

Snapshots of adherence: Photo-stories capture medication motivators among people with HIV

Roundtable presented by Michelle Teti, DrPH, tetim@health.missouri.edu

The Snapshots Project: Using their personal pictures and stories (photo-stories) a group of people living with HIV (PLH) created a set of 10 posters to describe how different patients experience life with HIV, manage consistent adherence to their HIV medications, and problem-solve medication challenges. The purpose of the posters was to help *other* PLH at their clinic improve adherence attitudes (i.e., self-efficacy, motivation) and communication with providers about meds. See more at Session 3182.0, Monday, November 2, 2015: 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Poster generating process: interactive, collaborative, and time-intensive



Picture themes

Key themes revolved around motivations to become and remain adherent –important people or things, spirituality, hopefulness about the future, and adherence as a way to take control over one’s health. Images of themes were varied and included medication routines, support systems, pets, self-portraits, and nature.

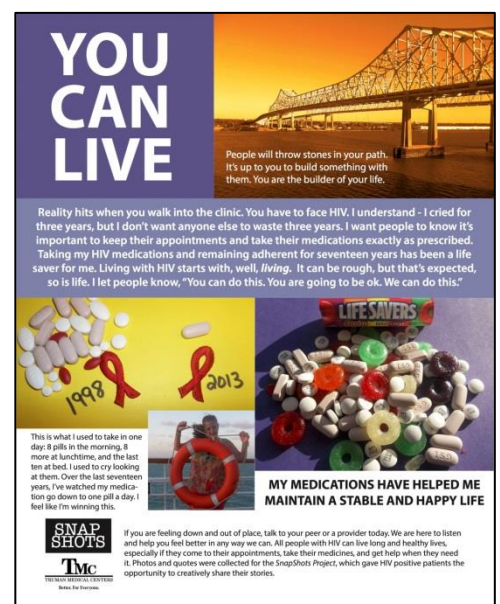


“When I was diagnosed, it was like I froze. It felt like a corridor with no end. I was out of place, like the moon in daytime. That’s how HIV made me feel. It still does, you know, feel out of place... I thought it was a death sentence. I wanted to die. I turned to drugs and alcohol. But I wanted to show that I survived.... Even though being positive difficult, there is always light behind it. This sun peeking out behind the clouds describes how I feel now. You can have a full happy life with HIV. It is not a death sentence; take your medication. That’s the good side of it. I take my medicine at 9:00, it’s a routine. It helps keep me away from drugs and alcohol.”



“You wake up when you walk in the clinic. You have to face HIV. I understand – I cried for 3 years about that, but I don’t want anyone else to waste 3 years. People can’t believe I have HIV when they see me, they say, “You don’t look like you have it.” I say, “Well, what does it look like? You don’t look like it either.” I want

people to know it’s important to make their appointment. Whatever they need, we can help. It may be rough but that’s expected, so is life. I let people know, “I know you can do this. You are not going to die. This is very doable. But we need to do it.” It’s scary, but we can do this.”



Evaluation

Posttest compared to pretest data showed that PLH who *created the posters* reported higher levels of self-efficacy for adherence ($P<.05$), more positive communication experiences in general, and a trend towards improved communication about adherence with their providers.

- Learned about self through project: Being able to look at life and be able to see the benefits that I have had living with this disease, it made me very proud to take pictures...The medicine, going through the struggle and I still keep going.
Wants others to learn from her pictures: How much freedom it is when you're not hiding behind the fact that you're positive.
- Learned about self through project: It's always helpful to see where you're at, and if something has changed for the better or for the worse, and what you can do to get it to the better.
Wants others to learn from his pictures: You do have friends and support.
- Learned about self through project: I love who I am now compared to my past...I took my bus further to an area that was abandoned. But on one side it was abandoned, on the other side it was starting to show growth...Got off the bus, started taking pictures of that building (was a metaphor for his life).
Wants others to learn from his pictures: Get back up, set yourself on the ground, and then start walking. It may be baby steps, but you'll still be walking.

In posttests, clinic patients who *viewed the posters* reported that they needed less support from others to adhere to their medications correctly ($P<.05$).

- I was inspired, touched. I felt and saw me in these pictures [on posters] - I could relate.
- The posters help me to know that I'm on the right track by taking my medicine.
- If they had these in the rooms while we're sitting back and waiting, I can just see that person who's very fearful, and scared...Being alone in the room while you're waiting, we do stare at the walls. This can be artwork for the doctor's offices where people can relate. They're powerful. This here is us. My doctor goes home every day. My doctor doesn't have to take a regimen. This here will talk to you in a different way than what our providers can teach us. Because this is real. This is someone who understands, and knows, and deals with it.
- [The posters] let me know that the providers are willing to showcase what people are going through because sometimes when you come to the clinic you have people scared.