SESSION 2
ENHANCING COUPLE COMMUNICATION
(Couple Session)

**Type of Session:**
Couple

**Session Outline:**
Activity A: Opening and Welcome (5 minutes)
Activity B: Review Last Session (5 minutes)
Activity C: Overview of Current Session (5 minutes)
Activity D: Review Homework (10 minutes)
Activity E: Patterns of Communication (15 minutes)
Activity F: Talk and Listen Technique (25 minutes)
Activity G: Problem Solving Skills (20 minutes)
Activity H: Risk Behaviors and Barriers to Risk Reduction (15 minutes)
Activity I: Couple Goal Setting (10 minutes)
Activity J: Homework (10 minutes)

**Session Goals:**
The goals of this session are:

- Learn Better Communication Skills
- Learn Problem Solving Technique Using FENCE
- Learn Good Goal Setting Skills
- Identify Couple’s STD/HIV Risks
- Identify Couple’s Goals to Reduce Risks
- Identify Couple’s Barriers to Achieving Goals

**Materials Needed to Conduct Session:**

- Ankh
- Eban CD Track #5: “Let’s Talk About Sex” by Salt ‘n Pepa
- Newsprint: Group Rules for Participation
- Poster #1: Eban symbol
- Poster #3: Nguzo Saba (Seven Principles)
- Poster #6: FENCE
Newsprint: Goals for Session
Poster #8: Characteristics of Good Goals
Workbooks for Facilitators
Small Cards with Facilitators’ Names and Phone Numbers
Handout #3: Talk and Listen Technique
Handout #4: FENCE
Handout #5: Referrals for Counseling
Handout #6: Levels of Risk
Handout #7: Couple Goal Setting
Handout #8: Couple Commitment Certificate
Condoms for Couple
Video Clip for Speaker and Listener Technique
Post It Flip Chart
Magic Markers
Homework #2: Practice Talk and Listen Technique and FENCE
Envelopes and Reimbursement (if handed out by facilitators)
CD player

FACILITATOR’S NOTE

- Reinforce all verbal contributions to increase participation by each member of the couple.
- Ensure that each member of the couple participate equally in the discussion.
- Facilitators should model appropriate couple communication and then be the coach for the same gender member of the couple when they practice a role play.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Opening and Welcome</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Review Last Session</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Overview of Current Session</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Review Homework</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Patterns of Communication</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Talk and Listen Technique</td>
<td>25 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIMH Multisite HIV/STD Prevention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trial for African American Couples</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Eban HIV/STD Risk Reduction Session 2**
*Version 1.0; September 4, 2003*
G. Problem Solving Skills  
H. Risk Behaviors and Barriers to Risk Reduction  
I. Couple Goal Setting  
J. Homework

Estimated Time = 120 minutes (2 hours)
Activity A: Opening and Welcome

**Time:**
5 minutes

**Materials needed:**
- Clock
- Tape Recorder
- Newsprint: Ground Rules for Participation
- Poster #1: Eban symbol
- Poster #3: Nguzo Saba

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

   Welcome __________ and __________. It is good to see you again. Have you had a good week?

   This is the second session of the EBAN Program and today we are going to go over how to talk to each other and solve problems together so that you can be healthier.

   To do this we are going to show you a technique you can use to talk and listen to each better so that you can really understand each other.

   For the next three weeks, the four of us will work on enhancing your communication and problem solving skills to promote your health. We want to see you every week.

   In these sessions, we will build on the strengths that you bring to your relationship--like wanting to come to this project together, and caring enough about yourselves and each other to want to learn more about staying healthy.

   You will be role models for other couples who want their family, friends, and community to stay healthy.

   Coming to these sessions means that you care for each other, and that you want to learn ways to improve your relationship.
Do you have any questions?

Remember the ground rules we talked about last time with the group? Those same ground rules apply to these couples’ sessions.

2. Read ground rules from the flip chart.

Are there any ground rules you would like to add as a couple?
Activity B: Review of Last Session

**Time:**
5 minutes

**Materials Needed:**
- None

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

Before we begin this session, we would like to review the session last week. Is there anything you would like to discuss about last week’s session?

What did you learn?

2. Wait for the couple to volunteer some points. If neither partner does, probe.

Did you learn anything last session that helped you understand your relationship better?

Did you practice anything you learned?

3. Reinforce anything that either one says and review the points.

Yes, last week we learned about Nguzo Saba.

- Learned about HIV/STD facts.
- Learned how to identify some problems that make it hard to change.
- Discussed ways that we can overcome some of those problems so that we can have safer sex.
- Increased our pride in being men and in being women.
• Increased our pride in African American cultural heritage.
Activity C: Overview of Current Session

**Time:**
5 minutes

**Materials Needed:**
1. Newsprint – Goals for Session

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

   *Today we will be talking about 3 principles from the Nguzo Saba: One, “Unity” or “oomojah”; Three “Collective work and responsibility” or “oojeemah”, and Five, “Purpose” or “nee ah”.*

   *We would like to talk about how to be closer together so that you can talk to each other better and solve problems.*

   *Many couples have difficulty talking about sex and other important topics. During this session we are going to work on developing better communication and problem solving skills.*

   *This program will help you create Eban–the fence of safety, security and love around your relationship–to help you protect each other from infection with HIV and other STDs.*

   *Finally, we will help you establish goals for protecting each other from HIV and STDs and improving your relationship.*

   *Do you have any questions about our goals for this session?*

   *We would like to begin by going over your homework assignment.*
Activity D: Review Homework

Time:
10 minutes

Materials Needed:
- Homework #1 (in workbook)

Procedure:
1. Start by saying,

   In the last session, you were asked to write four things: (1) what strengths you bring to the relationship, (2) what is important to you about your relationship (3) what you love about your partner, and (4) how you want to protect each other.

   Let’s look at the homework from last week.

   Which one of you would like to go first? Okay, we want you to tell your partner what you think are your strengths and then [opposite gender facilitator] will show you what we want the other person to do. [Opposite gender facilitator] will say what he/she heard. If this is not correct, you should correct it.

   Facilitator’s Note

   Select one partner to be the Talker, and have the opposite gender facilitator sit next to the other partner to model being the Listener. Facilitator should reflect back what the Talker said, adding “did I get it right?” After two statements, facilitator should ask the Listener partner if he/she is ready to “take over”. If not yet, keep modeling statements until Listener is ready. When Talker is finished, switch roles, and have the other Facilitator play the Listener in the same way for two statements before the participant takes over.

2. Ask partners to say how the exercise felt.

   How did it feel to hear your partner express those feelings? How did it feel to have your partner tell you what he/she heard?
3. Reinforce the couple for being open with you and with each other. Let them know that this is the first step to good communication and to making positive changes in our lives.

It is really great to hear you describe what you value about the other person and what you value in your lives.

As we listen to your sharing we can hear how united the two of you are in sharing responsibility for each other and your relationship.

Thank you for doing such a wonderful job. You have a lot of reasons to protect each other and be safe.

Risky behaviors, like unsafe sex, can get in the way of achieving your goals and dreams and your purpose. By working towards safer behaviors like using condoms, you are helping to make a bright future for yourself and your partner, as reflected in the principle of Nia or Purpose.
Activity E: Patterns of Communication (15 minutes)

Time:
15 minutes

Materials Needed:
- Patterns of Communication (in workbook section 2.3)

Procedure:
1. Facilitators should introduce the concept of differing patterns of communications. Understanding one’s pattern may help adopt a more effective way to communicate.

   Being able to communicate better can help you talk to each other about safer sex and protect each other from HIV and STDs. Many couples seem to have the same communication problem over and over in different situations.

   Before we talk about how to communicate better, we want to show you three common patterns that can cause problems.

   If you recognize when these are happening, you can use the communication and problem solving techniques you’ll learn later today to help you solve your problem.

2. Demand-Withdraw

   Pattern One is called Demand-Withdraw. One person is talking about a subject which is important to him/her while the other person is avoiding the subject.

   The person who is trying to have a conversation becomes really frustrated when the other person refuses to answer and withdraws from you.

   We will show you an example of the demand-withdraw communication pattern.

3. Facilitator One

   Why do you always leave your clothes all over the floor? The house is such a mess! I
4. **Facilitator Two**

*I cannot deal with this now I have to go to work.*

*Does that sound familiar to you?*

5. Probe whether this is a pattern common to their relationship.

6. **Demand-Demand**

The second pattern is called Demand-Demand where both partners demand to have their way.

*Both partners bring up issues, blame each other, and demand that the other change in some way or do something but neither is listening to the other one.*

*Listening is being able to later tell your partner what you heard him/her say in your own words.*

*We would like to show you this way of talking.*

7. **Facilitator One**

*You are always coming home so late! You never spend time with me and you do not help out around the house. You need to be a better partner. You are so selfish.*

8. **Facilitator Two**

*What about you? You are always nagging and criticizing me. You never want to do*
anything that I want to do and nothing ever satisfies you. You are the one who needs to behave better.

Does that sound familiar to you?

9. Probe whether this is a pattern common to their relationship.

10. **Withdraw-Withdraw**

The third pattern is called withdraw-withdraw. When a relationship has unresolved problems, couples may retreat into a withdraw-withdraw pattern.

The couple may not know how to talk about the problem, or they might not want to hurt the other person or stir things up. As a result, problems do not get addressed or resolved.

11. **Facilitator One**

What is wrong?

12. **Facilitator Two**

Nothing. What is up with you? (rolling eyes)

13. **Facilitator One**

I am fine but you seem upset. (gruffly)

14. **Facilitator Two**

No, I am fine. I just need to relax. Can you stop all the questions.
Does this way of talking sound familiar?

15. Probe which pattern is common to their relationship.

Which of these patterns is most common to your relationship?

Can you describe the last situation that you had which fits one of these patterns?

Many couples feel that these patterns do not lead to good feelings or problem solving. There is a healthier communication pattern, called Talk and Listen, that we would like to show you.
Activity F: Talk and Listen Technique

Time:
25 minutes

Materials Needed:
1. CD track #5: “Let’s Talk about Sex” by Salt ‘n Pepa
2. Speaker-Listener Video
3. Talk and Listen Technique (in Workbook, section 2-4)
4. Referrals for Counseling

Procedure:
1. Facilitator should introduce the exercise.

   We would like to discuss some good communication techniques that will ensure effective and healthy communication.

   Communication occurs when the listener hears and understands what the Talker meant to say.

   We would like to discuss the song for today’s session which is called “Let’s talk about sex.” As you listen to this song, think about the messages in the song.

2. Facilitators play the song (Track #5) and then lead a discussion about its meaning using the following questions.

   What does this song mean to you?

   How does it relate to talking with your partner about safer sex?

3. After the couple has provided some answers, reinforce their ideas.

   Yes, this song talks about the importance of talking to your partner about practicing
safer sexual behaviors. I hear Ujima and Umoja as Salt N’ Peppa suggest that by talking about sex we **unite** together and **share responsibility** for practicing safer sex.

Communication is important. By learning to talk and listen better, you can work together to protect each other.

You are on your way to learning how to more effectively talk to each other.

In this exercise, there is something for each partner to learn--how you express yourself and how your partner hears you. We would like to begin by showing a video. You will see couples united in a common purpose: learning to improve communication.

4. Show 7-minute video clip demonstrating the technique.

Even though this communication technique was called Speaker and Listener in the video, in this program, we call it the Talk and Listen Technique.

When you told each other what you value and love about each other and repeated what you heard your partner say, you were practicing the Talk and Listen Technique.

The Talk and Listen Technique is a powerful way to communicate about difficult subjects. We have taught this approach to many couples and it is helpful if they are willing to try it, practice it, and use it to work on difficult problems.

Do you have any comments on the video?

Before this technique will be useful, you need to practice it with easy topics; that is, topics that do not trigger emotions.

5. Refer to Couple Handout #3 in Workbook: Talk and Listen Technique, section 2-4.

We would like to review the way to do this with you by briefly going over the
procedures for the Talk and Listen Technique.

6. Briefly review procedures for Talk and Listen which are listed in workbook.

| Do you feel comfortable practicing the Talk and Listen Technique with each other? |
| Can you talk to each other about what you would like to do for fun this weekend? |

7. Example 1:

Take a few minutes to have the couple practice the talk and listen technique while facilitator gives corrective feedback throughout the process. If any of the three principles for today are reflected, participants should point that out.

| Yes, that was very good. |
| Are you ready to try a new topic? |

8. Example 2: **Facilitator note: If the couple expressed interest in discussing STD results, then facilitator should remind them by paraphrasing what they expressed earlier about the topic and encouraging them to discuss more using Talk and Listen. If not, skip to example 3.

| Earlier you talked about your STD results and there was more to say. We’d like to support you both as you use Talk and Listen to talk more about that. Are you ready? |

9. Facilitator should guide the couple to use Talk and Listen to talk about STD test results and praise efforts by the couple.
Example 3:

Can you think of a topic that has to do with safer sex? Can you discuss how you feel about protecting each other from HIV and STDs? We will coach you.

10. Facilitator should guide the couple to use talk and listen to talk about safer sex, and praise efforts by the couple.

That was a great first try! We will be using this technique throughout our sessions, and I hope it becomes a useful tool that helps your communication. Over time, these techniques will become more natural for you both.

Try to practice Talk and Listen often so it becomes second nature. You can use it anytime you’re dealing with a difficult topic, to help you be sure that what the other person said is what you heard. You can use this technique with anyone you feel you need to communicate better with, like your partner, your kids, your family.

Do you think that the Talk and Listen Technique would help improve your communication?

Do you think it can help you talk about sex?

11. Facilitator should initiate a brief exploration with the couple of what happens when the couple talks about sex.

- Do you find that it is easy or hard to talk about sex?
- What does talking about sex bring up for you?
• What happens when you talk about HIV?
• What happens when you talk about using condoms to prevent HIV from spreading?
• What makes it difficult to talk?

12. Let the couple volunteer what makes it difficult for them and reinforce their answers and suggest other reasons.

Yes, those are common reasons.

13. If the couple does not volunteer any reasons for avoiding discussions of sex, offer the following reasons.

• For many couples, talking about sex or HIV leads to an argument.
• For many couples, talking about sex or HIV leaves one partner feeling hurt or angry.
• Some couples avoid the discussion because it is too scary.
• Some couples avoid the discussion because it reminds their partner of his/her HIV status.

There may be many reasons why couples avoid discussion of sex. At Eban we want to encourage as much healthy discussion (using Talk and Listen) as possible so that you can talk about sex and plan for reducing risky behaviors.

What are some of the ways that couples might overcome their barrier to discussing things like sex?

14. Probe for ways that the couple can overcome these barriers. You can use some of the following statements to do this.
- Sometimes it might be helpful to plan to discuss an issue. Make a date with each other to talk.

- Now that you know Talk and Listen, it might help to discuss sex using this technique.

- If the conversation gets heated, a good idea might be to calm down and take a time-out. Then, you can go back to the discussion once both of you are calmer, and better able to talk about it without making the conflict worse.

15. Facilitator(s) should further explore barriers to communication, particularly to identify any unsafe patterns, including physical abuse. Mention that all couples have conflict or disagreement at some time in their relationship. Emphasize that Eban is about finding healthy and safe ways to communicate.

Before moving on, we’d like to take a few minutes to mention that we know that for some couples, disagreement or conflict, or poor communication can be VERY unsafe.

When couples have difficulty talking about conflict in a constructive way, their anger and frustration can build up and erupt. Sometimes couples have verbal arguments that can lead to one or both of them being physical.

What do you two do when either of you feels that a discussion may be getting out of hand or heated?

16. If couple is interested and willing to discuss their discomfort with how they handle conflict, facilitators can help them to use Talk and Listen to do so.

We want to do everything we can in Eban to support moving to the safest and most loving communication between all of our couples. Is there something we can do today to help each of you feel safer as you communicate with your partner?
17. If couple does not indicate any need or interest, move on to the next section emphasizing that you are available to talk outside of the session at any time about ways to make the couple’s communication safer and other resources and agencies that may be helpful to them.

Remember you can talk to us outside the session if you have any questions about how to be safer or if you would like some referrals.

18. Facilitators should also give all couples Handout #5: Referrals for Counseling
Activity G: Problem Solving Skills (20 minutes)

Time:
20 minutes

Materials Needed:
1. Flipchart
2. Markers
3. Poster #6: FENCE
4. FENCE (in workbook, section 2-5)

Procedure:
1. Facilitator(s) should introduce activity.

   Now that we have talked about different communication patterns, and how to talk and listen to each other, we would like to talk about how to work together to SOLVE problems so that you can deal with difficult issues and conflict in your relationship.

   Talk and Listen allows you to hear each other out. Problem solving allows you to come up with some solutions!

   As we just discussed, conflict involves disagreements. No matter how great your relationship is, there will be times when you see things differently.

   What is something you have conflict about or disagree about in your relationship?

2. Let them name some issues and reinforce them.

   Yes, money, household chores, talking about how you feel, sex are common areas of conflict.

   Are there other common problems?

   All couples have to deal with conflict. If we do not deal with issues or conflicts in your relationship, they can add up, and affect how you are feeling about each other and your sex life. They can prevent you from uniting together to protect each other sexually.
We would like to talk about an effective problem solving approach that will help not only your communication but also the way in which you make decisions.

3. Be sure Poster #6: FENCE is visible.

4. Refer to FENCE technique in Workbook, section 2.5.

5. Facilitators will teach couples the FENCE acronym and problem solving approach.

FENCE is the symbol that we use in the EBAN program to symbolize love and protection of each other and our community. We are working with you to build a FENCE of safety around yourselves and the community. Each letter stands for a step in the problem solving strategy.

F stands for Find Out What Is Going On.

Define the problem or issue you need to work on. Identify how you feel. Your feelings will let you know how much solving this problem means to you.

E stands for Explore Your Partner’s Feelings.

After you identify your feelings about this issue, listen to your partner and try to understand what he or she is feeling about what is going on. Try to have conversations when the two of you are alone so that you can really talk together.

Say something positive about your partner’s feelings to indicate that you acknowledge and support those feelings. When couples can acknowledge each other’s feelings, they communicate better.

N stands for Name and Discuss Your Options.

Write down the options and consider the pros and cons of each one.

Think about what you want given the options that are available. For example “I know
in the past that we have done A, B, and C. Now I would like to do X, Y, and Z because it might help us both to stay healthy.”

While it is important to consider your partner’s feelings, it is also important to consider your own needs and feelings when suggesting options.

**C stands for Choose the Best Option.**

You and your partner should decide what is the best option to solve the problem that you can both agree on. This may involve compromise on both sides.

**E stands for Execute the Plan and Monitor Progress.**

You and your partner should execute your plan for dealing with the problem.

Does that seem like a system that could help you work on your problems?

6. Probe whether the couple thinks that they can use this system to solve some of their problems and find out what some of their problems are.

7. Facilitator(s) should ask couple to select an issue that they can FENCE. Guide couple through the process, praising success and providing constructive feedback for places needing additional work. During the “Name and discuss options” step, write down the options they mention on a flipchart so they can choose one.

*We’ll be practicing Talk and Listen and FENCE in each session so that it becomes easier and more natural for you to use.*
8. Risk Behaviors and Barriers to Risk Reduction

Time:
15 minutes

Materials Needed:
- Flipchart
- Markers

Procedure:
1. Start by saying,

   In the last session we talked about individual risk behaviors. Now, you are together as a couple. Take a minute to think about any risk behaviors you may have as a couple. What are some examples of behaviors that transmit HIV or STDs?

2. Wait for responses; if none follow, use phrases below, or use to supplement couple responses.

   Not using condoms during vaginal, oral, or anal sex; sharing needles during drug use; breast feeding.

   Would you like to share which risky behaviors are most difficult for you and your partner?


4. Brainstorm barriers to practicing safer sex.

   Many people know that they have HIV or another STD and do not know how to work with their partner to reduce risk.

   What are some things that make it difficult to talk with your partner and use condoms?
5. Wait for responses and facilitators write them on a flip chart. In not mentioned, facilitators can suggest some of the following barriers:

- **Condoms interfere with sexual pleasure:** “Condoms do not feel good”  
  “Want skin to skin contact”

- **Availability:** “Could not find one.”

- **Spontaneity:** “Did not want to stop the process.”

- **Fatalism:** “I will get it anyway.”

- **Denial:** “I cannot believe I will get HIV.”

- **Negative Partner Reactions:** “I am afraid how my partner might react.”

Now we would like to get your ideas about how a couple can overcome these problems.

6. Wait for responses and reinforce them.

In the Eban program we will be working with you and your partner to set couple goals to reduce risky behavior, identify the things that get in the way of using condoms, and overcome any of these barriers that are a problem for you as a couple.

It is important that you recognize the barriers for you as individuals and those where you will need to work with your partner.
Activity I: Couple Goal Setting

Time:
105 Minutes

Materials Needed:
- Flipchart
- Markers
- Level of Risk (in Workbook section 2.7)
- Poster #8: Characteristics of Good Goals
- Couple Goal Setting worksheet (in Workbook section 2.8)

Procedure:
1. Start by saying,

   An important part of leading healthier lives is to plan and define goals to work on as a couple.

   Our purpose in Eban is to help you and your partner unite, and share responsibility for reducing your risk of HIV/STDs.

2. Refer to Handout #6: Levels of Risk in workbook, section 2.7.

   Before setting goals, let’s take a look at what behaviors are risky. Here is a listing of many different behaviors and their levels of HIV/STD risk.

   At the bottom are the sexual behaviors that are less likely to transmit HIV and other STDs.

   At the top are the sexual behaviors that are more likely to transmit HIV and other STDs.

   What level do you think that you are at as a couple?

   What level would you like to be at when you finish the Eban sessions?
As we talk about setting goals for your relationship, we can refer to this listing to ensure that you are moving to the less risky end of this hierarchy.

Before we move ahead and set goals, let’s talk about the characteristics of good goals.

3. Put up Poster #8: Characteristics of Good Goals on wall.

What do you think we mean by good goals?

A good goal is one where you clearly know whether you accomplished it or not. For example, “I will share with my partner what I learned in this session.”

A good goal is one that is well specified. A better goal would be “I will talk to my partner on Tuesday night when we go out to dinner.”

A good goal is one that is realistic, that is not too hard and not too easy. We want to set goals we can actually accomplish — not set ourselves up to fail. A goal that is doable is “I will go out and buy condoms and put them in a drawer next to the bed.”

A good goal supports our Nia or purpose of reducing high risk behaviors. (I will talk to my partner about using a condom the next time we have sex.)

So, again, goals should be well specified, realistic (that is, not too easy or hard), and have a clear endpoint so you know when you have completed the goal.

So, with this in mind, we would like you to choose two goals as a couple that both of you feel that you can accomplish over the next seven weeks.

One of these two goals should involve reducing your HIV/STD risk behavior. Look at the Levels of Risk to find a behavior that you can do which is less risky than what you are currently doing.

The second goal should involve improving your relationship. For example, it can involve working on strategies to communicate better with your partner.

Remember, these two goals should be related to 1) decreasing your HIV/STD risky
behaviors and 2) improving your relationship. These goals should reflect Unity or Umoja (uniting to protect one another), Collective Work and Responsibility or Ujima (working together to reduce our sexual risk), and Purpose or Nia.

4. Refer Handout #7: Couple Goal Setting in Workbook, section 2.8

5. Give the couple a chance to talk with each other and write down their two goals.

*Those are important goals. Can you tell us what these goals mean to you and how do you think that they will reduce your risks for HIV/STDs and help you improve your relationship?*

*Last week we talked about some of the things that can get in the way of your goals for practicing safer sex. What things in your life can get in the way of achieving each of your goals?*

6. Write the barriers the couple mentions down on the flip-chart.

*We would like you to write down the things that can get in the way of working on your goals for protecting each other from HIV and STDs and improving your relationship.*

*You can write them down in your couples’ goal worksheet, under “barriers” or “things that get in your way.”*

*Now we would like you to think about how you can overcome those barriers. You can write these down on your couple’s goal sheet.*

7. Give the couple a few minutes to write something down.

*Would you like to share some of them.*

8. Reinforce the good responses.
In this program, we will explore strategies to overcome these problems, so that you can be successful in achieving your goals.
Activity J: Homework (10 minutes)

**Time:**
10 minutes

**Materials Needed:**
- Couple Goal Progress Worksheet (in Workbook, section 2-11)
- Homework for Session 2 (in Workbook, section 2-12)
- Condoms

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

   The session is almost over. At the end of each of the Eban sessions, you will decide how you want to work on reducing HIV/STD risks for yourself and your partner and work on improving your relationship between now and next meeting.

   What can you accomplish by the next session on either of the two goals that you set as a couple?

2. Let them discuss this and decide on the strategies they will use this week to work on their goals.

   Those are good strategies.

   You can use the goal progress worksheet, which is in your workbook, to keep track of your progress on your couple goals.

   You should also practice the Talk and Listen Technique to talk about the goals that you just identified.

   You should also practice FENCE in working on your goals.
We would also like you to pick a convenient day and time to check in with each other, and use Talk and Listen to talk about what you learned in the session, how you feel about it, and how you are doing. You could talk about some of these questions.

1. What did you get out of the last session?

2. How do you feel about what you learned in Eban?

3. How are you doing as a couple?

4. What can each of you do to improve your relationship?

There is a homework sheet in your Workbook (Homework for Session 2) to remind you what you need to do during the week. Write down notes so we can discuss them next week in our session. Also, remember to bring your workbook with you.

Good-bye. Here are some condoms for you to take home. We will see you next week!