



# Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment in WIC:

## Using Emotion-Based Interactive Services in WIC Nutrition Assessment

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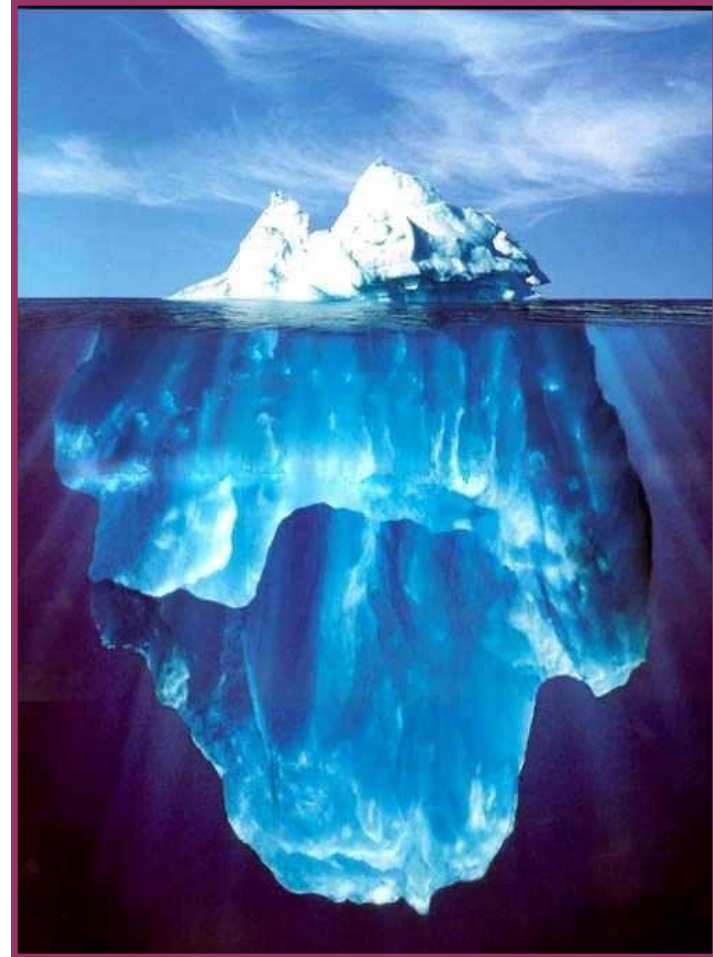
# People Make Changes for Two Reasons

The *logical* reason

The *real* reason

# Conscious thought is just the tip of the iceberg

Unconscious thought is 95% of all thought



When was the last time

you were seduced in public?

A stunning body. Soft, graceful lines. Sexy, sloped rear

pillars. *(Okay, take a breath.)* 215 powerful horses

*(Check pulse.)* Automatic Slip Control. Brake Assist.

Hot cornering. *(Palms sweaty yet?)* A sensual interior



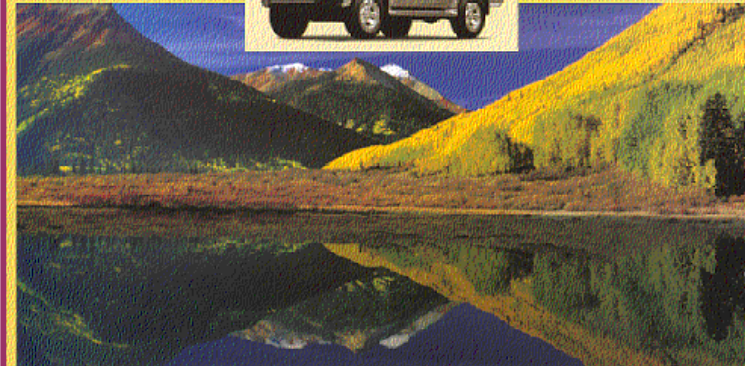
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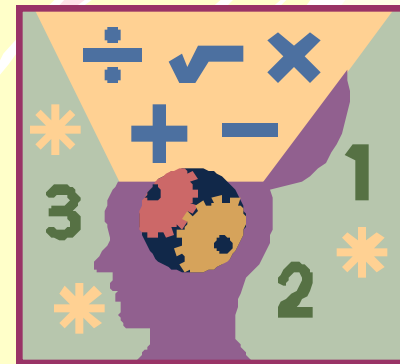
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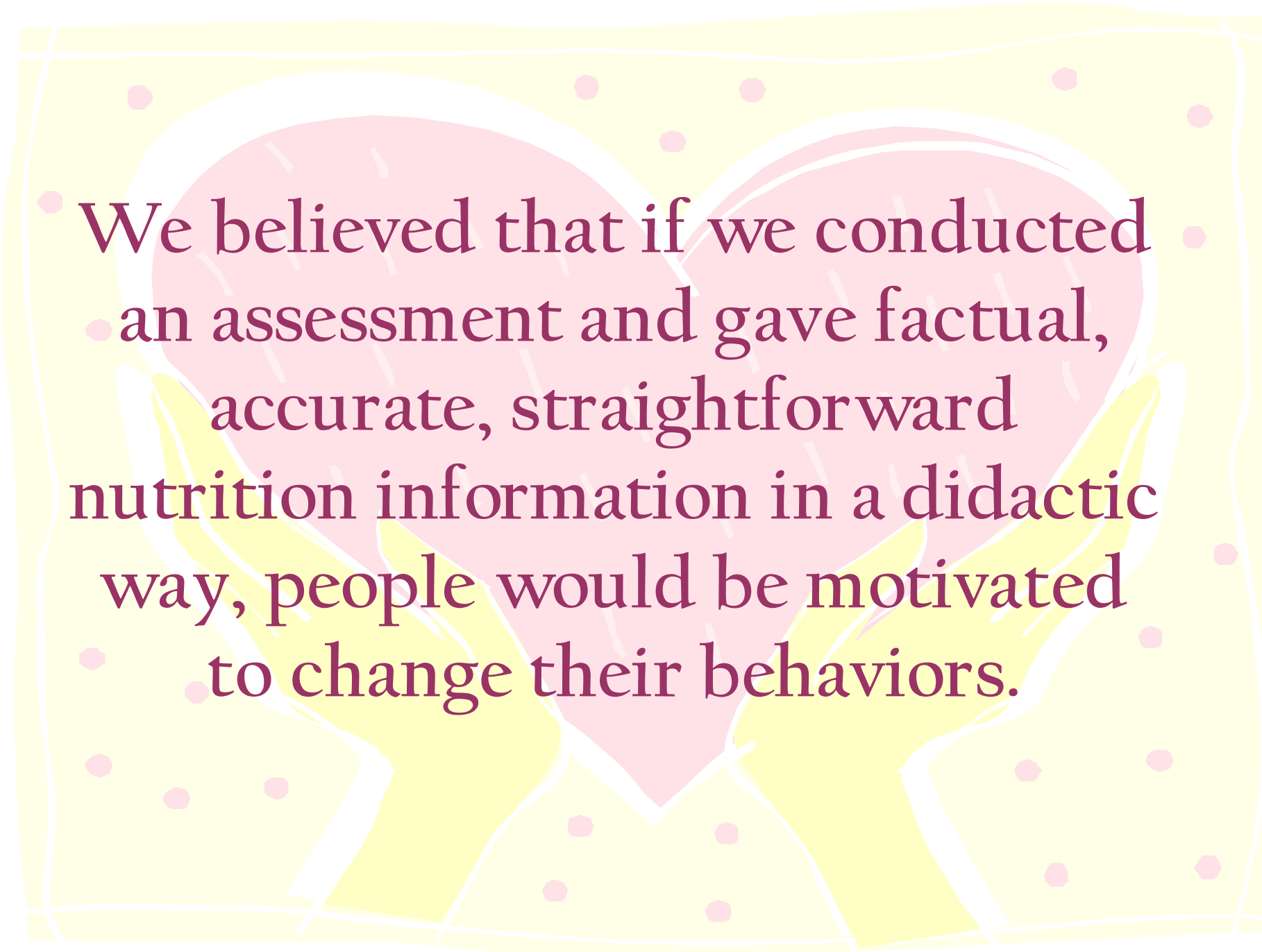
“We are not thinking machines.  
We are feeling machines that think.”



# Traditional WIC Approach

- Use step-by-step, sequential approach
- Offer logic, facts and rational explanations
- Present ourselves in a “professional” manner
- Interact with people by targeting the brain only.





We believed that if we conducted an assessment and gave factual, accurate, straightforward nutrition information in a didactic way, people would be motivated to change their behaviors.





A stylized illustration of two hands holding a heart. The hands are yellow with white outlines, and the heart is pink. The background is light yellow with white outlines and small pink dots.

# Touching Hearts, Touching Minds: An Emotion-Based Approach

Attempts to influence behaviors  
by targeting emotional benefits  
first and logic, second

# Purpose of THTM Project

- To change the way we do WIC to make the experience more valuable for participants.
- To create & use a new nutrition assessment process & educational strategies to make WIC more effective.
- To create an environment that facilitates participants coming back to WIC and adopting positive health behaviors.
- To make WIC counselor's jobs more satisfying and purposeful.

# What Participants Don't Want from WIC

- Don't comment on my parenting
- Don't make negative comments about my child (spoiled, etc)
- Don't discuss my child's "risks" in front of her
- Don't tell me that my mom/grandmother/doctor is wrong
- Don't tell me what to do
- Don't act like you know what's best for me and my child

# What WIC Moms Said They Want...

- Recognize me as the parent
- Acknowledge my efforts to be a great parent
- Show me that you care
- Respect my right to make my own life decisions
- Treat me as if we share a common bond and values
- Pay attention to what I perceive to be my needs; I'll listen to you if you listen to me first
- Treat me as an individual, not a "client" or number

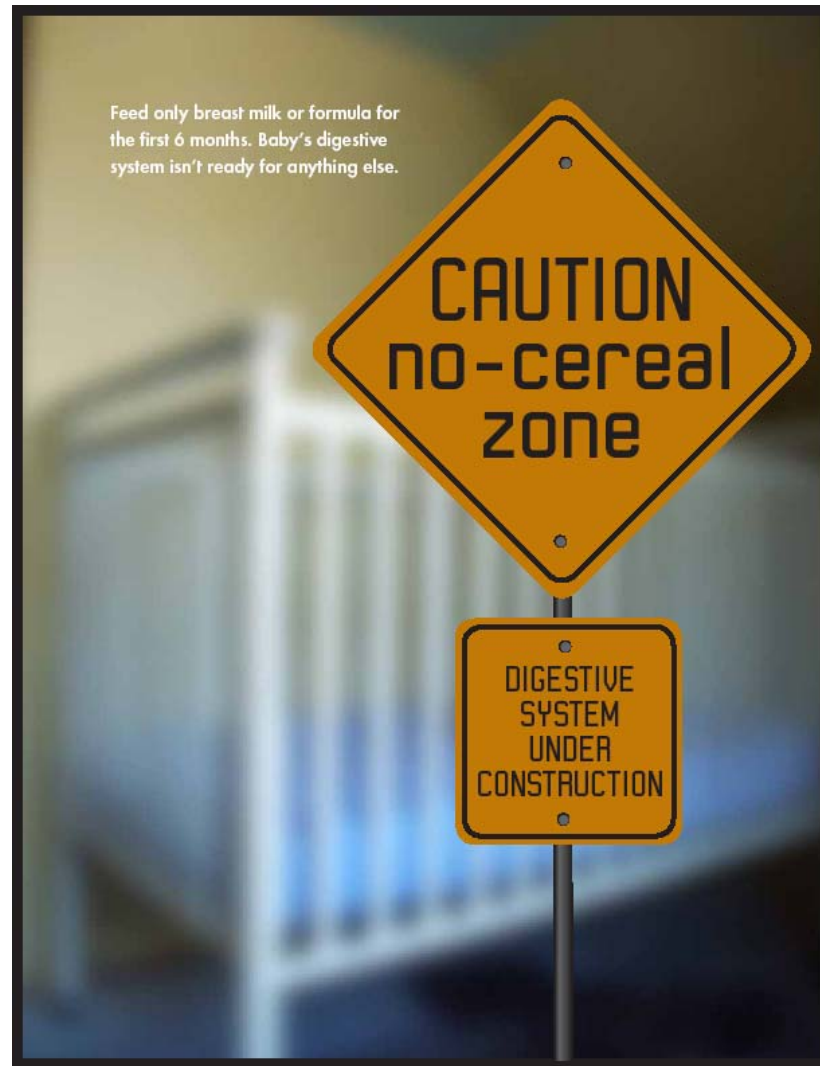
# WIC Moms Want:

- To feel accepted and respected
- To be viewed as intelligent
- To feel special
- Messages that are consistent
- Staff who are happy people with good attitudes, like children, enjoy their job...and wear a smile! Be likeable!

# THTM Project

- Connect with emotional 'pulse points'
  - Fundamental emotional impulses
  - Cause individuals to act and react
- MA WIC moms pulse points
  - Pride
  - Happiness
  - Hope for the future
  - Security and safety

# THTM Educational Messages



# THTM Educational Messages





# THTM Educational Messages

meals are a great time  
to play FOLLOW-THE-LEADER

Set a smart example.  
Sooner or later, kids  
will do as you do.

and you're the leader

# THTM Educational Messages





# Moving to an Emotion-Based Nutrition Assessment

# Goals of EB Nutrition Assessment



- To create a positive experience for parents
- To improve our ability to identify personal needs, concerns, & priorities of parents
- To interact to achieve participant-led behavior change

# Traditional vs EB/VENA

## Traditional

- Ask about what's on our agenda
- Focused in on identifying nutritional risk
- Focused on deficiency findings

## EB/VENA

- Ask what the parent wants to talk about
- Focus on behaviors & emotional motivators
- Focus is on using information to individualize services
- Use a positive approach based on desired health goals not deficiencies

# Traditional vs EB/VENA

## Traditional

- Identify risk factor
- Tell them what they need to change
- Set goals
- Give reinforcing pamphlet

(Give people what *we think* they need)

## EB/VENA

- Ask parents to share successes and challenges
- Ask parents to identify areas for improvement
- Facilitate change by asking questions
- Let them be in charge of identifying solutions

(Give parents what *they* want and need)

# VENA-OARS vs Emotion-Based Skills & Techniques

- Critical Thinking
- Rapport Building
- Stages of Change
- Health Outcome Model
- Open Ended Questions
- Affirmations
- Reflective Listening
- Summarize
- Critical Thinking
- Rapport Building
- Connect emotional benefits with logic & fact of taking action
- Open
- Dig
- Connect
- Act

# Open. Dig. Connect. Act.

**Open:** Provocative questions that lead to EB conversations

**Dig:** Questions to gain more insight into true feelings regarding a certain issue

**Connect:** Connect the conversation topic with parents values, attitudes, beliefs, and feelings.

**Act:** Parents identify specific action steps they can take and believe that they will be making a difference



# What is an Emotion-Based Nutrition Session Like?

- It resembles an authentic conversation – informal, interactive
- Both parent & counselor are comfortable being open & honest
- No dancing around topics at a superficial level
- Conversation during assessment and education:
  - Affirms parents - makes them feel they are GREAT!
  - Renews their sense of hope; inspiring change
  - Reminds parents they are powerful & their action makes a difference in their child's life

# Traditional vs EB/VENA

## *Introducing Vegetables*

- Traditional
  - Have you introduced vegetables to your baby?
  - Which and how many vegetables does she eat a day?
  - The benefits of feeding vegetables to your child are ...
  - Here is how to work more vegetables into your baby's diet ...
- EB/VENA
  - How do you feel about eating vegetables?
  - How do you feel about helping your child love vegetables?
  - Why is developing a love of vegetables important to your child's future?
  - What are some of the barriers that keep you from reaching your goal of having your children love vegetables?
  - What is one idea you have to get your child to eat more vegetables this week?

# Traditional WIC Nutrition Messages

- When your child is active, she will have less chance of being overweight.
- When your child is breastfed, he will have fewer ear infections.
- When your child drinks from the cup rather than the bottle, she will have less chance of developing baby-bottle tooth decay.

# Emotion-Based Nutrition Messages

- Intelligent, caring moms, like you, feel good when they're active with their children.
- You are a powerful influence in your baby's life when you choose to breastfeed. You are giving him a gift that only you can give...and it will last a lifetime.
- You can take charge and feel in control of your child's future when you offer her milk from a cup rather than the bottle. You are protecting her innocent smile and when you see her smiling in a picture, you will know that you did the right thing...

# What Happened?

- Increased connection and respect between staff & participants
- Increased satisfaction with WIC
- Improved word of mouth advertising
- Increased participation rates
- Increased behavior change
- Greater self esteem for parents and staff

# touchingheartstouchingminds.com

TOUCHING HEARTS, TOUCHING MINDS				
Home	Overview	Emotion-Based Materials	Implementation Tools	Contact Information
<p>"The best and most beautiful things in the world can not be seen, nor touched...but are felt in the heart." <i>Helen Keller</i></p>	<p><b>Welcome to Touching Hearts, Touching Minds</b></p> <p><b>Join us in revitalizing nutrition education</b></p> <p>The Massachusetts Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program invites you to join them in transforming nutrition education.</p> <p>The strategies and materials on this website differ from traditional nutrition education approaches. Because emotions, not logic or facts alone, drive behaviors, this new approach represents an exciting opportunity for interacting with people that will lead to behavior change. These materials highlight emotion-based benefits of making eating and activity changes in addition to the logical, rational benefits of taking action.</p> <p>Expect renewed passion and a revitalized sense of purpose as you harness the power of emotion in your nutrition education programs.</p> <p><b>Change yourself to change others.</b></p> <p> <b>WIC</b> GOOD FOOD and A WHOLE LOT MORE!</p> <p><b>EMOTION-BASED MESSAGES</b></p>			

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“They May Forget What You  
*Say,*  
but They Will Never Forget  
How You Made Them  
*Feel.*”

Carl W. Buechner