SESSION 5
IT TAKES A VILLAGE
(Group and Single Gender)

Type of Session:
Group and Single Gender

Session Outline:

Activity A: Opening and Welcome (10 minutes)
Activity B: Review of Last Session (5 minutes)
Activity C: Overview of This Session (5 minutes)
Activity D: Forming a Village (15 minutes)
Activity E: Review of Homework (15 minutes)
Activity F: Enhancing Ethnic Pride (15 minutes)
Activity G: Overcoming Social Adversity (15 minutes)
Activity H: HIV Disclosure (20 minutes)
Activity I: Homework (5 minutes)
Activity J: Eban Closing Circle Ritual (15 minutes)

Session Goals:
The goals of this session are:

- Be able to use the FENCE problem-solving model to overcome structural barriers that impede safer sex.
- Identify and build social networks that support safer sex.
- Problem-solve structural barriers to safer sex
- Discuss social network for the support of safer sex

Materials Needed to Conduct Session

- CD Track #8: “Lean on Me” by Bill Withers
- CD player
- Newsprint: Group Rules for Participation
- Poster #1: Eban symbol
- Poster #3: Nguzo Saba
- Poster #6: FENCE
- Workbook for Facilitators
- Handout #7: Couple Goal Setting Form
- Post It Flip Charts
- Magic Markers
- Red, Green, and Yellow Stickers
- Homework #5: Assessing and Building Your Social Support Network
- Envelopes and reimbursement (if handed out by facilitators)

**Instructional Time:**
2 hours (120 minutes)

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Total Time: 2 hours (120 minutes)

**TIPS TO FACILITATORS**
- Participants may be reluctant to respond so you should allow extra time for participants to respond.
- Be sure that one facilitator is focused on assessing the process so that they can help reluctant couples participate.
- Promote unity and ethnic pride to motivate participants.
Activity A: Opening and Welcome

**Time:**
10 minutes

**Materials Needed:**
- Clock
- Tape Recorder
- Ankh
- Newsprint: Ground Rules
- Poster #1: Eban symbol
- Poster #3: Nguzo Saba
- Poster #6: FENCE
- CD track #8: “Lean on Me” by Bill Withers.

**Procedure:**
1. Start by saying,

   _We want to welcome you back to our village where we work together to maintain our personal health and that of our community. During the couple sessions we have been impressed with how much support you have been providing to each other as a couple._

   _We hope over these next three sessions we will extend support to each other._

   _It has been three weeks since we have been together and so we thought that we would begin with introductions in our talking circle._

   _We will pass the Ankh around. Does someone remember what this stands for?_

2. Wait for someone to volunteer.
Yes, it is a symbol from Ancient Egypt that represents eternal life, unity between men and women, and our collective will to survive and thrive.

When you receive the Ankh, please tell the group your name and something about yourself.

3. Holding the Ankh, the facilitators model an introduction.

4. Facilitator One

As you all know, my name is ________. I am here because I am committed to helping our community and making it stronger. I am excited to be part of this group with you.

5. Facilitator Two should then also share their reason for being here or how they feel about being part of the group.

6. Let every member of the group introduce themselves.

Thank you for sharing so openly. As you know we begin our work by playing a song associated with the theme for our session.

7. Play “Lean on Me” by Bill Withers, track #8.
What does this song make you think of?

What feelings do you have while listening to this song?

How does this song relate to your relationship and practicing safer sex?

8. Reinforce participants’ responses and relate them to social support for safer sex.

This song shows that you can lean on each other and support each other to practice safer sex because you are struggling with similar challenges.

By supporting each other you and the other couples in this village become stronger as a couple and a community.

Instead of our quotation, we are going to read a poem later in this session that reflects our unity (our Umoja) and ethnic pride.
Activity B: Review of Last Session (5 minutes)

**Time:**
5 minutes

**Materials Needed:**
None

**Procedure:**
1. Start by saying,

   Since we were together, we have been meeting with you as couples and we have been talking about the Nguzo Saba and learning new skills from the Eban program.

   You have participated in four sessions, the first one as a group and then in three sessions as a couple. You have learned a lot in the last four weeks, and we have really enjoyed working with you.

   What did you enjoy the most about the last four sessions?

   We have demonstrated how the principles of our culture support safety and protection. You have set goals for protecting each other from HIV and STDs, identified things that can get in the way of protecting each other, practiced using the FENCE problem solving technique, communication techniques like the Talk and Listen Technique, and learned ways to practice safer sex and make it more fun.

   How did you feel about using the techniques you learned, such as FENCE and Talk and Listen?

   In the third session we reviewed male and female anatomy and practiced how to use male and female condoms correctly.
What did you learn in that session that was the most useful for you?

We also worked on making better decisions in taking care of our health and in our sexual life.

During our last session together, we talked about your relationship and how what happens outside of your relationship can affect how you work together as a couple and how you make decisions about protecting each other.

Who can tell us what Eban stands for?

It stands for safety and security within the family; a fence of safety.

2. Reinforce the responses but, if necessary, reframe their definition.

Can anyone share with us what else they have learned in the couple sessions and how it has helped you to engage in safer sex and be healthy?

Great. We are so pleased that it is working so well for you.

Very good. How does Eban relate to sexual practices?

3. Facilitator can probe for responses with the following questions:
What role does a fence play in helping you to maintain your sexual health?

How do the Nguzo Saba help you to maintain your sexual health?
Activity C: Overview of Session

**Time:**
5 minutes

**Materials Needed:**
- Newsprint – Goals for Session
- Poster #3: Nguzo Saba

**Procedure:**
1. Start by saying,

   "The Nguzo Saba for this session are Principles Number One-Unity or Umoja and Number Two-Self-determination or Kujichagulia."

   We want to talk about how this group can unite as a village and how you can build your own system of social support in your community.

   We want to discuss racism and negative judgments about people living with HIV, and how these attitudes affect how we take care of ourselves.

   We want to discuss the strengths of African Americans / Blacks and how we can choose for ourselves how to overcome adversity.

   Today we are going to vary the order in which we do things. Instead of ending the session with the homework assignment, we are going to end with a closing ritual for the village, to unite our village."
Activity D: Forming a Village

Time:
15 minutes

Materials Needed:
- Flipchart
- Markers
- Newsprint: Ground Rules for Participation

Procedure:
1. Start by saying,

   *As we work together, we would like you to think of this group as a village. When we say village, what do you think of?*

2. Write responses on flip chart.

   *Yes, that is right. It is a place where we can come together as a group to collectively support one another in our efforts to engage in safer sex practices.*

   *Our village is where we unite (Umoja) in our effort to protect ourselves, our partners, and our communities from STDs and HIV by supporting one another to use condoms and other safer sex methods. We unite to be sure our community has the knowledge, power, and skills to choose for itself how it will survive and thrive.*

   *This village is a protected place, where everything you say is kept within this group and you can feel comfortable knowing that we respect each other and we are concerned about each other’s well being.*

   *This village is also a place of diversity. Just like any village, this one includes people of*
different ages and people with diverse experiences and views. Through these differences, we can all unite, learn from each other, and share our wisdom with each other.

Remember what you have in common: you are all here because you are committed to safety and security in your relationship and community.

What is it like for each of you to be here today with the group?

3. Allow participants to share.

We are very proud of you for choosing to be here to learn more about how to take care of our sexual health and the sexual health of our community.

4. Be sure Newsprint of Group Rules for Participation is visible.

We would like to review the Group Rules for Participation that you developed together the first night.

We would like to emphasize that confidentiality is extremely important.

5. Ask for volunteers to read the guidelines. If there are no volunteers, the facilitators will go over the rules.
Would you like to add other rules?

We would also like to remind you some people have an easier time talking in groups than others. In order to let everyone in the group have a chance to express their ideas and feelings, we would like you to raise your hand.

Please let other people finish their thoughts before you speak. If you disagree with them, remember that everyone has a right to her/his opinion. The way to express a difference of opinion is by saying “I understand and respect your point. However, I feel…”

We need to revisit how you will respond to each other if you happen to meet in your community. Some people may find it awkward and therefore may not wish to socialize away from this group. If you do not want to be acknowledged out of the group, please let the group know now. Each couple has the right to determine what is best for them.

How would you like to be acknowledged if people see you outside of the group?

Okay. Thank you for being honest with the group.

Having an agreed upon set of rules is the first step toward forming a village together. Even if rules are not written, every group has an understanding of what are acceptable ways to treat each other.
Activity E: Review Homework

**Time:**
15 minutes

**Materials Needed:**
- Homework for Session 4 (in workbook)
- Couple Goal Progress worksheet

Procedure:
1. Start by saying,

   Your homework from last session was to make a Couple Connection by sharing coupons asking your partner to engage in certain activities with you.

   These included safe and creative activities to show your love and affection for each other (like massages, romantic dinners, romantic baths, or other ways to share with each other) and to strengthen your union.

2. Use some of the following questions to generate discussion.

   - *How did that work?*

   - *Did you each use all three connection coupons?*

   - *What kinds of activities did you share?*

   - *Which did you like the most?*
- How did they make you feel?

- What problems came up?

- How can you work on them next time?

- Would someone like to share what you added as activities to make a Couple Connection?

*Great. Those are good ideas.*

*Do you think that this is something that you can continue to do in order to make your relationship more fun and safe?*

3. Transition to discussion of couple goals. Allow 2 minutes per couple for discussion of goals.

*At the beginning of every couple session, we have been talking with each of you about how you have been doing on your goals for reducing your risks for HIV and STDs and improving your relationship.*

*Now that we are together in the village, we would like to keep doing that as a village so that we can support each other.*

*It is important to check on your goals each week, so that you can see how you are doing and develop strategies to keep on protecting each other.*
Who is willing to share their goals, the strategies you used to work on your goals, and how you did?

Great. Can you use the following format:

- Begin by describing one of your goals.
- Tell us what you have done to work toward this goal.
- Tell us how the Nguzo Saba supported you in working towards this goal.
- Tell about any problems you have encountered and how you addressed them.
- If you used FENCE, indicate how it worked.

Since there’s a group of us and we have a lot to cover, we’d like each couple to spend just two minutes describing their goal, strategies, and how it worked.

4. Praise the couple for sharing their experience and ask for another volunteer.

Yes, you have made great progress on working on your couple goals. However, you can also learn a great deal from problems that prevented you from achieving your goals.

Would someone else like to share any problems they had when working on your goals.
Activity F: Enhancing Ethnic Pride

Time:
15 minutes

Materials Needed:
- Flipchart
- Markers
- “Still I Rise” by Maya Angelou (in Workbook section 5-3)

Procedure:
1. Start by saying,

   In earlier sessions we talked about what it is like to be men or women and we looked at how pride in ourselves helps us to protect ourselves and our partners.

   As a village, we would like to identify what makes us proud.

   First let’s hear how each person identifies. What names do we use to call ourselves?

2. Facilitators give examples by talking about how they identify, and then wait for each participant to discuss their identity.

   What makes you proud to identify as _______?

   What does it mean to you to be Black or African American or to be in a relationship with someone who identifies as black or African American?

3. Reinforce participants’ responses.
As you can see, we are a diverse group, and there are multiple ways we call ourselves. Sometimes our experiences can affect how we call ourselves.

We have a rich heritage and cultural identity. Our experiences as a cultural group give us unity (Umoja), strength, a sense of pride, and the skills to survive and thrive.

We have a poem we would like to share with you. Please turn to section 5-3 “Still I Rise” in your workbooks, there is a poem by Maya Angelou that reflects our resilience as a people.

I’ll read the poem, and then when I point we can all repeat the refrain “I rise”.

4. Facilitator reads the poem, and everyone repeats the refrain “I rise.”

What are some important points made in this poem?

5. Reinforce some of the following points:

- We have the ability to overcome problems, and protect each other in the process.

- We have the power to choose how we respond to obstacles in our lives. We can be defeated, or “Like Dust, I Rise”.
• Our pride in ourselves can help us overcome obstacles.

• Negative people will say negative things. Positive people will be more positive.

• Learn from the past, and live in the future.

• We have helped humanity evolve by reclaiming our history and demanding our rights.

• We live creatively, and we can find creative ways to connect while protecting each other.

• We are the survivors of oppression and adversity. We are the creators of strong and secure communities.

• We are strong, we stand on the shoulders of those ancestors that have come before us.

• We have strong faith (Imani) and a strong spiritual foundation.

• We are committed to our families and each other. We are committed to keeping each other safe.

• We are very resilient and forgiving.

There is a lot to be proud of in our community. How we feel about ourselves and as a people is far more important than how others feel about us.
That is what self-determination (Kujichagulia) is about: Defining ourselves instead of letting other people define us, and defining what is best for us.

Feeling proud of who you are can be difficult in the face of obstacles. We would like to talk about some of the obstacles that we face that affect how we feel about ourselves and how we take care of ourselves.
Activity G: Overcoming Social Adversity

**Time:**
15 minutes

**Materials Needed:**
- Flipchart
- Markers
- Poster #6: FENCE
- Scenario – FENCEing racism (in Workbook, section 5-4)

**Procedure:**

1. Elicit responses from participants concerning obstacles in society that challenge us as a people and may negatively affect us.

   *We have had to overcome many obstacles historically. Can you name some?*

   *Yes, those are very good ones: health care access, mistrust of medical professionals, experiencing stigma because of HIV, racism, poverty, etc.*

2. Lead discussion of some of these problems.

   *How does racism affect you everyday and make it difficult for you to do what you need to do?*

3. Reinforce responses and write on flip chart.
As a race/cultural group we continue to be excluded from opportunities because of the color of our skin.

Are there any examples that you can think of?

Yes, those are powerful examples; others are:

- Excluded from higher education.
- Safe neighborhoods.
- Lack of economic opportunities.
- Not having equal access to health care.
- Not having health insurance or a safety net.
- Work very hard for little money.
- Stress leads to hypertension and other negative symptoms.

**Impact of Racism on Health**

How do these things impact your health?

Yes, those are good points; some others are:

4. Facilitators can suggest the following examples if participants do not raise them:
1. Tend to get diagnosed later when disease has progressed.

2. Because of safety issues, may not feel safe going to a pharmacy late at night if we find that we are out of condoms.

3. Have difficulty talking to my doctor about my symptoms and insisting on good medical care.

4. Suspicious of health clinics and hospitals and so do not seek care.

5. We do not trust health information that we receive because of Tuskegee and other negative experience with health care providers.

6. We may receive less quality care whether or not we pay for health care.

7. Providers often assume that we may not take drugs correctly or they assume that we are less deserving of some kinds of care than others because our illness is our fault.

8. Facilitators can reinforce statements with the following comments.

Mistrust of Health Care System

Yes, there is a healthy mistrust because in the past, African Americans have been
mistreated by health professionals at clinics and hospitals.

A powerful example is the Tuskegee experiment in which 400 African American men were denied proper treatment of their sexually transmitted disease. Another example is Bessie Smith, Queen of Blues, who was left to die on a hospital doorstep because she was Black.

Medical mistrust may keep people from seeking medical attention and care, delaying diagnosis and treatment of STDs, HIV/AIDS.

If people do not know they are sick, they may give STDs to their loved ones.

Not using health care clinics and hospitals leads to using home made treatments exclusively without getting medical evaluation and treatment. Sometimes an illness that could have been treated grows worse and is life threatening.

Remember that we are affected by AIDS at a rate over three times higher than our percentage of the population and in order to keep the death rate from getting any higher, we need to demand good medical treatment earlier.

So this is the time to call on self-determination or Kujichagulia. We cannot let anyone stop us from getting the medical care we need. If we do, we as a people die. Some of you may remember the civil rights song “Ain’t gonna let nobody turn me ‘round”.

Stigma

What about the way African-Americans are shown in TV shows and in movies? Can this affect how you feel about yourself and how you take care of yourself?
What about HIV stigma - discrimination and rejection because of you or your partner’s HIV infection.

How do these judgments about people living with HIV affect you and how you take care of yourself?

9. Facilitator can respond with some of the following comments:

People may avoid close relationships with others to protect themselves from being judged and rejected.

People may lack support for living with HIV from their family and friends.

People may not be encouraged or supported for practicing safer sex.

As a people, we have a lot to deal with, but we talked earlier about our history as African American/Black people. We are strong and able to overcome social adversity.

You might also remember that in Session 1, we talked about the importance of being proud of who we are, not based on anything outside of ourselves, but our inner worth.

That’s what’s meant by the principle of Self-determination (Kujichagulia). We don’t need to use what’s outside of us to feel good about ourselves. We can keep on pushing, even when we’re face with obstacles.

You can use your new skills like FENCE to problem solve and keep these obstacles from
negatively affecting how you take care of yourself and keep each other safe.

10. Transition to working on overcoming adversity.

We can overcome problems by solving them as best we can and remembering how much our friends and family need us.

Even when we are victimized by society, it is important not to victimize ourselves. When other people make negative judgments, it is important not to internalize those judgments and to keep hopeful and to problem solve. We can keep from taking these judgments in through our unity (Umoja), self-determination (Kujichagulia) and calling on the positive supports in our lives.

We would like to use FENCE--our technique to problem-solve--to continue to take care of one another and practice safer sex despite racism and negative reactions from other people about HIV.

We will also talk about how we can work with friends and family and unify to support us to do what we know we need to do–practice safer sex and promote safety and security in our community.

Can someone describe a situation in which racism or negative judgments about people with HIV affected their decision to practice safer sex?
11. If no one volunteers a situation, use the scenario below.

**Scenario**

Cassandra and Milton have been married for seven years and in a committed relationship for ten years. Milton became HIV+ through sharing needles. Cassandra, a full time home health attendant, is HIV-. Neither Cassandra nor Milton has private health insurance. Milton receives care at the neighborhood clinic. Cassandra always goes with him for his appointments.

While sitting in the clinic waiting room, they over heard a clinic nurse saying “...it is surprising that they are not all sick. Those blacks are always in here begging for condoms. They need to just stop having sex.” Milton and Cassandra feel angry, ashamed, and embarrassed. On their next visit they don’t pick up condoms and they begin to have sex without condoms more frequently. They make their appointments only occasionally and begin to forget them altogether.

12. If using this scenario, use the text below or adapt for the example provided by the group.

*How would Cassandra and Milton use the FENCE technique to deal with this problem?*

13. Reinforce members providing the steps to use.

**F – Find out what going on. What is happening here?**

Cassandra and Milton are letting the nurse’s racism and negative judgments get in the way of getting condoms.
E - Explore your partner’s feelings. How are Cassandra and Milton feeling about this?

They are feeling ashamed and embarrassed because the nurse’s negative comments are blocking their ability to protect each other.

N – Name and discuss options. What are some options for Cassandra and Milton?

They can remember to have pride in themselves, no matter what negative close-minded people say.

They can make a written complaint about the nurse’s racist statements to his/her supervisor, and write that her attitude is getting in the way of their care at the clinic.

They can find care at another clinic that is more open and accepting.

They can find another place to get condoms.

They can remind themselves how important it is to keep each other safe, and make a point to commit to it despite obstacles.

C – Choose the best option. What option would you choose?

Choose the option that is best for both members of the couple.

E – Execute the plan and monitor progress.
After choosing the best option, you take the steps necessary to carry out the plan.

Now we would like each couple to think of a situation in which racism or negative judgments about people with HIV interfered with your practice of safer sex.

Together, use FENCE to identify how to handle the situation in a way that protects you and your partner.

14. Guide each couple to FENCE their situation, allowing other participants to contribute additional options and solutions.

Excellent! It looks like everyone is getting the idea. You came up with some great ideas for protecting yourself and your partner. We do not want you to leave what you are learning in this room, so we encourage you all to practice FENCE as situations come up in your daily lives.
Activity H: Social Support and HIV Disclosure

Time:
20 minutes

Materials Needed:
- Flipchart
- Markers
- Disclosure Scenarios (in Workbook, section 5-6)

Procedure:
1. Start by saying,

   Another way to deal with the challenges that affect how you take care of yourself and your partner is to find support in our community for living healthy. As a culture and community, we are responsible for the well-being of each other.

   Can you tell us about what social support means to you?

   Yes. “We all need somebody to lean on.” Social support is the people in your life who are there to offer support, who you can lean on.

   We have learned a lot from individuals and couples living with HIV who we have worked with to develop this program. We have learned that, in order to practice safer sex, it helps if those around us—our partner, family, friends and others in our lives—encourage and support us.

   It can be hard to find support if you are worried about telling others that you or your partner is HIV+.

   Remember that we’re available after the group if there’s a concern you can’t discuss.
Have you shared your or your partner’s HIV status with the people in your life?

2. Wait for responses and allow for group sharing and support. Tie in the support you see among participants to the village concept.

3. Ask the following only if some participants have not disclosed:

**Have Not Disclosed**

*How does not telling people about your HIV status help you?*

*How does not telling people about your HIV keep you from getting the support that you need?*

*What is it like to not let people close to you know about your or your partner’s HIV status?*


5. Ask the following only if some participants have disclosed. If they haven’t skip to “Thinking about disclosure”:
Have Disclosed with Good and Bad Results

Of those of you who have disclosed, what happened when you told your friends and family about your or your partner’s HIV?

How did you feel?

How have people reacted when you told them?

What was it like to share your or your partner’s HIV status with people in your life?

Can you think of an example of a disclosure to someone that you thought would go well and it did not turn out to be supportive?

Can you think of an example of a disclosure to someone that you were uncertain that it would go well and it turned out great?

6. Wait for responses from group.

So it sounds like sometimes telling others can be helpful and sometimes it can be painful.
Thinking About Disclosure

What do you think would be the pros and cons of sharing your HIV status or your partner’s HIV status with the people in your life?

7. On flip chart list the pros and cons.

8. If not mentioned by the participants, explore some of the following issues to get the discussion going:

- You may decide to disclose to some people and not others. You may need to hide your HIV status, like at work, or when you think that people may have negative attitudes toward people living with HIV.

- What are your friends and families attitudes about HIV?

- How open and understanding are they likely to be if you disclose?

- Are there people or group, such as in your religious community, who you can talk to about your status who can be supportive?


Okay. That is good. We are not encouraging you to disclose or not to disclose. We just want to help you explore what you would like to do.
Can you identify one person or group that your might share this information with and receive support?

10. Wait for responses.

Sometimes you may disagree what to do as a couple. Has that happened?

Sometimes, you might want to share your partner’s HIV status and get support, but your partner might be afraid of letting people know.

Sometimes your partner might want to share, but you do not want to.

It is important to talk about differences in your comfort with sharing this information, and decide together whom you would like to tell and whom you can get support from?

What are some possible situations and ways you could see yourself disclosing your HIV status as a couple?

We would like to discuss some situations with you and decide whether or not to disclose.

Please turn to your workbook “Disclosure Scenarios” in section 5-6.

Which one would you like to work on together?
Yes, that is a good one. Deciding whether to tell someone about HIV or not.

Do we have any volunteers who would like to read the situation or discuss how the characters can decide who and how to tell?

11. A facilitator or a participant should read the scenario that the group chooses. Then the other facilitator should ask the volunteer, or the whole group the discussion questions.

**Scenario 1: Disclosing to an Unsupportive Family**

Derrick and Chante have been together for a year. Chante is HIV+. They love each other, but feel isolated from some of their friends, and family because of HIV. Some of Chante’s family knows her HIV status, and are supportive of her. Derrick has told no one. He knows his mother is very religious and conservative and has strong feelings about sex outside of marriage. His aunts are gossips. His father has said negative things about people with HIV when watching TV.

12. Some of the following questions can be used to initiate a discussion.

*Who would you decide to tell or not to tell? Why or why not?*

*If Derrick decides not to tell his family because of their negative judgments, is there someone else he can tell and get social support from?*

*Chante’s family? Some of his friends?*
How can he judge whether his friends would be supportive if he told them?

How would he say it?

Examples might be:

“I am HIV positive. I am worried about what you will think of me.”

“I need to share something very difficult and serious with you. I just found out that I have the virus—the one that gives you AIDS.”

**Scenario 2: Disclosing HIV to Supportive Family**

Yolanda and Daniel have been married for five years. Daniel is HIV+ and has known since before the couple met. Early in their relationship, he told Yolanda that he was HIV+. However, he did not have any symptoms and did not think Yolanda was at risk. Now she is pregnant. Yolanda is very close to her family, and would like to have the social support they have always given to her.

She wants to tell her family that she is pregnant, but also that her husband is HIV positive. She needs support right now. What should she do?

13. Some of the following questions can be used to initiate a discussion.
Do you think that Yolanda should tell her family? Why or why not?

What should she say to them?

Examples of what she can say are:

“I love Daniel and he loves me. We are very happy that we are going to have a baby. However, we are worried that the baby may be positive because Daniel has the virus.”

“We are going to have a baby and we want our baby baptized in the church. I have not told you before but Daniel is HIV positive. If the baby is positive, do you think that we have to tell him?”

In your resource manual in the section on “HIV Support Services” on page ##, you will see a list of support groups and support services for people living with HIV and their partners. These can be valuable sources of support. You can also turn to other couples in this group (the village), for support.

14. Transition from talking about friends and family to this group.

We have talked about how you can tell your family and friends about your serostatus in order to get support. Now we want to talk about how you can use this group for support.

One of the major benefits of this group is the friendship and support you have formed here.
Not all of you may feel comfortable sharing topics like HIV with the some people so you may want to keep up a relationship with some people in this group.

We want to make sure that you have the support you need.

Now we would like to brainstorm about how to increase support for safer sex within this group.

15. The following are some suggestions if they are not mentioned by the group.

- Try to call each other once a week after the group ends.
- Have pot lucks and get together.
- Unite to form your own group.

We think that you have good ideas how to get the support that you need and how it can help.

Now we would like to break into single gender group to build support for making health decisions about using condoms. For the next fifteen minutes, you will meet in a woman’s group and a man’s group.

In these groups, you will discuss what issues men and women face in using condoms with their partners. Then, you will get back together and share your experiences.
16. Once in separate man’s or women’s group in separate rooms, start by saying,

Okay, now that we are together as men/women, we would like to talk about the issues we face in trying to use condoms with our partner.

What is it like to be a man/woman in a relationship affected by HIV, and have to use condoms?

17. Allow group sharing and support.

What are some of the obstacles we face as men/women in trying to use condoms with our partner?

18. Write responses on flip chart.

19. Facilitators can suggest the following examples if participants do not raise them:

- Not wanting to be reminded about HIV
• Not wanting to hurt the HIV+ partner by suggesting a condom.

• Not wanting to interrupt the flow of sex.

• Wanting to be close to my partner, with nothing in the way.

**What are reasons for men/women to practice safer sex with our partner?**

20. Allow group discussion.

**Yes, it is important to protect yourself and your partner.**

*By using condoms and being true to our partners, we are showing that we are the kind of men/women who take responsibility for caring for our partners and our health.*

*You are also showing your partners that you love them enough to protect them.*

**What are some things that can help men/women use condoms with their partner?**

21. Apply the Nguzo Saba to participants’ suggestions (i.e. self-determination, unity, creativity). If participants do not bring up the following, facilitator can suggest them:

• **Remind yourself that using condoms shows your partner how much you care (Umoja - Unity).**
- Find sexy ways to use condoms, like thinking up sexual fantasies with condoms, or playing the Eban café game to make safer sex more fun (Kuumba – Creativity).

- Try different kinds of condoms, like flavored, ribbed, or colorful condoms (Kuumba – Creativity).

You came up with great strategies for using condoms with your partners.

Now that you have had a chance to talk about your experiences, we would like to go back to the group. Then, you will have a chance to share your experiences with the group, and hear about their experiences.

Before you go back, you might want to think about or discuss what you’d like to share with the whole group.

22. Allow participants a couple of minutes to think about or discuss among themselves what they’d like to share with the whole group, and what they’d like to keep private.

**FACILITATOR’S NOTE**

Bring the two gender groups back together into the same room.

23. Once two gender groups are back together in the same room, start by saying,

Now we would like to share some of the issues that we discussed in our men’s/women’s group with each other.
What are some of the obstacles you face that make it difficult to use condoms?

24. Wait for responses.

What are some reasons that you want to protect your partner?

25. Wait for responses.

What are some strategies you’d like to share that can help people use condoms?


Thank you for sharing your experiences in the group. We can all learn from one another and support each other to protect ourselves, our partner, and our community.
Activity I: Homework

**Time:**
5 minutes

**Materials Needed:**
- Homework for Session 5 (in workbook, section 5-9)
- Green, Yellow, and Red Stickers
- Connection Coupons
- Couple goal progress worksheet
- Condoms

**Procedure:**

   *In your workbook, you’ll find a homework sheet. We would like you to write down the people who give you social support. You can use initials or nicknames.*

   *Put a green sticker by the names of people who give strong support; a yellow sticker next to those people who are somewhat supportive; and a red sticker next to the people who provide little support.*

   *Then, you can pick one person from your list and decide how you can strengthen your bond with that person and contact him/her (e.g, phone call, invitation, letter, etc.). Or, if you would like you can call other people from the group to give each other social support.*

   *You should also work on your couple goals.*

2. Facilitators work with each couple to plan strategies to work on their goals.
Also, remember to check in with each other to talk about how you are doing, what you learned in the session, and how you feel about what you have learned.

Also, continue to share Connection Coupons with your partner to show affection and love for each other.
Activity J: Eban Closing Circle Ritual

**Time:**
15 minutes

**Materials Needed:**
- Ankh
- Eban Circle (in Workbook, section 5-8)

**Procedure:**
1. Start by saying,

   We would like to have a Talking Circle to share what we have already learned from this program.

   We will pass around the Ankh, an ancient Egyptian symbol that represents eternal life, unity between men and women, and our collective will to survive and thrive. When you have the ankh, it is your turn to talk.

2. Facilitators will model by saying what they learned from participants (The script below is just an example).

   **Facilitator One**

   I learned a lot from you. I learned how strong and resilient all of you are, and how much you can support each other. I feel thankful to be here with you today.

3. Facilitator Two should then also share what they learned from the participants.

4. Participants will talk about how they feel about what they learned and then pass the ankh to the person on their left.
It was very good to hear what you have learned from this project.

Now we would like to have you do the Eban Closing Circle Ritual. We would like to stand in a circle and hold hands (if you are comfortable) to form the protective Eban Closing Circle.

5. Participants should stand in a circle during the Eban Closing Circle, but they don’t have to hold hands if they prefer not to.

I am going to read a statement which is in your workbook in section 5.7.

“This is the Eban circle, it represents 360 degrees of African unity, strength and solidarity. We are only as strong as our weakest link. There is protection and comfort within the circle. There is also protection from the outside because I can look over your shoulder and you can look over mine. We stand together for each person, each couple, our families and the community.”

6. After the Eban Closing Circle say:

We have had a great session. We look forward to seeing you again next week in the village. We hope that you have a wonderful week and your homework goes well.

Take a few minutes to say good-bye to everyone informally.