



A H e a l t h i e r , H a p p i e r Y o u

Making Smart Lifestyle Choices

Leader's Manual

“A Healthier, Happier You” is a health promotion package that lends itself to brief presentations as well as in-depth workshops. Whatever presentation format you choose, the backbone of your program will be the single page fact sheet, “A Healthier, Happier You: Making Smart Lifestyle Choices” (HE 7-167).

Overview of Contents

The first page of this manual serves as a brief teaching outline for volunteers such as homemaker leaders who, after attending a 90-minute training session, will then deliver a shorter version of the program to their clubs or other groups.

Following the leader's outline, you will find a camera-ready publication, “A Healthier, Happier You: Ten Dimensions of a Well-Rounded Lifestyle” (H.E.7-175). This publication contains a wealth of information. Depending on your goals, the group you are addressing, and the time frame of your presentation, you may wish to use it for background information, as the foundation of an informal lecture, or as a supplementary handout for group participants.

After this supplementary publication, you'll find a description of available loan materials including a wellness videotape, colored presentation transparencies, and a set of healthy lifestyle posters.

We then offer two additional group activities—What's Wrong With This Picture? and Learning Stations—and suggest the possibility of forming a discussion panel or inviting an outside speaker.

Next you'll find suggestions on visual teaching aids, a section on humor, a suggested evaluation procedure, and a recommendation on concluding your workshop. At the end of the manual we've provided 12 transparency masters, six health-related cartoons, and a one-page evaluation instrument.

Leader's Outline

*The best way to treat disease
is to prevent it.*

As a group leader, please use or adapt this outline as you see fit. Incorporate your own ideas and creativity. The backbone of your presentation will be the one-page fact sheet, "A Healthier, Happier You: Making Smart Lifestyle Choices" (H.E. 7-167). Study this publication carefully so that you are thoroughly familiar with it.

If possible, sit down with a friend a week or so before your presentation. Complete your respective Lifestyle Profiles, discuss points that come to mind, then commit yourselves to simple Personal Action Plans that you can fulfill within three or four days. This will give you firsthand experience with the Lifestyle Profile and Personal Action Plan that you can share with your group.

As you conduct your workshop, emphasize that the best way to promote health and reduce medical costs is to make intelligent lifestyle choices.

Statistics from a variety of sources tell us that most Americans have a lot of room for improvement in leading healthier lives. Let's take Kentucky, for example. On its "public health report card," the National Public Health Association ranked Kentucky in the bottom 20 percent of states. Many Kentuckians still do not use seat belts; over 25 percent are obese; and a whopping 68 percent of Kentuckians lead sedentary lives, failing to engage in physical activity for 20 or more minutes three times a week. Kentucky leads all other states in percentage of smokers, is 7th in overall cancer deaths, 11th in suicide rates, and 12th both in heart disease deaths and birth defect rates.

Soaring medical costs are digging deeply into the financial health of the nation. While we're familiar with the rising expense of medical services, we pay less attention to the high cost of other lifestyle-related problems. For example, did you know that the expense of fighting child sex abuse in Kentucky alone has been estimated at \$58 million a year? And that figure doesn't begin to measure the cost in human suffering.

The positive side of all this is that you and I can make a difference! It starts with small personal lifestyle choices that collectively add up to a big difference. That's what this program is all about—choosing to lead healthier lifestyles.

Off to a Good Start

Invite your group to stand and take a BIG, long stretch. Smile. Lead them in two or three brief, gentle, easy-to-do exercises, cautioning participants not to strain sore or weak parts of their bodies. Enjoy another full body stretch before sitting. Next, ask everyone to take in a deep breath and slowly release it. Repeat the deep breathing one or two times. Tell a good-natured joke, if one comes to mind; or invite a group member to share a funny experience. Both exercise and humor refresh and relax us, opening our minds to learning.

Success Stories

Give participants an opportunity to share success stories of people they know who have made positive lifestyle changes. What motivated these people to change? Why were they successful? What can we learn from them?

Lifestyle Profile & Personal Action Plan

After you have presented the three guidelines for success—take small steps, be kind to yourself, and enjoy the process—and after discussing what health means, distribute the one-page fact sheet, "A Healthier, Happier You: Making Smart Lifestyle Choices." Go over the 10 Dimensions of a Healthy Lifestyle while inviting input and encouraging discussion from the group.

Then lead participants in completing their profiles and personal action plans. Next, ask them to team up with a partner so they can be accountable to and encourage one another in the days ahead. Emphasize that the goal is to take a small, manageable step toward a healthier lifestyle. Unrealistic goals invite failure; stay away from them. Instead, go slowly and enjoy the process. Invite a few people to share their action plans. Discuss the importance of positive attitude, including positive visualization and self-talk. Ask participants what they think will help them most in successfully completing their action plans.

A Follow-Up Session?

Discuss with your group the possibility of scheduling a short follow-up session, perhaps the next time your group gets together? Folks could briefly share with one another how they did with their Personal Action Plans. The idea would be to have fun, celebrate with those who have achieved their goals, and provide lots of encouragement for those still struggling toward success.

Closing Story

Remember Freddie the Frog? He accidentally jumped into a big pail of milk with steep, slippery sides. Every time he tried to get out, he slipped back into the lake of fresh milk. After hours paddling through the milk, his little legs became almost paralyzed from exhaustion. He went under once, twice, and then a third time. But he refused to give up. "I'll die paddling before I go under again," he said to himself. Very soon, to his delight, he felt something solid under his legs. His persistent paddling had churned up a big lump of butter. Encouraged, he gave forth a burst of energy and leaped out of the bucket onto solid ground. The moral: When striving toward a worthwhile goal, don't give up! If you persist, you will succeed.

Thought for the Day

Don't depend on external events or other people to make you happy. Happiness is something you first find inside you, and then bring as a gift to all who cross your path.

Materials

Available for Loan

Because quantities are limited we are able to loan these materials only to County Cooperative Extension Offices:

■ **Videotape.** Three copies of a video, *Wellness: Skills for Lifestyle Change*, are available for loan from the Scovell Hall Instructional Video Library. Each video is accompanied by a 16-page booklet of the same title. To check on the availability of this video (Catalogue # VHS-0105), contact Jean Mullins via AgMail. The 15-minute videotape discusses little choices we can make each day that will add up to an enhanced sense of well-being. Wellness is defined as an on-going journey that results in increased health, vitality, and satisfaction.

The video covers six areas of wellness: nutrition, fitness, stress, healthy relationships, job satisfaction, and safety. In addition to the six wellness areas discussed in the video, "A Healthier, Happier You" also covers four additional areas essential to overall well-being: balanced positive thinking, effective money management, spiritual nourishment, and enrichment, fun, and laughter.

■ **Color Transparencies.** We have for loan three sets of 11 color transparencies. To borrow them please contact Jean Mullins by AgMail. These transparencies are essentially the same as the set of black and white masters found later in this manual except that they are laser quality and printed in color.

■ **Posters.** We also have available three loan sets of five "Healthy Lifestyle Posters." You may borrow them from the Scovell Hall Instructional Video Library by contacting Jean Mullins via AgMail. These professionally produced, 18" x 24" laminated color posters, shipped in a durable plastic tube, are packed with information. The titles of the five posters are: How Fit Are You? How Much Do You Know About Walking? How Well Do You Manage Stress? How Healthy Is Your Attitude? How Well Do You Balance Work and Family?

What's Wrong With This Picture?

Practice reading the following story aloud two or three times, so that you feel comfortable reading it to your group. Before you read this narrative to your group, instruct them to be ready with pen and paper. Your job is to read the story without stopping; their job is to jot down everything they notice that might promote poor health. Ask group members to think of health in a broad context. Remind them of the ten dimensions of a healthy lifestyle highlighted during your summary of the "A Healthier, Happier You" fact sheet.

After you finish reading, ask those present to share the health "red flags" they noticed as they listened to the story. Allow participants freedom to discuss issues as they are brought up. Finally, as a group, design a balanced, healthy lifestyle for George and Ruby.

George slumps in his mulberry corduroy easy chair, wing tipped shoes abandoned, belt buckle loosened to liberate his rotund belly, and swirls of cigarette smoke moving across his face toward his beer bottle. After a week of long hours at the office, his mind returns to personnel problems and he can't relax enough to enjoy the TV sitcom. Even those juicy slabs of pork roast, the mashed potatoes with butter and gravy, and that hot fudge double chocolate pecan with caramel syrup delight haven't erased the memory of his argument with the boss. Hmmm!

He'd leave his job in a heartbeat if he weren't so dependent on every penny just to make ends meet. The pressure is really getting to him, though. George squirms restlessly, reminding himself not to mention his problems to Ruby. That nuisance of a pain shoots across his chest and left arm again. Dang! Wishing the discomfort would just go away, he decides that this Saturday, his weekly exercise day, he will jog five miles instead of four. He promises to reward himself with bacon, eggs, and sugar doughnuts when that ordeal is over.

Lighting another cigarette from his last one, George glances over at Ruby, who has quickly tidied the kitchen. She now perches at the end of the sofa, reading U.S. News & World Report. Ruby is thin, thanks to rigorous off-and-on dieting, but she seems nervous and high-strung. She doesn't laugh anymore, but then again, he doesn't laugh much either. And fret?! Shaking his head, he wonders what she is worrying about now—the children, her hospital volunteering, her church work, the house, the neighbors—and of course, the money. If she would just stop buying all those clothes and shoes, they wouldn't have so many bills to pay.

There she sits, sipping her cabbage juice, which she swears is providing all her daily nutrients. He shudders as he remembers the dreadful broccoli-asparagus-cayenne pepper surprise she tried to feed him earlier, and, grimacing, he determines never to eat another vegetable. Never! Noticing the canned laughter on TV, he does not join in. Bored, silent, and lonely, George relaxes his weary shoulders into the cushions, closes his eyes, and dozes. Soon snoring fills the room.

Ruby, looking up from her magazine, frowns at the snoring. He certainly is a romantic sight, she thinks, glancing scornfully at her husband's nodding head. She remembers sadly what fun they used to have dancing with friends until dawn. No more of that silliness. Not since, after drinking with friends, she broke her leg in that terrible car accident. To this day, she wonders why, even though only her seat belt saved her life, George still refuses to wear one. All he ever says to her about it is,

“Well, everybody’s got to go sometime.” She rubs the aching part of her leg where the pin remains.

Actually, she thinks, she hasn’t been feeling too well lately, but that physical will just have to wait. It costs so much money, and if there is bad news, she doesn’t want to hear it right now. A few months more won’t matter. Turning to gaze at the evening sun filtering through the winter trees outside the living room window, she hears a wisp of an old song coming from the TV, reminding her of old times and old friends. Suddenly lonely, she wonders if George would go for a walk with her. Glancing over at him, she shakes her head no. Picking up a book titled “A Romantic Interlude in the Bahamas,” she settles back for another quiet evening at home.

Learning Stations

To conduct the “Learning Stations” activity, you need the Healthy Lifestyle Posters introduced above under “Materials for Loan.” Tape the posters in well spaced locations on the walls of the room. For example, if your group has roughly 30 people, randomly divide them into five teams. Ask each team to gather around one of the posters. Give the teams ten minutes to absorb as much information as they can from their particular poster. Then ask the members of each team to present to the larger group a two- or three-minute summary of what they learned.

Discussion Panel or Outside Speaker

To give your workshop an extra twist, you may want to form a panel consisting of a couple of lay persons and two or three health-care professionals. Ask each panelist to briefly share information about one component of health they feel is particularly important. Then open the workshop up for discussion among panelists and invite questions from the members of your group.

As an alternative, invite a local health-care expert to speak and receive questions from your group.

Visual Teaching Aids

If you do not use a loan set of color transparencies, consider using the 12 transparency masters in this manual. You can either make overhead transparencies or, if your group is fairly small, you may wish to fix the masters (or copies of them) to cardboard and use them as small posters as you focus on each of the dimensions of a healthy lifestyle. With either transparencies or posters, consider using a set of markers to add a touch of color.

A Touch of Humor

Toward the end of this manual you will find six cartoons. You may wish to use some or all of these transparency masters to add a touch of humor to your workshop. Depending on the capability of your overhead projector and the size of your group, you can make transparencies

from the cartoons in their current size or you can enlarge them before making your transparencies. The cartoons were created by Ed Fisher and are published in a book titled Health Care-toons. The volume is distributed by the National Wellness Institute (715-346-2172) which gave us permission to use these cartoons for non-profit educational purposes.

Evaluating Your Workshop

To determine *the extent of positive behavior change* generated by your workshop, consider gathering the names, addresses, and phone numbers of group members at the beginning of your session. Before you begin your session, explain that you will be contacting a sample of participants in about two weeks to see what changes they have made as a result of the *A Healthier, Happier You: Making Smart Lifestyle Changes* program. After two weeks, contact a random sample using the evaluation form at the end of this manual titled, “Helping Us Serve You Better.”

Concluding Your Workshop

We recommend that you distribute the one-page leaflet toward the end of your workshop. That way participants won’t be tempted to read it during group activities. The Lifestyle Profile & Personal Action Plan serves as an excellent concluding activity. Be sure to have handy a supply of colorful, fairly small rubber bands that participants can wear as take-home reminders to follow through on their chosen action plans.

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Helping Us Serve You Better

1. As a result of participating in the *A Healthier, Happier You: Making Smart Lifestyle Choices* workshop, has your *thinking* changed in a positive way?

Yes **No** Please explain.

2. As a result of this program have you *done* anything that you consider an improvement?

Yes **No** Please explain.

3. Did you follow through on your Personal Action Plan?

Yes **No** Please explain.

4. Suggestions for improving the *A Healthier, Happier You* program:

5. As a direct result of this program:

a. **Yes** **No** I have read the *A Healthier, Happier You* one-page leaflet.

b. **Yes** **No** I have a better understanding of the factors that contribute to healthy living.

c. **Yes** **No** I am leading a healthier lifestyle.

d. **Yes** **No** I feel better about myself.

e. **Yes** **No** I have shared portions of what I learned with others.

f. **Yes** **No** I helped a friend or family member with a Personal Action Plan.

g. **Yes** **No** I would highly recommend this program to others.

Today's Date _____