

Training Session

How to support someone with HIV who has a Christian Faith

Audience: Staff and volunteer training in Health or Social Care settings

Time: 1- 2 hours (2 allows for more discussion)

Aims:

- To feel more confident in understanding how being diagnosed with HIV might affect someone who is a Christian, and how being a Christian affects how people live with HIV
- To feel able to find out if someone with HIV values their faith
- Be able to advise, signpost or support that person in their spiritual need

Preparation:

- Identify three videos from Positive Faith (recommendations below)
- Watch the Body and Soul Charity videos if HIV awareness needs updating (you could send the links round to the participants as 'homework' before the training session)
- Have a look through the Positive Faith website with your group in mind - what aspects of the resource would they find useful in their work?
- How will you support someone affected by the content?
- What support is out there for people living with HIV? Are there any HIV churches or groups?

Suggested group ground rules:

- Keep to time
- Respect each other perspectives
- Contribute from your own experiences and observation
- Be prepared to learn something
- Keep confidentiality of what has been shared and within the illustrations that you share
- Mobile phones on silent
- Take turns talking and let people finish what they are saying

Programme

Top and tail your workshop in your normal way – i.e welcome and introduction – use the ideas provided as a template that makes sense for your group; it's size and dynamic.

1. As a group write down a list of questions your could ask someone that might help you understand a person's faith, beliefs or spirituality
2. Show 3 videos – suggestions:
 - HIV and Faith Matters : Why me?
 - HIV and Faith Matters : Will I be healed
 - Living with HIV : Being diagnosed with HIV – Do not be anxious
3. Allow time for some quiet reflection between videos
4. Share one thing that 'struck' each person after watching each video. Or ask people to write down that one thing down, then take turns in sharing after all three videos have been viewed.
5. Provide space and time for the discussion to take place. Use these questions if necessary.
 - Why would someone living with HIV feel they might have sinned?
 - Why would it be useful to know that the person you are supporting has a faith?
 - Would God heal someone living with HIV?What might be the initial reaction following an HIV diagnosis of someone who is has Christian faith?
 - Why do you think that churches and society in general, have stopped thinking and talking about HIV?
6. Review questions you wrote down at the beginning. Agree and write out the best 2.
7. Give an overview of Positive Faith so that there is confidence to signpost (it might be useful for them to know that it's mobile optimised, there's a range of questions addressed with theology and bible references included, it's appeal to wide range of Christian perspectives, diverse individuals feature in the videos and many are openly living with HIV)

8. Ask the group to think about the following – Is there a peer group or a trusted individual that could offer support for spiritual needs? Is there a church community that you are confident would welcome someone with HIV? How would somebody know?
9. Evaluate : get feedback from the group about what they gained and what could be improved for next time.