs. Remember you do value and love yourself too.

**Scenario #2:** You decide that the time in your relationship is right for you to have sexual intercourse. You decide on using condoms, but your partner does not want to use a condom.

**Solution:** Some people will use a million excuses to avoid using condoms so you'd better be armed with a snappy reply. If she says, "It takes away the romance," you could say, "So could an STI." If he says, "I can't feel anything with a condom," tell him, "You'll feel even less if you

don't use one because we won't be having sex." If she swears she won't give you any diseases, tell her it's nothing personal but you want to make sure both of you stay healthy. The bottom line: You've done well so far. You've kept your boundaries that you set for yourself. You know how precious you are. You have the choice to say, "No condom, no sex."

**Scenario #3:** You've already had sexual intercourse together but now you realise that it was just too soon for you and you don't want it to happen again.

**Solution:** It's not too late to stop. Keep in mind that just because you've done it once doesn't mean you have to do it again. It's okay to say "no" at any time, regardless of what you've done in the past. The key is to be firm and clear about how you're feeling and what your boundaries are. If your partner tries to push the issue, stand your ground. Anyone worth your time and affection should respect that you want to slow things down.



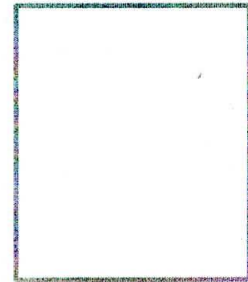


## Commitment 6

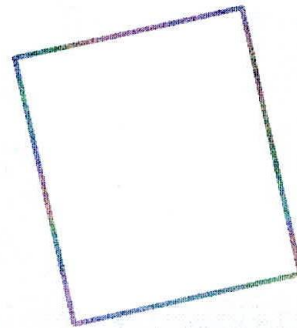
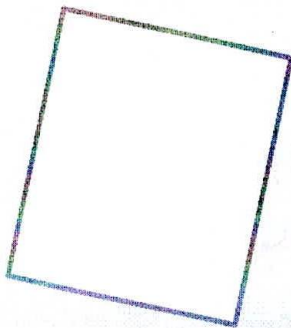


*I commit myself to facing challenges with courage*

Sign



Stick photographs of your friends who share your commitment 6



**My notes for facing challenges with courage**

Even though our major focus in college is academics, we also want to enjoy our lives. Unfortunately, there are situations of stress, conflict and peer pressure. Our independent "adolescent" selves want to but cannot handle some of these pressures and conflicts.

There is a way out. We need to learn a few life skills that can help us cope with various circumstances. The World Health Organisation has suggested ten minimum life skills that everyone needs to gain to enjoy life healthily.

### **What are Life Skills?**

They are abilities needed by an individual to cope with the problems and demands of daily life.

**Life Skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.**

*World Health Organisation*

### **How can these Life Skills help you?**

They have helped other young people in the following ways:

- ▣ Enabled them to have an honest and truthful self awareness.
- ▣ Helped them gain psycho-social capacity and achieve holistic self development.
- ▣ Allowed them to develop healthy self-image and establish appropriate relationships with other people, community and the environment.
- ▣ Empowered adolescents to think critically and make effective decisions.
- ▣ Strengthened an individual's capacity to do what one knows is healthy.

Wouldn't you like to know what these magic Life Skills are all about?  
Read on.



### **Life Skill 1: Empathy**

**Definition:** The process of understanding and caring about the needs, desires and feelings of other people.

**Explanation:** The ability to see things from the perspective of others, and understand what others are going through (putting yourself in their shoes).

**Example:** *Jyoti invited everyone to her home to celebrate her achieving first class in exams and all had agreed, except Shanti. You found out that she had failed in maths, while the others had passed. While all the others called her a spoil sport, you stood up for her and told others to cool off. You used the skill of empathy because you were able to understand her feelings and what she was going through.*

### **Life Skill 2: Problem Solving**

**Definition:** The ability to develop solutions for internal or interpersonal problems and conflicts.

**Explanation:** The capability to have a complete picture of the problems, by analysing the root causes of the problems, and coming up with an objective assessment of related issues and concerns, helps with problem solving.

### **Life Skill 3: Interpersonal Relationship (IPR)**

**Definition:** Relationships with parents, siblings, friends and peers, future partners and all the other people that a young person comes in contact with as he or she develops into an adult.

**Explanation:** The depth and values you build in your relationships with all those around you, especially family and friends is the foundation for good IPR, which help you grow to your full potential.

## **Life Skill 4: Effective Communication**

**Definition:** The ability to express ourselves, both verbally and non-verbally in ways that are appropriate to our cultures and situations.

**Explanation:** Effective communication involves the sharing or exchange of thoughts and feelings and entails openness and readiness to share one's ideas, desires, needs and fears with other people. It means not only being able to express opinions and desires, but also our needs and fears. It involves the skill to ask for advice and help in times of need. Learning to speak effectively is useful to get one's way anywhere, anytime.

## **Life Skill 5: Creative Thinking**

**Definition:** The ability to see beyond the actual and direct experiences.

**Explanation:** The ability to think outside the box encourages an individual to ask important questions such as: 'What are the options I have? What are the implications or possible results of each option? Do these options include the courses of actions that I really want?'

Creative thinking is the ability to challenge, which is one of the first steps in lateral thinking. It is questioning the process of thinking by asking *"Can I look at this in another way? Or differently?"*

## **Life Skill 6: Critical Thinking**

**Definition:** The ability to study one's surroundings and experiences objectively.

**Explanation:** The ability and willingness to question the way things are, and to not readily accept things at face value, helps one think of the pros and cons before making a decision.

## **Life Skill 7: Stress Management**

**Definition:** The ability to shorten the length of time that one experiences stress and negative emotions, and minimise their adverse effects.

**Explanation:** It is the ability to understand the cause and learn how to deal with effects such as physical (headaches, high blood pressure, excessive sweating, etc.), emotional (anger, crying, shouting, etc.) and social (fights, verbal abuse, etc.) challenges. Managing stress involves reducing these effects through special techniques such as slow breathing, rationalisation, physically distancing oneself from the situation, talking to others, etc.

## **Life Skill 8: Self Awareness**

**Definition:** The knowledge and understanding of one's self.

**Explanation:** The ability to have a clear picture of one's strengths and weaknesses, values and attitudes toward life, needs and desires, and aspirations in life. It is also the ability to accept ourselves as we are.

## **Life Skill 9: Decision Making**

**Definition:** The ability to effectively use creative and critical thinking in determining the options or courses of actions to follow.

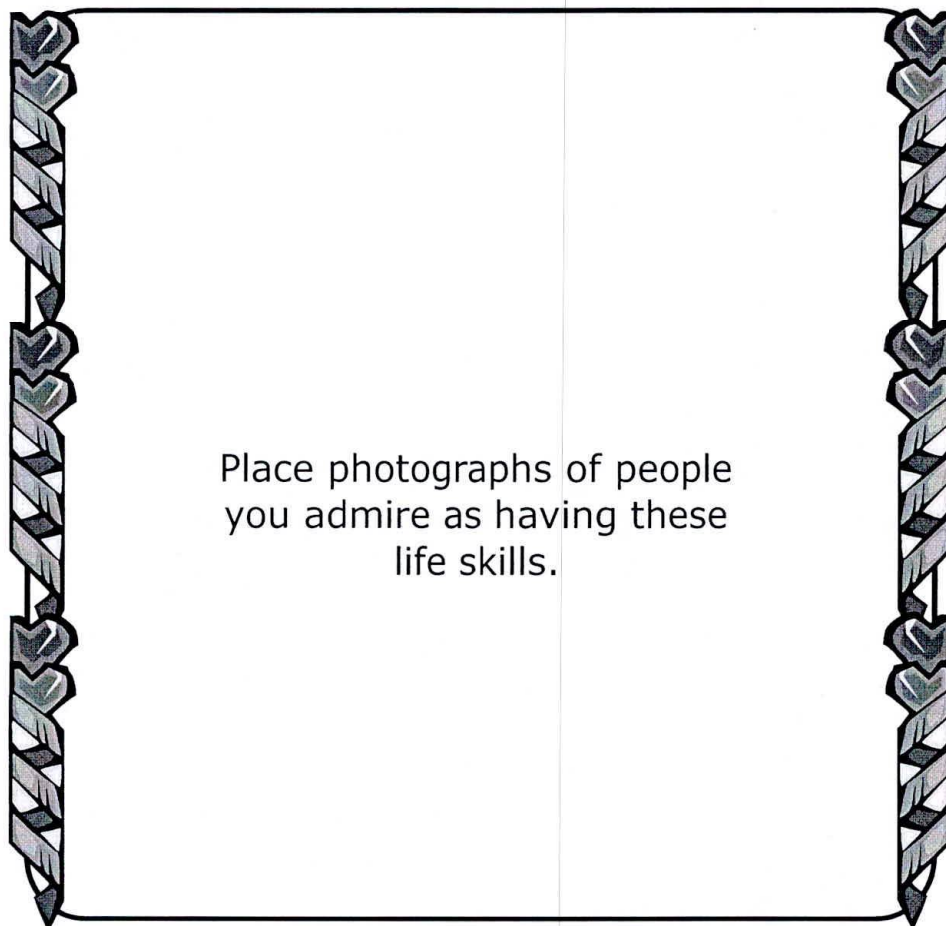
**Explanation:** The capability to analyse the issues that need to be decided on to weigh the pros and cons of each option; to choose the course or courses of actions based on what the individual believes to be the best of all the possible choices.



## **Life Skills 10: Emotions Management**

**Definition:** Ability of the individual to rise above the confusion brought about by emotions and feelings.

**Explanation:** Ability to maintain self-control and rationality despite the psychological problems caused by emotional changes and stress, is a life skill that can help us truly to Celebrate Life.



Place photographs of people  
you admire as having these  
life skills.

**Let's see if you understand how to apply these skills in everyday situations:**

Listed below are different situations many young people might come across. How would you address each situation, and specify which Life Skill is being used to do so. More than one Life Skill can be used for each situation.

Sl. No.	Situation	Possible action	Life Skill
1	Your exams are tomorrow and there is a great movie on TV tonight.		
2	Your friend is forcing you to go alone for a movie with him / her.		
3	Your classmates have been worrying you to come out for a drink to the pub for over a week and now they are calling you a sissy.		
4	You are angry because your parents punished you for coming home late without waiting for an explanation.		
5	Write down a situation you often come across		

Now work it out ...

Fill in the blank lines, using clear 'No' statements, alternative actions and delay tactics.

**You're at a party with someone you have gone out with a few times. You really like this person. Your friends already see you both as a 'pair'. The party is at a friend's house whose parents are gone. A lot of people are getting high and some couples are leaving – probably to have sex. You don't want to get high or have sex and you don't want to leave the party.**

Your "pair": Let's get out of here so we can be alone. It's too crowded.

You: \_\_\_\_\_

Your "pair": I just want to be alone with you. This is our chance.

You: \_\_\_\_\_

Your "pair": C'mon, I really want us to be alone.

You: \_\_\_\_\_

Your "pair": I've been looking forward to this night with you. Let's make it special.

You: \_\_\_\_\_

What are the Life Skills you put into practice while getting your answers? List them out.

\_\_\_\_\_



## USE YOUR BODY TO SHOW YOU MEAN 'NO'

Use a strong firm voice.

Throw your hands up in HANDS OFF action. Sit up or stand up stiffly like a soldier does at attention pose and march away from the person.

Use gestures to help you say NO with your hand and arm movements.

Keep your face serious and no matter how hard, maintain eye contact when you say 'NO'.

At times it will be necessary to physically fight back. Use your strength to push away and walk/run away.



### Reema's story



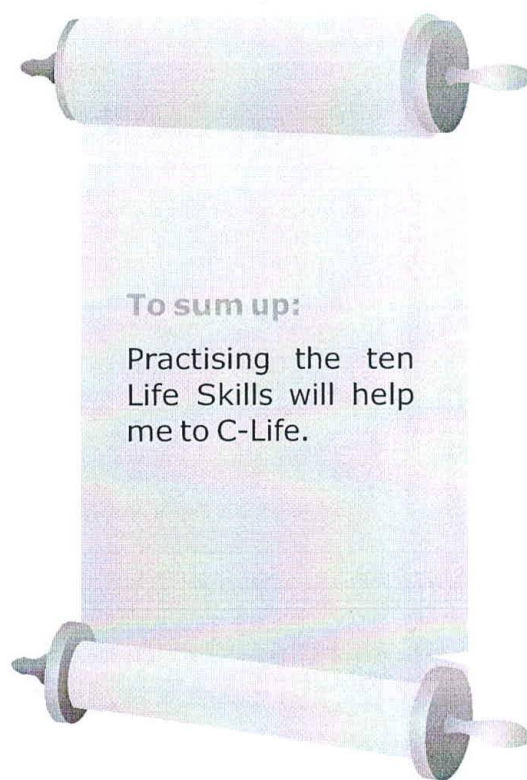
Reema (19), returned from college agitated that day. She walked straight into the kitchen to see her mother baking a cake.

She started unloading her pent-up feelings to her mother, "Ma, I just cannot manage. Today all my friends ignored me and the lecturer scolded me and... and you are spending more time with Kiran than with me. It's just too much."

Her mother continued to make the cake and Reema said, "Are you making the chocolate cake now?" Her mother replied, "Yes. Would you like to taste some of this maida?" Shocked, Reema answered, "Even you are stressing me out. Maida!"

"Okay," said the mother, "Would you like some of this raw egg?" "Mom", Reema exclaimed in desperation, "What's wrong with you?" "Sugar alone?" mom continued.

Reema got off the kitchen chair and began walking towards the door in a huff. "Wait" said her mother, and continued, " By itself, the maida, the egg or the sugar does not taste good. But when it is blended and baked for a particular period, don't you love it?" "Yes", said Reema. "Well", said her mother, "In the same way, these problems you face are the special ways by which you are getting baked to become that ideal young woman you will be. Think about that, okay?" Reema smiled. She appreciated her mother's wisdom in explaining her stressful day.



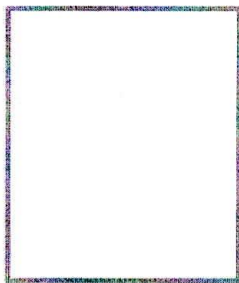


## Commitment 7

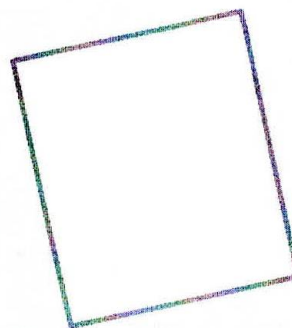
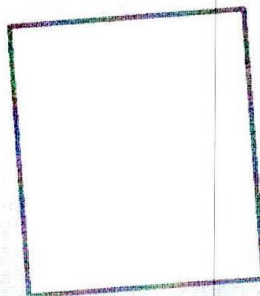
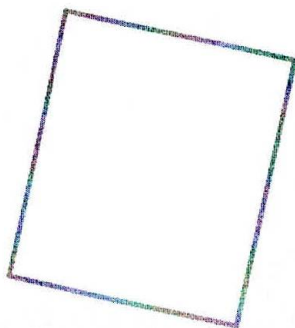
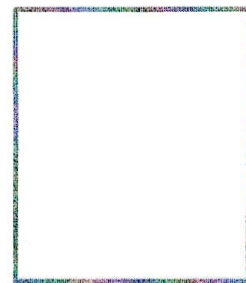


*I commit myself to  
developing Life Skills  
to prevent HIV infection*

Sign



Stick photographs of your  
friends who share  
your commitment 7



## This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with very faint, evenly spaced horizontal lines running across its entire width. The lines are light gray or blue, typical of standard notebook paper. There is no handwriting, printed text, or other markings on the page.

**My notes for developing Life Skills to protect myself from HIV infection**

[illegible]



# I CARE ABOUT EVERYONE

Reducing stigma and discrimination

8



Stigma is a situation where people are distanced for reasons perceived rightly or wrongly in a context. People living with HIV infection face stigma.

#### **Few examples of stigma & discrimination**

"I was thrown out of my house even though I got infected with HIV by my now deceased husband."

"I feel awful...they have taken away my children from me."

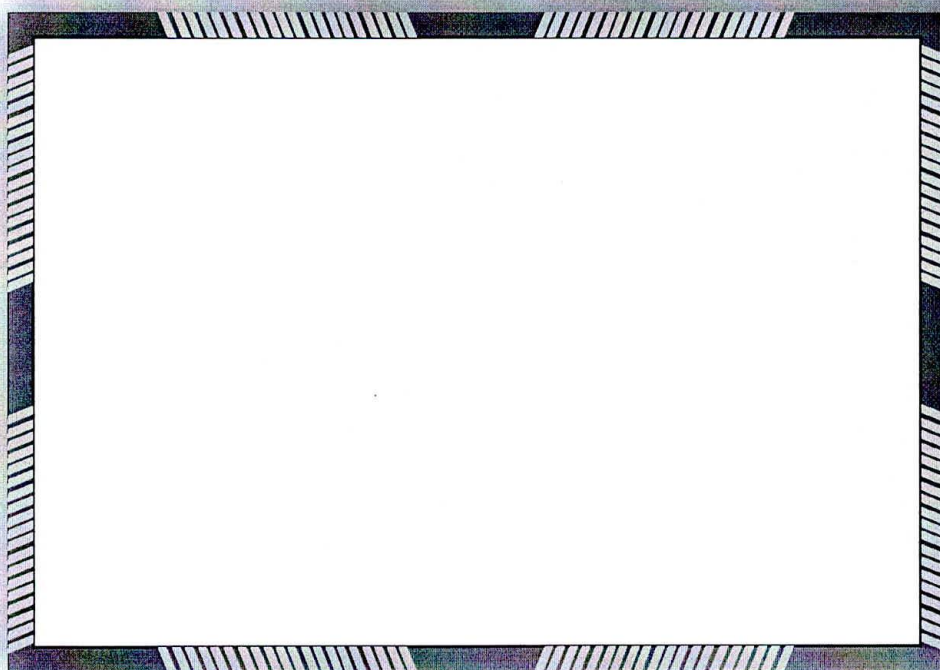
"Don't use our plates. Yours are kept separately."

"Pack your bags and leave. There is no work for you here."

Let's understand why there is no need for people living with HIV infection to be treated so badly. We do know that staying in the same house, looking after their children, working side by side with them, using the same toilet or going with them to the same college does not spread HIV infection. People do think that those with HIV infection are 'bad', 'promiscuous'. This is not true. Any person is at a risk of getting HIV infection.

You can do your bit too to let others know. Ignorance increases stigmatising practices. You can inform others that stigma kills people faster than HIV infection.

Activity: First get some photographs of you, your near and dear ones and stick them on this page:

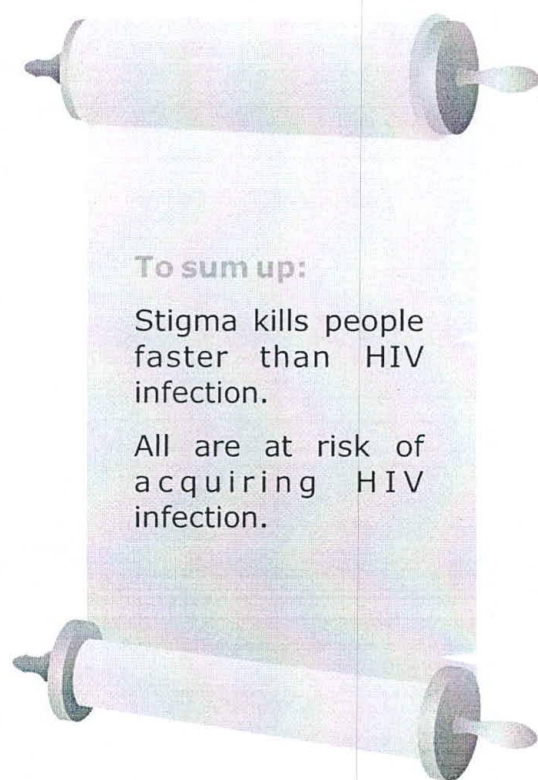


All are at risk for HIV infection. Even those in your photos. Including you.

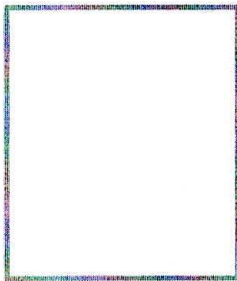
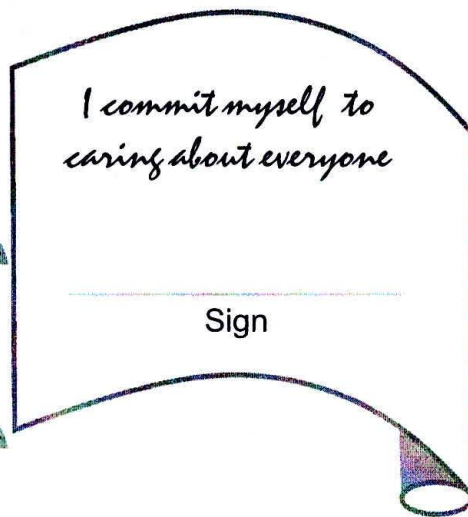
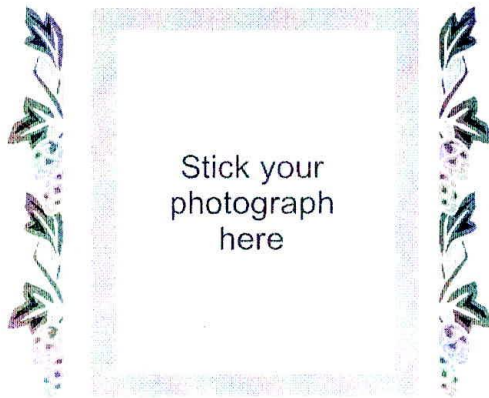
**KEY MESSAGE TO PASS ON TO OTHERS:**

People with HIV infection need not be thrown out of their houses, colleges or offices.

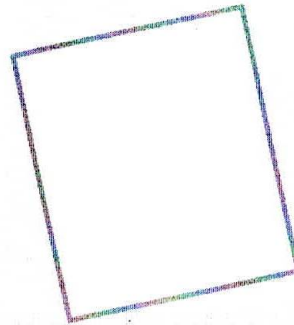
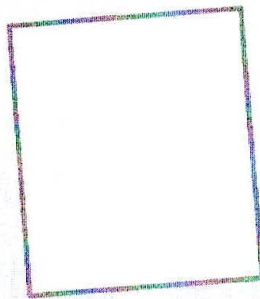
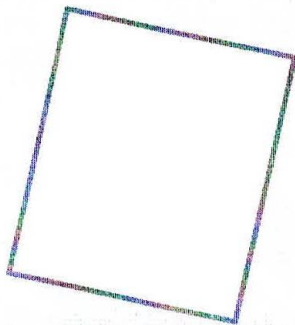
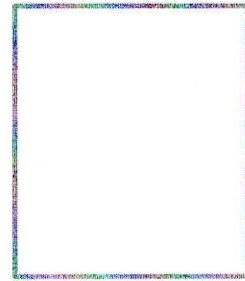




## Commitment 8



Stick photographs of your friends who share your commitment 8



## My notes to care about everyone



# I EXERCISE MY RIGHTS WITH RESPONSIBILITY

Human rights and sexual rights

9



Rights are those freedoms that we are born with, that the world and our country, India are committed to maintain. There are several human rights that every individual enjoys through the Indian Constitution. Some of them are the right to life, the right to information and education, the right to liberty and security of the person, the right not to be discriminated, the right to the benefits of scientific progress, etc.

Here, we would like to focus on a few rights that are important for you to understand and exercise to protect yourself from those risky situations that make you vulnerable to HIV infection and AIDS.

Three of the most direct rights in the context of HIV and AIDS are:

**Right to Informed Consent:**

You cannot undergo testing for HIV unless specific and informed consent from you is taken.

**Right to Confidentiality:**

Whatever may be your test result, you have the right to confidentiality. If you turn out to be HIV positive, then go back to the second step and look at the ways to lead a healthy life with HIV infection. Don't forget to contact the positive network close to you. No one at your college nor at office once you begin work needs to know your HIV status. Think positively. You have the choice to disclose your status to someone close to you and a duty to do so before you begin a sexual relationship.

**Right against Discrimination:**

Regardless of your HIV status, you have a right to be in college, to work, seek and receive medication and education.

### **The World Health Organization defines SEXUAL HEALTH as:**

A capacity to ENJOY and CONTROL sexual and reproductive behaviours in accordance with a social and personal ethic.

- ☞ Freedom from fear, shame, guilt, false beliefs and other psychological factors inhibiting sexual response and impairing sexual relationships.
- ☞ Freedom from organic disorders, disease and deficiencies that interfere with sexual and reproductive functions.

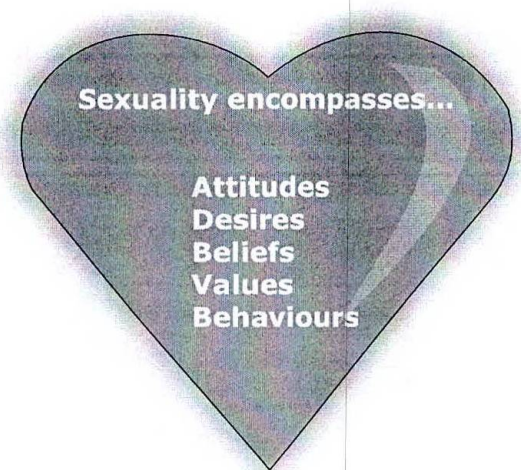
In order to understand our sexual rights clearly, we need to know what sexuality is all about. Often sexuality is wrongly interpreted and thought of as sexual intercourse or sex.

### **What is sexuality?**

Human sexuality is much more than just the act of sex. Human sexuality includes:

- ☞ How you describe yourself as a person
- ☞ How you feel about being a man or a woman
- ☞ How you relate with members of either gender.





#### UNIVERSAL CODES OF SEXUALITY

- ☞ Sexuality is a natural part of the self; it includes physical, ethical, spiritual, social and psychological dimensions.
- ☞ Every person, including you has self-worth, dignity and expresses sexuality in different ways.
- ☞ Sexual relationships that are not forced are more satisfying and long lasting
- ☞ Sexual relationships need to be based on mutual trust, honesty, commitment and respect.
- ☞ All sexual decisions have effects and consequences.
- ☞ Every person has a right and obligation to make responsible sexual choices.
- ☞ All men and women are sexual beings.
- ☞ Exploring sexuality by the young is a natural process of achieving an identity.

Here is a situation. Read through it and follow the explanation below:

### Situation

Anuja thought she was a very lucky girl when Aman, the man of her dreams asked her to go with him to a movie. His gang of friends were going and he wanted them to know that he liked Anuja. He behaved courteously and Anuja was happy. The next day he took her to a picnic. Once again he looked after her and saw to her every need. At night Anuja couldn't stop thinking of him. One day Aman took Anuja to a restaurant and both of them had some beer. He then took her to his house. No one was around. There he offered her more drinks. He then put on some music and asked her to dance. They danced and Anuja liked it. He then kissed her. She liked that too. He then started undressing her. Anuja stopped him saying, "No". But Aman said, "I have spent so much for you and now you have to give me what I ask for" and then had sex with her.

### IS THIS RAPE????

Write down what you think and get your friends to scribble their thoughts along the margins. Are you thinking it is not rape? What are your reasons? Do you think it is not rape because Anuja went out with Aman? She willingly went to his house – she should not have gone. She should not have encouraged him by dancing with him. She should not have allowed him to kiss her. She liked the kissing. She asked for it (sex). She should have said NO firmly. Some women say 'No' when they mean 'Yes'. Is this what you think?? In short she should have been the one to CONTROL where the relationship was heading? Aman had no responsibility towards controlling where the relationship was going?

## THE FACT IS THAT AMAN DID RAPE ANUJA.

### **Any non-consensual sex is rape.**

The duty to control sexual relationships is both Aman's and Anuja's. The right to enjoy sexual relationships is again both theirs. Look once more at the WHO definition of sexual health. Sexual health is the ability to enjoy and control sexual behaviour. We need to learn not just how to enjoy sexual behaviour safely but also how to control sexual behaviour...enough to STOP if ever there is a verbal or non-verbal STOP expressed.

Sexual rights also include the right not to be abused. We may often not even recognise that abuse is happening. It may have become quite normal in our life.

### **RECOGNISE ABUSE**

#### **Emotional and psychological abuse include:**

- ☐ Telling someone s/he is ugly.
- ☐ Denial of love/affection/sex.
- ☐ Humiliation.
- ☐ Refusing to help someone in need.
- ☐ Name-calling, shouting at a person.
- ☐ Damaging their favourite possessions (clothing, pet).
- ☐ Threatening physical or sexual violence.
- ☐ Insulting or cursing a person who has refused to have sex.
- ☐ Writing threatening letters to someone after she/he ends a relationship.



### Physical violence may include:

- ☐ Slapping, beating, pinching, hair pulling, burning
- ☐ Threatening or attacking a person with a weapon or object
- ☐ Physically confining (locking in a room or tying up)
- ☐ Ripping off clothes against the will of the person being ripped.

### Sexual violence may include:

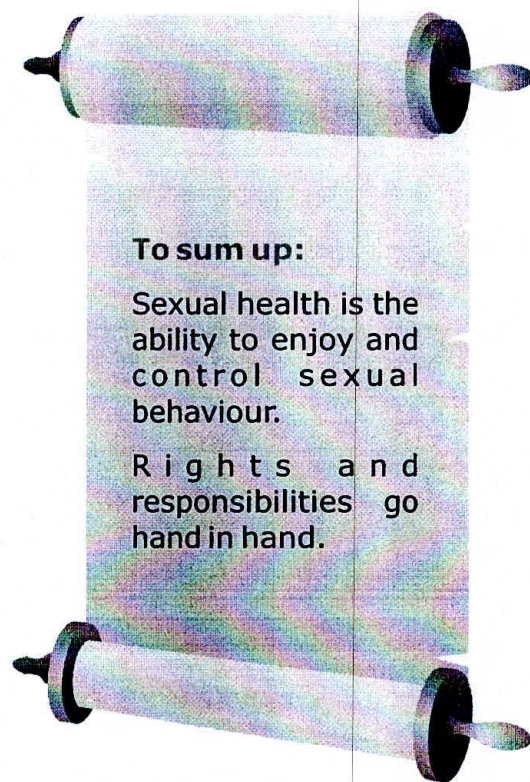
- ☐ Beating a person to force him/her to have sex.
- ☐ Touching a person's sexual body parts against his/her will.
- ☐ Using vulgar and abusive language to coerce someone into having sex.
- ☐ Putting drugs into a person's drink so that it is easier to have sex with him/her.
- ☐ Refusing to use contraceptives or condoms.
- ☐ Having sex with a minor.

### Rights.... Positively Yours!

Remember that you do not need to tolerate abuse. You are entitled to basic Fundamental Rights. All are equal in the eyes of the law – no matter what religion, caste, status, sex or place you belong to. These Rights do not change just because HIV and AIDS affects an individual. It is important to be aware of your basic or Fundamental Rights and to remember that you can do something if they are violated.

### Answer to the riddle on Pg 55

The famous neuro surgeon is his mother

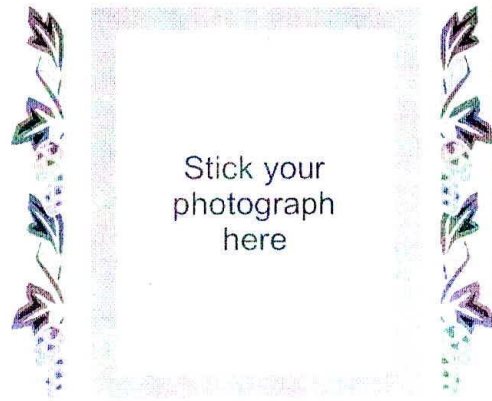


**To sum up:**

Sexual health is the  
ability to enjoy and  
control sexual  
behaviour.

R i g h t s   a n d  
responsibilities go  
hand in hand.

## Commitment 9

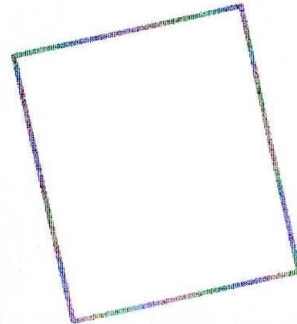
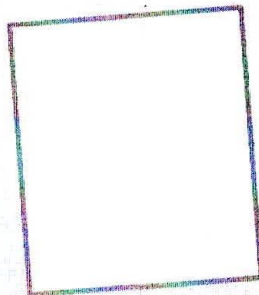
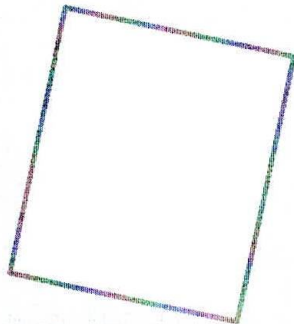
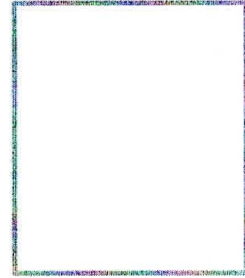


*I commit myself to  
exercising  
my rights  
with responsibility*

Sign



Stick photographs of your  
friends who share  
your commitment 9





## My notes for exercising my rights with responsibility

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. A single vertical line runs down the center of the page, creating two equal-width columns. The paper appears to be from a notebook or a standard ruled document. There are no markings, text, or drawings on the page.

# I PLAN FOR MY FUTURE

Life after college

10



### What have you learnt so far?

If you have gone through all the previous nine commitments, you now:

- ☐ know the changes one goes through in the adolescent period
- ☐ have learnt basic facts about STIs, HIV and AIDS
- ☐ understand the cultural and gender influences in our society
- ☐ recognise the importance of self esteem
- ☐ know how to set boundaries
- ☐ can be assertive in order to face challenges with courage
- ☐ will be able to use critical life skills to handle difficult situations
- ☐ will not tolerate stigma and discrimination, and will be caring
- ☐ know your sexual rights as an individual.

That's great!! We hope you feel good about all these learnings. Now, it's your turn to use them wisely. For the time you are in college and beyond that.

Let's spend a few minutes thinking about life after college.

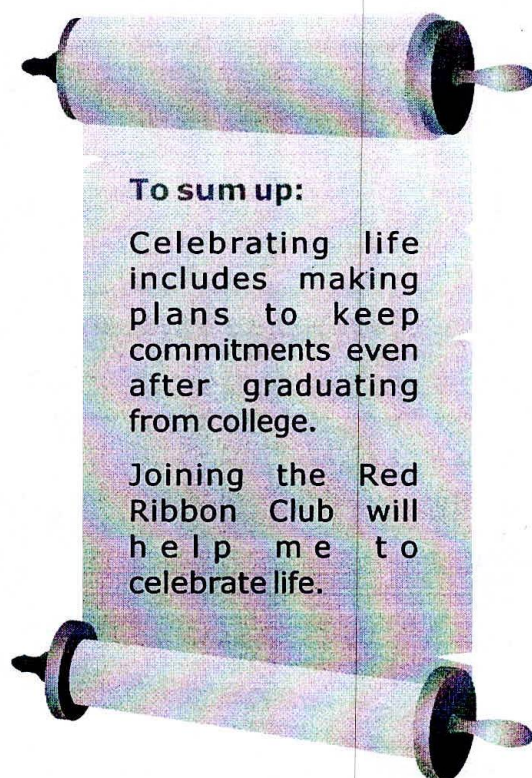


### What do you think would happen to you?

Which commitment would come in handy when you:

- ☐ look for a job?
- ☐ get engaged and married?
- ☐ face problems with your boss?
- ☐ have fights with your spouse regarding children?
- ☐ meet a close friend who is living with HIV infection?

Discuss each of these situations with your Friendly Advisor. Don't put it off saying- "When I face it I will deal with it," or " I know how to handle all these things, I don't need to worry." For now, however, celebrate life by enjoying your rights with responsibility. Join the Red Ribbon Club and get involved in spreading the messages you have learnt. Be proud of yourself that you have made these commitments to yourself, and encourage others also to go through them.

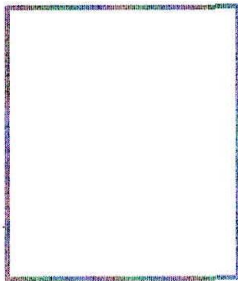
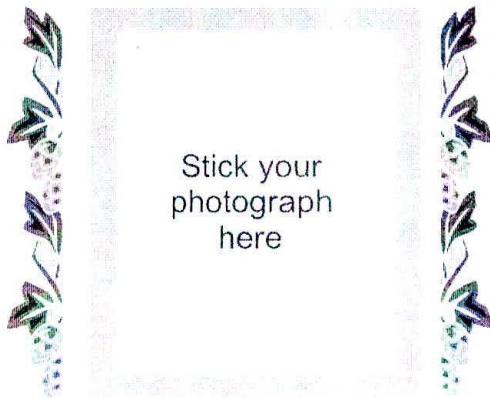


**To sum up:**

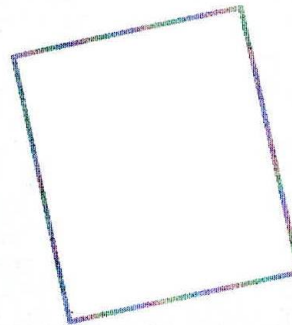
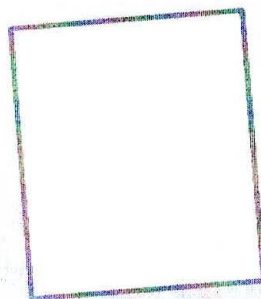
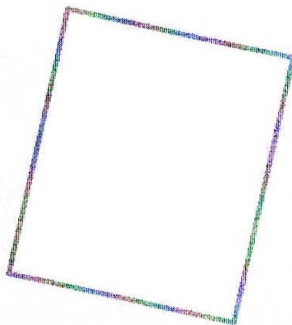
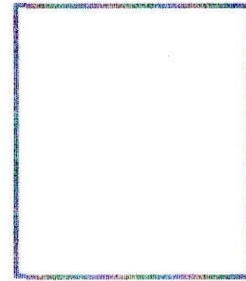
Celebrating life  
includes making  
plans to keep  
commitments even  
after graduating  
from college.

Joining the Red  
Ribbon Club will  
help me to  
celebrate life.

## Commitment 10



Stick photographs of your  
friends who share  
your commitment 10





## My notes for my future

[illegible]

## EVALUATION FORM

You need not write your name or address. Once you have completed the C-Life

Student's Hand book, please complete this form and mail it to:

MYRADA 2, Service Road, Domlur, Banagalore – 560071, India

Name and address: (Optional)

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.....

Name three important messages you got for yourself through reading the C-Life Student's Handbook.

[illegible]

Give us suggestions on:

1. What material is missing from the C-Life Student's Handbook?
2. Is any part unclear, or not relevant, or not to the point?
3. Are the methods, stories and examples helpful and realistic?

**Any questions?** Ask them here. Get questions from your friends too and jot them down on the flip side of this page. We shall answer them confidentially. No one needs know who asked the questions. The answers will be posted to the address you give above.

**Any other comments**

We thank you for your feedback. This will help us to revise the next edition appropriately





MYRADA

