Body&Soul

Peer Counselor's Handbook

Body&Soul Peer Counselor's Handbook

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION TO PEER COUNSELING 2

THE FOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS 3

- ASKING OPEN QUESTIONS 3
- LISTENING AND REFLECTING 6
- BUILDING MOTIVATION 9
- SUMMARIZING THOUGHTS AND PLANS 14

GETTING STARTED 15

PEER COUNSELOR TOOLS 16

- PEER COUNSELING ROAD MAP 17
- STARTERS FOR OPEN QUESTIONS AND REFLECTIONS 18
- VALUES SHEET 19
- IMPORTANCE AND CONFIDENCE RULERS 20
- SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM 21

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT BEING A PEER COUNSELOR 22

NUTRITION INFORMATION 23

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 30

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

3 John 1:2

Introduction

Congratulations on your selection as a Peer Counselor! Your work will help members of your church improve their health by eating better.

What Is Peer Counseling?
Peer counseling offers one-on-one attention and support to those who have signed up to receive it. It has successfully helped members of African American churches take the first step toward good health by adding more fruits and vegetables to their diet.

In the training, you will learn four communication skills that will make it easier to talk with members of your church about eating more fruits and vegetables. These four skills are:

1. Asking open questions
2. Listening and Reflecting
3. Building motivation
4. Summarizing thoughts and plans

Using the Peer Counselor's Handbook
The Peer Counselor's Handbook was designed to help you be an effective Peer Counselor. Use it with the training movie to learn and practice the communication skills.

This Handbook contains:

- Information about the four communication skills. All of the points made in the movie are also in your handbook. There is space for you to take notes.
- Exercises that will help you practice these communication skills
- Peer Counselor tools to help guide you through conversations with church members
- Resources about the benefits of eating more fruits and vegetables
- Frequently asked questions about being a Peer Counselor

Respecting the Privacy of Others
Respecting the privacy of others is a very important part of being a Peer Counselor. People will open up to you more readily if they trust that what they share with you will remain confidential. Do not discuss these conversations with anyone, not even your family or other church members.

If you think any of the people you counsel might benefit from other services at your church or in your community (such as grief counseling or a meals program), you may give their names to the appropriate person at your church (e.g., the Peer Counseling Coordinator). But be sure to get their permission first.

Tips for Using this Handbook

- Look through this handbook before the training workshop. The more familiar you are with what peer counseling is, the more you will gain from the training.
- Use this handbook as a resource. It will guide you as you begin to serve as a Peer Counselor.

The Spirit of Peer Counseling

- Peer Counselors use a style of communication that is open, supportive, and not judgmental.
- Peer Counselors help people create their own plans for change. They generally give no advice and don't push people into changes they are not ready to make.

"Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?"

1 Corinthians 3:16

The Four Communication Skills

This section contains information about the four communication skills that are presented in the movie. Follow along as you watch the training movie. Take notes and highlight sections that are important to you.

ASKING OPEN QUESTIONS

One of the skills important to being a Peer Counselor is the ability to ask open questions.

What Is an Open Question?

Open questions:

- Can't be answered with "yes" or "no"
- Allow for a fuller, richer discussion
- Are non-judgmental
- Let the people you counsel think out loud
- Allow them to do most of the talking, using their own words
- Let them know the conversation is about them

What Is a Closed Question?

Closed questions:

- Can usually be answered with "yes" or "no"
- Let the person who asks the question do most of the talking
- Can be judgmental because they can force a person into a certain answer

Answers to Open Questions

Answers to open questions often give a lot of information. For example, if you ask, "What do you think about eating more fruits and vegetables?" people might tell you about:

- Their motivations or barriers
- Their health concerns
- The influence of friends and family
- The impact of the pastor's message

Answers like these help you understand the people you counsel. And the better your understanding, the more able you are to support them as they work toward a healthier diet.

Examples of Open and Closed Questions

Open	Closed
Why did you sign up for peer counseling?	Are you interested in eating a healthier diet?
Tell me about some fruits and vegetables you like to eat?	Do you want to eat more fruits and vegetables?
What kinds of fruits and vegetables do you like?	Do you like fruits and vegetables?
How, if at all, have your eating habits changed over time?	Do you still eat the same foods now as you did a few years ago?
What would help you to eat more fruits and vegetables?	Is cost a problem for you?

Starters for Open and Closed Questions Open questions start differently than closed questions.	
Open	**Closed**
Tell me about ...	Do you ...
To what extent …	Will you ...
What else ...	Can you ...
Help me understand …	Is it ...
How did you …	Did you …
What, if any …	

SUMMARY OF ASKING OPEN QUESTIONS

Open questions:

- Let the other person talk
- Cast a broad net
- Keep the ball rolling
- Are not biased
- Make few assumptions
- Are not judgmental

People respond to open questions:

- With more information
- In their own words

Closed questions:

- Let you do most of the talking
- Are very specific
- Stifle conversation
- Might imply the right answer
- Narrow the choices
- May force agreement

People respond to closed questions:

- With brief, yes/no answers
- Without explaining or opening up

PRACTICE EXERCISES

This exercise is also on the movie. You can use this sheet with the movie or you can use it to review your skills at a different time.

Exercise 1: How would you turn these questions into open ones?

1. Do you like fruit?
   Open ended:
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. Do you enjoy trying new fruits and vegetables?
   Open ended:
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Is it difficult for you to find time to cook?
   Open ended:
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. Does your family eat vegetables regularly?
   Open ended:
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. Are you ready to start eating more fruits and vegetables?
   Open ended:
   _____
   _____
   _____

Exercise 2: Everyday Questions

1. Listen to the questions that reporters ask on the TV news. Are the questions mainly open or closed? How does the type of question affect the answer?
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. When TV commercials try to sell you a product, do they ask mainly closed or open questions? Why?
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Pay attention to the people around you at home, at work, or while traveling. What kinds of questions do they ask? How does the type of question encourage conversation, or cut it short?
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. Pay attention to your own questions. Do you usually ask open or closed ones?
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. Try to change some of your closed questions to open ones. For example, say, "What happened today?" instead of, "Did you have a good day?" When you ask more open questions, do people share more information with you?
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. Practice changing closed questions to open ones when you get together with other Peer Counselors.
   _____
   _____
   _____

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."

1 Corinthians 6: 19-20

LISTENING AND REFLECTING

Reflective listening is like holding a mirror up as people speak. It allows them to hear aloud things they may have only been thinking about. It also helps to show that you understand what they have said.

What Is Reflective Listening?

Reflective listening:

- Is active listening – listening carefully to the words that are spoken and to the emotions that may be behind those words
- Keeps people thinking and talking
- Forces you to listen – you can't reflect if you're not paying attention

A reflection is a statement that:

- Reflects, as a mirror does, what people have said or what they are feeling
- Lets you check that you understand what has been shared and shows your desire to understand
- Opens the door for people to keep talking

A reflection is not:

- Giving advice
- A question

How Peer Counselors Use Reflective Listening

Peer Counselors:

- Listen and reflect what they hear
- Remain supportive and non-judgmental
- Help people find their own solutions by letting them sift through their thoughts and feelings. This can help them set realistic goals and decide how to achieve them.
- Don't give advice or try to solve problems

Reflective Listening vs. Giving Advice: Examples from the movie

In the movie, Nanette and Belinda speak together after church. Belinda tells Nanette that the pastor's sermon has her thinking about changing how she eats.

In the first example, Nanette gives Belinda advice instead of listening. Belinda then argues against the advice and changes the topic.

Belinda: Girl, y'know, Pastor got me thinking today about how I eat. My blood pressure being high and all.

Nanette: You're right. You'd better do something. You saw what happened to Deacon Smith?

Belinda: Right out of the blue.

Nanette: I'm telling you, what did he say today in the service? *"You better stop eating that greasy food."*

Belinda: I know you're right. But it's not that easy. I mean, who has time to shop and eat right, and buy the right thing.

In the second example, Nanette uses reflective listening to help Belinda solve her problem by herself.

Belinda: Girl, y'know, Pastor got me thinking today about how I eat. My blood pressure being high and all.

Nanette: Sounds like the pastor really got to you today.

Belinda: Yes, he did. You know, it's really something about that body/temple connection.

Nanette: Yeah, the pastor's message about the body/temple connection, it's made you want to eat a little healthier.

Belinda: Yeah, I think I'm ready for myself, but I'm not sure about the kids. They're kind of impossible to cook for because they don't go for that healthy stuff.

Nanette: So, girl, what you're telling me is that the kids need to eat healthier, but for right now that's going to take some time. So, you ready to start for yourself?

Belinda: Yeah, I think I am ready to start for myself. I think I better take care of myself first.

Nanette: So, tell me about some of those ideas you're gonna try.

Belinda: Well, at work, in the afternoon, maybe I could eat an apple instead of chips, and I could eat a banana for breakfast in the morning.

Nanette: Hmm. Sounds like a piece of fruit is the way to go.

Belinda: Yeah, I think I could do that.

Notice how Nanette listens to Belinda and then responds with a statement that reflects, as a mirror does, what Belinda has just said. Nanette does not respond with her own thoughts on what Belinda should do.

By using reflective listening, Nanette:

- Lets Belinda know that she has heard her concerns
- Lets Belinda know the discussion is about her
- Gives Belinda a chance to hear what she has just said, stated a little differently
- Lets Belinda think through her own thoughts and feelings about what she wants to do
- Gives Belinda support for the plan she has come up with on her own

Reflective Listening Tips

Here are some ideas for using reflective listening:

- Reflections end with a drop in the voice, not an upturn. An upturn makes a reflection sound like a question. Listen to how the Peer Counselors in the movie use their voices.
- Don't worry about being perfect. There are many possible reflections to every statement. You'll still get useful information even if you don't get it quite right.
- If you're confused about what the person means, you might say: "I'm not sure I fully understand what you mean. Let me see if I have this right …"
- It's OK if the person says "no." Use no's as a clue to change direction.
- Some people may make statements like, "God loves me no matter what I eat." A simple reflection such as, "You feel certain of God's love" will keep the conversation going in a positive direction.
- Avoid phrases like "you need" and "you have a problem." These sound judgmental.
- Avoid phrases like "you could" and "you should." These phrases are lead-ins to giving advice.
- Remember, just thinking about eating more fruits and vegetables may be a good first step for some people.

Summary: Reflective Listening

Reflections:

- Can be about what was said, or about the emotions behind what was said
- Move you closer to a better understanding of the key issues involved
- Show that you are listening and that the person's thoughts and feelings matter to you
- Encourage conversation
- Build rapport
- Don't need to be perfect

Reflections let you:

- Learn more
- Be supportive
- Be non-judgmental

Reflections let the person:

- Voice thoughts or feelings they may not have talked about before
- Feel understood
- Feel accepted without judgement
- Hear their thoughts and feelings restated
- Make themselves clear by adding to or changing what they have said
- Talk about all sides of an issue
- Set realistic goals and decide how to achieve them

PRACTICE EXERCISES

Exercise 1: Dropping Your Voice

Practice letting your voice drop at the end of this sentence: *"So getting your kids to eat healthier foods may take some time."* Keep saying it until you have a feel for letting your voice drop. Then have a friend listen to make sure that you are making a statement, instead of asking a question.

Exercise 2: Making Reflections

Below is a list of things people might say during a discussion about eating more fruits and vegetables. How would you reflect on what they have shared? Write your reflections in the spaces provided.

You can use this sheet with the movie or you can use it to review your skills at a different time.

Example: "I'd eat more fruit if I could buy it at work!"

Reflection: You would like to eat more fruit, but you can't buy it at work. OR You can't buy fruit at work.

1. I eat lots of fruit and vegetables in the summer, but not the rest of the year.
   Reflection:

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. My mother always told me to eat lots of fruits and vegetables if I wanted to grow up to be strong and healthy.
   Reflection:

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Living alone, I find I just don't cook the way I used to.
   Reflection:

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. I used to eat lots of fruit, but then I found out I have diabetes.
   Reflection:

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. I know they're good for me, but I just don't have time to prepare them.
   Reflection:

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

Exercise 3: Look Around You

1. Create reflections for statements you find in newspapers or magazines.
2. Pay attention to the discussions going on around you. What happens when people give advice? Does the advice encourage or cut off conversation? Do you think it will be followed?
3. Pay attention to your own talks. Do you usually share your thoughts and feelings, or do you listen and reflect?
4. Try to change your own style to one where you listen more and respond with reflections. Does the change affect how much people share with you?
5. Practice making reflections when you get together with other Peer Counselors.

"Cast not away your confidence,
which hath great recompense of reward."

Hebrews 10:35

BUILDING MOTIVATION

Peer Counselors help people build motivation by:

- Connecting personal values to a healthier diet
- Identifying the perceived benefits and barriers to eating more healthfully
- Boosting confidence to take action

Motivation and Values

Values are our principles – like being there for family, or doing God's will. Ideally, they shape the choices we make. Values are often at the heart of making healthy lifestyle choices. When people discover that healthy eating is related to their values, it's often easier for them to find the motivation to put their beliefs into action.

How Peer Counselors Use Values

As a Peer Counselor, you can help people think about the values that guide their lives. In general, people really enjoy talking about their values. Often, this exercise helps them think about whether there is a tie between their values and their eating habits. When they see a link, this can help to build motivation for change. You can help them:

- Identify their core values by using the Values Sheet (page 19)
- Understand why these values are important to them
- Decide what link, if any, they see between their values and eating more fruits and vegetables

We see the role of values in the conversation between Belinda and Nanette in the movie. The pastor's sermon has shown Belinda that her eating habits do not give proper respect to her body as a temple of His Holy Spirit. In talking with Nanette she decides to eat more fruits and vegetables to bring her actions in line with her beliefs.

Tips for Discussing Values

Here are some ways to discuss values:

- **Stay neutral/non-judgmental**. Some people will see the tie between their values and eating habits. Others won't. That's OK. Even if you think there is a clear link between a person's values and eating more fruits and vegetables, avoid saying so. It's important for people to make the connection for themselves.
- **Reflect.** Be sure to make reflections while people are discussing their values. This shows that you are listening and that you understand the reasons for their choices.

PRACTICE EXERCISE

Exercise: Using the Values Sheet

Fill in the Values Sheet below. It will help you understand the key issues involved in discussing values.

Step 1. Look at the values below. Mark the 3 that you feel are most important to you in guiding the decisions you make in your life.

- ☐ Spirituality, to grow and mature spiritually
- ☐ Family, to have a happy, loving family
- ☐ God's will, to follow God's plan for me
- ☐ Good Christian, to follow the teachings of the Bible
- ☐ Health, to be physically well
- ☐ Responsible, to do what I said I would do
- ☐ Disciplined, to do what is right
- ☐ Independent, to be able to meet my own needs
- ☐ Considerate, to be thoughtful of others
- ☐ Honesty, to be truthful in all areas of my life
- ☐ Inner peace, to feel a sense of quiet/calmness within me
- ☐ Friendship, to be a good friend and have close, supportive friends
- ☐ Helpfulness, to reach out to others
- ☐ Loving, to give and receive love
- ☐ Hopeful, to remain positive in my view of the world
- ☐ Other_____

Step 2. What does each of the values you chose mean to you?

1. _____

_____

_____

_____

2. _____

_____

_____

_____

3. _____

_____

_____

_____

Step 3. What connection, if any, do you see between any of your values and eating more fruits and vegetables?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Step 4. What reflections would you make about your response above?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Motivation — Building Importance and Confidence.

Motivation is a combination of importance and confidence:

Importance means how important it is to a person to eat more fruits and vegetables. The level of importance is based on the personal benefits they see to eating more fruits and vegetables. Often, a person sees the benefits of healthy eating but they may have other needs or priorities in their lives.

Confidence means how confident or sure a person is about their ability to change their eating habits. Confidence is key to making changes. People sometimes feel less confident because they have barriers, such as not knowing how to prepare vegetables. Taking small steps that lead to larger goals can help increase confidence.

How Peer Counselors Use Motivation

Talking about importance and confidence can be a turning point in the conversation. Peer Counselors should discuss both issues because:

- One person may think it's very important to eat more fruits and vegetables, but they may lack the confidence to do so.
- However, another person might feel very confident that they can change their habits, but may not think it's important to do so.
- Understanding both issues can help a person develop a realistic plan of action.

These discussions can raise a number of questions. They include:

- How much do I want to make this change?
- What could get in my way?
- What could help?
- What would my first step be?

Importance and Confidence Ruler

An easy way for Peer Counselors to learn about a person's motivation is by using Importance and Confidence Rulers. Remember, the people you are counseling may not have a copy of the ruler.

Importance and Confidence Ruler

Not at all			Somewhat						Very
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Start by using the ruler to learn about importance.

1. Ask: **"How important is it to you to eat more fruits and vegetables? On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not important at all, and 10 being very important, where would you place yourself?"**
2. After the person gives you a number, ask: **"Why did you choose _____ , and not a lower number like 1 or 2?"** (If they choose 0 or 1, ask instead, "Why such a low number?") Their answers to this question will tell you the benefits they see to eating more fruits and vegetables.
3. Reflect on the reasons given.
4. Ask: **"What would it take to move your number a little higher?"** Their answers will tell you what would motivate them to eat more fruits and vegetables.
5. Reflect.

Ask similar questions about confidence.

1. Ask: **"How confident are you that you could eat more fruits and vegetables if you decided to? On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not confident at all, and 10 being very confident, where would you place yourself?"**
2. After people give you a number, ask: **"Why did you choose _____, and not a lower number like 1 or 2?"** (If they choose 0 or 1, ask instead, "Why such a low number?") Their answers to this question will tell you what helps them to feel confident.
3. Reflect on the reasons given.
4. Ask: **"What would it take to move your number a little higher?"** Their answers will tell you what would increase their confidence.
5. Reflect.

How Peer Counselors Help People Move Toward Action

Discussing values, importance, and confidence should give you an idea of why the person you are counseling might want to eat more fruits and vegetables. For those who are ready to change you can help them develop a realistic action plan:

- Ask if the person has some ideas for eating more fruits and vegetables.
- Reflect on these ideas in a way that provides support for a plan: "You can see yourself _____ and sticking with it."

If the person you are counseling doesn't have a plan, provide guidance:

- Get permission to share some ideas that have worked for others.
- Share information from the nutrition section of this handbook or offer ways to get more information, such as through nutrition activities at the church.

Ask if any of these ideas could be useful.

Reflect on these ideas in a way that provides support for a plan: "You can see yourself _____ and sticking with it."

If the person does not develop a plan, that's OK. Offer a reflection like, "You're interested in eating more fruits and vegetables, but you're not ready to start yet."

Summary of Building Motivation

The Values Sheet and the Importance and Confidence Rulers are useful tools for Peer Counselors. The way people respond to them will depend on their life experience, knowledge, and hopes.

Some people may develop a tentative plan. That plan could involve bringing a healthy snack to work each day. Or, it could simply involve thinking about eating healthier food.

Whatever the response, don't push. This may be the first time they have had a chance to really think about how they eat and whether they could make healthier choices. Just thinking about these issues can be an important first step toward better eating habits.

PRACTICE EXERCISES

Exercise: Importance and Confidence

Using the Importance and Confidence Ruler below, answer the following questions. They will help you clarify your own motivation for eating more fruits and vegetables.

How important is it to you to eat more fruits and vegetables? On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not important at all, and 10 being very important, where would you place yourself?

Importance and Confidence Ruler

Not at all				Somewhat					Very
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

1. What number did you choose?

   _____

2. Why did you choose ____ , and not a lower number like 1 or 2?

   _____

   _____

3. What would you reflect about your response to number 2?

   _____

   _____

4. What would it take to move your number a little higher?

   _____

   _____

5. What would you reflect about your response to number 4?

   _____

   _____

Now think about your confidence level.

How confident are you that you could eat more fruits and vegetables if you decided to? On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not confident at all, and 10 being very confident, where would you place yourself?

Importance and Confidence Ruler

Not at all				Somewhat					Very
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

1. What number did you choose?

   _____

2. Why did you choose ____ , and not a lower number like 1 or 2?

   _____

   _____

3. What would you reflect about your response to number 2?

   _____

   _____

4. What would it take to move your number a little higher?

   _____

   _____

5. What would you reflect about your response to number 4?

   _____

   _____

"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

1 Corinthians 10:31

SUMMARIZING THOUGHTS AND PLANS

The person you counsel will get more out of the conversation if you summarize their thoughts and plans.

What is a Summary?

A summary restates the key parts of the conversation. The summary may include:

- Thoughts
- Concerns
- Plans
- Reflections
  (especially those that produced a strong reaction)

How to Use a Summary

A summary can be useful in a number of ways. It can help the person:

- Recall the conversation
- Think of new ideas
- Plan their next steps
- Feel more confident about moving forward

Summary Tips

Try these tips for summarizing thoughts and plans:

Take notes. Notes will give you a reference point for what to include in the summary. Focus on:

- Why the person feels it's important to eat more fruits and vegetables, or what gets in their way
- Their level of confidence
- Concerns about eating a healthier diet
- Values and benefits that may act as motivators
- Any plans that have been discussed

Check to see if the person wants to add anything to the summary. Ask, "What would you like to add?" Reviewing the conversation may have brought up other thoughts, or even another idea for eating more fruits and vegetables.

PRACTICE EXERCISE

Exercise: Summarize Your Values and Motivation

1. Look over your responses in the exercises about values, importance, and confidence. What plan could you make to eat more fruits and vegetables?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. How would you summarize your own values, importance, confidence, and plan?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

"Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality."

Romans 12:13

Getting Started

GET READY

One day soon, your church's Peer Counseling Coordinator will tell you which church members you are responsible for contacting. It's only natural to feel a little nervous as you prepare to step into your new role. Try to remember two things:

1. They will be expecting your call because they signed up for peer counseling.
2. You were asked to be a Peer Counselor because you are good at listening and giving support.

GET SET

You may want to practice your counseling skills before the first conversation. Try these ideas:

- Practice a conversation about eating more fruits and vegetables with another Peer Counselor. Tape the practice session, if possible. Listening to the tape will help you identify areas for more practice.
- Use the Self-Assessment Form (page 21) to help you check how you're doing.
- Review the conversation in the movie.

Gather all the supplies you'll need for the discussion. These include:

- Peer Counseling Roadmap (page 17)
- Starters for Open Questions and Reflections (page 18)
- Values Sheet (page 19)
- Importance and Confidence Ruler (page 20)

GO!

Here's how to set up your first conversation:

- Call or introduce yourself to the church member you have been assigned.
- Identify yourself as a Peer Counselor from your church.
- Find out if the person prefers to talk on the phone or meet in person.
- Schedule a time that works for both of you.

Tips

- Take notes during the conversation. This will help you keep track of key points.
- Meet with other Peer Counselors regularly for ideas and support. Feel free to talk about how you are handling different situations. But don't reveal the names of the people you counsel.
- Remember: Reflections will get easier. They don't have to be perfect.
- Enjoy being a Peer Counselor. Having the opportunity to reach out and help others is a blessing, for them and for you.

Peer Counselor Tools

The following pages contain tools that will help you as a Peer Counselor. An explanation of each tool appears below.

PEER COUNSELING ROADMAP 17
The roadmap summarizes each part of the peer counseling conversation. Use it to check off each step as you cover it and to check if you have missed any key points. Remember: Each discussion will be different. You don't need to follow the specific order of the roadmap.

STARTERS FOR OPEN QUESTIONS AND REFLECTIONS 18
The starters are ways to begin an open question or a reflection. There is room for you to add other starters that have worked well for you.

VALUES SHEET 19
The sheet helps you guide the conversation about values. Church members get a sheet when they sign up for peer counseling. If they have misplaced their sheet, show them your copy, or read the values to them.

IMPORTANCE AND CONFIDENCE RULER 20
The ruler helps the person think about importance and confidence.

SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM 21
The form is useful for identifying areas that you should practice.

Peer Counseling Roadmap

Use the roadmap as a guide to the main points of the peer counseling conversation. Each conversation will take its own path, so you may not follow the roadmap exactly. For example, you might talk about values, importance, and confidence in a different order.

Make Contact/Arrange Meeting

- Introduce yourself as a Peer Counselor from your church.
- Say that you understand the person has signed up to talk with a Peer Counselor.
- Ask if the person still wants to talk. If so, set a time and place for the meeting or call.

Talk about Fruits and Vegetables

- Ask why the person signed up for peer counseling.
- Listen and reflect.
- Ask about how many fruits and vegetables the person eats every day.
- Ask them what they like (or dislike) about fruits and vegetables.
- Ask if the person knows the recommendation (5 to 9 servings per day). If not, ask if the person would like to know the recommendation.
- Listen and reflect.

Talk about Values

- Explain that making a lifestyle change is easier if the change is tied to one's values.
- Ask what the person's top 3 values are and what they mean to the person.
- Listen and reflect.
- Ask what connection, if any, the person sees between these values and eating more fruits and vegetables.
- Reflect on the connection or lack of connection.

Rate Importance and Confidence

- Ask the person to rate the importance of eating more fruits and vegetables on a scale of 0 to 10.
- Ask why the person chose _____ and not a lower number, like a 1 or a 2.
- Listen and reflect.
- Ask what it would take to move this number a little higher.
- Listen and reflect.
- Ask similar questions about confidence. Listen and reflect.

Create Action Plan/Summarize/Close

- Ask if the person has some ideas for ways to eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Listen and reflect.
- If not, *with permission*, suggest some ideas and ways to get more information.
- Ask if any of these ideas might work for them.
- Listen and reflect.
- Summarize the key parts of the conversation.
- Ask if it would be OK to call the person in about 2 weeks.
- End the conversation.

Starters for Open Questions and Reflections

Refer to this sheet whenever you need ideas for how to start open questions and reflections.

OPEN QUESTIONS
Tell me about … ?
To what extent … ?
What else ... ?
Help me understand …?
What, if any … ?
How did you … ?

REFLECTIONS
It sounds like …
It has been hard for you …
You're feeling …
You're not sure …
You have mixed feelings about …
You're thinking about …

Values Sheet

Look at the values below. Mark the 3 that you feel are most important to you in guiding the decisions you make in your life.

☐ **Spirituality,** to grow and mature spiritually

☐ **Family,** to have a happy, loving family

☐ **God's will,** to follow God's plan for me

☐ **Good Christian,** to follow the teachings of the Bible

☐ **Health,** to be physically well

☐ **Responsible,** to do what I said I would do

☐ **Disciplined,** to do what is right

☐ **Independent,** to be able to meet my own needs

☐ **Considerate,** to be thoughtful of others

☐ **Honesty,** to be truthful in all areas of my life

☐ **Inner peace,** to feel a sense of quiet/calmness within me

☐ **Friendship,** to be a good friend and have close, supportive friends

☐ **Helpfulness,** to reach out to others

☐ **Loving,** to give and receive love

☐ **Hopeful,** to remain positive in my view of the world

☐ **Other**_____

Importance and Confidence Ruler

Use these rulers to help the people you counsel rate their motivation.

Importance

How important is it to you to eat more fruits and vegetables? On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not important at all, and 10 being very important, where would you place yourself?

NOT AT ALL				SOME WHAT						VERY
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Confidence

How confident are you that you could eat more fruits and vegetables if you decided to? On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not confident at all, and 10 being very confident, where would you place yourself?

NOT AT ALL				SOME WHAT						VERY
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Self-Assessment Form

This form will help you identify skills that you should practice.

Instructions

To use this self-assessment:

- Tape yourself while practicing the Peer Counselor conversation with another Peer Counselor.
- Listen to the tape. As you listen, place checkmarks in the boxes below.

Place a checkmark in the box every time you:

1. Ask an open question	4. Reflect with an upturn
2. Ask a closed question	5. Offer unsolicited advice
3. Make a reflection	Notes:

Scoring

Give yourself 1 point for every checkmark in boxes 1 and 3. Take away 1 point for every checkmark in boxes 2, 4, and 5.

Self-Assessment

1. You should ask more open questions than closed ones.
2. You should be asking very few closed questions. If you asked closed questions, how could you have made them open?
3. Reflect with confidence. You should have more reflections than questions. If you asked many questions, go back and look for places where you could have reflected. Did you reflect deeper feelings and emotions? Look for places where your reflections could have gone deeper.
4. If you reflected with an upturn, practice making statements, not asking questions.
5. Avoid offering unsolicited advice, telling people how you would handle a situation, or giving your opinion. If you offered advice, what could you have done differently?

"I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears."

Psalms 34: 4

Frequently Asked Questions about Being a Peer Counselor

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE BODY & SOUL PROGRAM?

The program's immediate goal is to help church members make healthier eating choices. In time, the program may also address other health issues that church members care about, such as being more physically active.

WHO DO I TALK TO?

Church members sign up to receive peer counseling. The Peer Counseling Coordinator will tell you who to contact. As more people from your church sign up, the coordinator will give you more names of people to contact. You and the Peer Counseling Coordinator will decide together how many people you counsel.

WHERE DO I TALK WITH THE PEOPLE I COUNSEL?

You can talk with them over the phone or in person – whichever is most comfortable and convenient for both of you.

HOW MUCH TIME DOES PEER COUNSELING TAKE?

The first discussion takes about 20 minutes. The follow-up conversations are usually shorter.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BEING A PEER COUNSELOR?

Peer Counselors use special communication skills that help people discover their own reasons for eating more fruits and vegetables. Your church selected you because you already have good listening and communication skills and enjoy helping others. The training movie and this handbook will help you learn these communication skills.

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT FRUITS AND VEGETABLES?

You don't need to be an expert. Just become familiar with the information about fruits and vegetables in the Resources section of this handbook (pages 23-29).

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF PEOPLE HAVE MEDICAL CONCERNS?

Don't give medical advice. Instead, say, "I suggest you speak to your doctor about that. I'm not qualified to give that kind of information."

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF A PERSON HAS OTHER SERIOUS PROBLEMS?

Ask their permission to give their name to the Peer Counseling Coordinator, who can put them in touch with resources in the church or community. Even if they don't want you to use their name, you can still discuss their situation with the coordinator or pastor. Just don't reveal who they are.

DO I NEED TO EAT MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES?

Everyone should eat more fruits and vegetables. It will also make you more credible and comfortable as a Peer Counselor.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF A PERSON DOESN'T WANT TO EAT MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES?

Use open questions and reflections to find out why they asked to receive peer counseling. If they aren't interested at this time, that's OK. Your conversation may lead them to become interested in the future.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF A PERSON DOESN'T OPEN UP OR DOESN'T SHARE MUCH INFORMATION?

Give them a few extra seconds of silence before you respond. This will insure that you haven't cut off their reply. Some people are private or quiet by nature. Or they may need more time to think before they speak.

The Good News About Fruits & Vegetables

The National Cancer Institute recommends eating 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables every day is an important part of a healthy, active lifestyle. It promotes good health and helps lower the chances of getting high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some types of cancer. African Americans have very high rates of these diseases and get them earlier in life. They also suffer more serious health problems and die at an earlier age from these diseases. Most African Americans eat less than half of the daily amount of fruits and vegetables they need to stay healthy.

Everyone has the power to make choices to improve their health. The good news is that eating more fruits and vegetables is one of the easiest things you can do to get started.

This section has information about:

- why eating fruits and vegetables is important for good health,
- how many servings are recommended, and
- what a serving size really is.

Why eating fruits and vegetables is important for children

IT ALL BEGINS IN CHILDHOOD

African American youth have the highest rates of overweight and obesity among all children. Type 2 diabetes is also going up at alarming rates among African American children. Eating habits that affect a child's risk for these problems begin in childhood. Healthy eating in childhood, and into the adult years, will lower their chances for diseases later in life. These diseases include obesity, overweight, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and cancer. Most African American kids eat less than half of the amount of fruits and vegetables they need to stay healthy.

GOOD HABITS LAST A LIFETIME

It's important for us to help kids develop good habits they can carry into their adult lives. Eating more fruits and vegetables when they are young will make it easier for them to choose healthier foods as adults.

NUTRIENTS TO GROW HEALTHY AND STRONG

Fruits and vegetables give children many of the nutrients they need to grow healthfully. Eating enough fruits and vegetables also helps kids develop strong muscles, bones, and teeth.

Why eating fruits and vegetables is important for adults

HELP MANAGE YOUR WEIGHT

When combined with an active lifestyle, eating fruits and vegetables can help you manage your weight. Most are low in calories and fat. And many have lots of water and fiber to help you feel full.

You can eat fewer calories and still satisfy your appetite. Eat larger portions of fruits and vegetables at meals. Eat fruits and vegetables raw or steamed and use very small amounts of added sauces, butters, or oils.

LOWER YOUR CHANCES FOR SOME CANCERS

People who eat 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables a day have a lower chance of getting cancer of the lung, mouth, pharynx, esophagus, stomach, colon, and rectum. They are also less likely to get breast, pancreas, larynx, and bladder cancer.

LOWER YOUR CHANCES FOR HEART DISEASE & STROKE

Heart-healthy diets include 8 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables a day. They are low in saturated fat and cholesterol. They also include low-fat dairy foods and whole grains. Such diets can greatly lower blood pressure and cholesterol and lower the chances of heart disease. Recent studies also report that diets rich in fruits and vegetables may help lower the chances for having a stroke.

REDUCE HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

In the DASH study (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension), people with high blood pressure followed a special eating plan. These people saw their blood pressure go down after only one month. The plan included 8 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables a day and 2 to 3 servings of low-fat dairy foods.

The DASH eating plan is low in saturated fat and cholesterol. The plan allows only very small amounts of red meat, sweets, and sugar-containing drinks. It also includes moderate amounts of whole grains, fish, poultry and nuts.

People in the DASH study with the lowest sodium intake had the biggest fall in blood pressure. Too much sodium causes blood pressure to rise. Potassium counteracts the effect of sodium on blood pressure. Yet, African Americans get only half their potassium needs. Fruits and vegetables are naturally high in potassium and low in sodium.

LOWER YOUR CHANCES FOR DIABETES

Obesity and diet are strong risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes. So it is important to be at a healthy weight. Get enough exercise and eat a healthy diet that includes 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables a day.

What's in fruits and vegetables?

Fruits and vegetables are the best source of many vitamins, minerals, and fiber the body needs. They are also packed with hundreds of disease-fighting substances called phytochemicals. And fruits and vegetables are low in fat and calories.

Vitamins
Fruits and vegetables provide many important vitamins, like vitamin A and vitamin C. There are about 20 vitamins needed for life, each with a very important job. Some vitamins help the body produce energy. Others help keep skin healthy. The best way to get vitamins is to eat the fruits and vegetables that contain them.

Minerals
Fruits and vegetables provide many important minerals, like potassium and magnesium. The body needs minerals to do many things. For example, some minerals help the body maintain healthy bones and healthy blood pressure.

Fiber
Fruits and vegetables are packed with fiber. Some fiber helps lower cholesterol. Fiber also slows down digestion so that the body can absorb more nutrients and better control blood sugar levels. Other fiber helps you get rid of waste and keeps you regular.

Phytochemicals
Phytochemicals (fight-o-chemicals) are the natural disease-fighting substances in fruits and vegetables. Phytochemicals help fight to protect your health. Fruits and vegetables have hundreds of phytochemicals. Phytochemicals work together with vitamins and minerals to promote good health.

Here are just a few examples of the phytochemicals-found in fruits and vegetables:

- Carotenoids in red and yellow-orange fruits and vegetables (such as tomatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots)
- Lycopene in tomato-based foods (such as tomato sauce, tomato paste)
- Lutein and zeaxanthin in leafy greens (such as collard greens, spinach, romaine lettuce)
- Flavanoids in brightly colored fruits and vegetables (such as blueberries, cherries, strawberries)

The vitamins, minerals, fiber, and phytochemicals in fruits and vegetables combine for a health-protecting and disease-fighting effect that you can't get from vitamin pills. Only a variety of fruits and vegetables give you all of these nutrients together.

The colors of health

Fruits and vegetables come in a rainbow of colors. Each color is a sign of different important nutrients. You can benefit from eating fruits and vegetables of different colors each day. These include green, yellow-orange, red, blue-purple, and white.

This chart shows the 5 color groups and gives some examples of fruits and vegetables from each.

green Leafy greens (collard, mustard, and turnip greens, swiss chard, kale, spinach and lettuces), asparagus, green peppers, broccoli, green beans, peas, green cabbage, green onion, brussels sprouts, okra, zucchini, chinese cabbage (napa/bok choy), green apples, green grapes, honeydew melon, kiwifruit, limes

yellow-orange Carrots, summer squash, corn, sweet potatoes, butternut squash, pumpkin, yellow peppers, rutabagas, cantaloupe, grapefruit, lemons, nectarines, oranges, peaches, pineapples, tangerines, apricots, mangoes, papayas

red Tomatoes, spaghetti sauce, tomato juice, tomato soup, red peppers, red onions, beets, red cabbage, kidney beans, apples, pink grapefruit, red grapes, strawberries, cherries, watermelon, raspberries, cranberries, pomegranates

blue-purple Eggplant, purple grapes, plums, raisins, blueberries, blackberries, purple figs, dried plums, black currants

white Cauliflower, mushrooms, white beans, onions, garlic, parsnips, shallots, turnips, ginger, jicama, bananas, pears

How many servings do you need each day?

Everybody needs to eat a diet rich in fruits and vegetables. But most adults need to eat more than children. And men need even more than women

RECOMMENDED DAILY SERVINGS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES FOR HEALTHY, ACTIVE PEOPLE			
	Vegetables	**Fruits**	**TOTAL**
Children ages 2 to 6, some women and some older adults	3	2	**5**
Children over age 6, teenage girls, active women, and some men	4	3	**7**
Teenage boys and active men	5	4	**9**

*United States Department of Agriculture/Department of Health and Human Services, Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2000

Over 75% of all African Americans aren't eating enough fruits and vegetables to keep them healthy.

MOST AFRICAN AMERICANS NEED TO EAT MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES EVERY DAY			
	African Americans are currently eating	**Amount recommended***	**Additional servings needed to meet the goal**
Kids ages 2 to 6	2	5	**3**
Kids ages 6 to 11	3	7	**4**
Teenage girls	3	7	**4**
Teenage boys	3	9	**6**
Women	3	7	**4**
Men	3	9	**6**

*Daily servings of fruits and vegetables recommended as part of a healthy, active lifestyle.

What's a serving?
It's all in your hand.

Eating 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables a day is a lot easier than you might think. Many people don't realize how small a serving is. One serving of fruits and vegetables should fit in the palm of your hand. When you see how small a serving is, you see how easy it is to eat 2 or 3 servings with every meal.

A serving is:

- One medium-sized fruit, such as an apple, orange, plum, or peach
- 1/2 cup of raw, cooked, canned, or frozen fruits or vegetables
- 3/4 cup (6 oz.) of 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice
- 1/2 cup cut-up fruit
- 1/2 cup cooked or canned legumes, such as beans and black-eyed peas
- 1 cup of raw, leafy greens, such as lettuce and spinach
- 1/4 cup dried fruit, such as raisins, apricots, and dried cranberries

Active men need 9 servings a day. Check out what 9 A Day looks like below to see how easy it is:

MORNING	counts as 1	counts as 1	
MID-DAY	counts as 2	counts as 1	
EVENING	counts as 2	counts as 1	counts as 1

Acknowledgements

The Peer Counselor's Handbook was developed to support *Body & Soul: A Celebration of Healthy Eating & Living*.

Special thanks to Dr. Andrew von Eschenbach, M.D., Director of NCI; Dr. Mark Clanton, M.D., Deputy Director of NCI; Ed Maibach, Ph.D., Director of the NCI Center for Strategic Dissemination; and Robert T. Croyle, Ph.D., Director of the NCI Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences for their leadership and support.

The handbook was developed at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill by:

- Marci Kramish Campbell, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Nutrition, School of Public Health and the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Carol Carr, MA, Project Manager, UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center

With:

- Ken Resnicow, Ph.D., University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center and School of Public Health
- Lorelei DiSogra, Ed.D., R.D., Director, 5 A Day Program, National Cancer Institute
- Alexis Williams, M.P.H., Health Education Specialist, National Cancer Institute

Peer counseling was adapted from *Motivational Interviewing* by William R. Miller and Stephen Rollnick, 2nd Edition, 2002, The Guilford Press.

The Peer Counselor's Handbook was adapted from the Motivational Interviewing Training Kit developed by Dr. Ken Resnicow.

NCI would like to acknowledge the contributions of:

- Porter Novelli, Washington, D.C.
- Riffenburgh and Associates, Albuquerque, NM

Suggested citation: Body & Soul Peer Counselor Training. National Cancer Institute (2005). Bethesda, MD