

## VENA Revisited

Produced by the Alabama Department of Public Health  
Video Communications and Distance Learning Division

### Faculty

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### Why is Change So Hard?




### Breaking Bad Habits

- Knowing that you need to change is not enough
- Having the knowledge about how to change is not enough
- Harmful habits can stick because enjoyable habits (eating sugary, fatty foods or using alcohol) stimulate the pleasure center in the brain

### Breaking Bad Habits

Even if you substitute a good habit for a bad habit, it does not erase the bad behavior from your brain, making it easy to relapse.



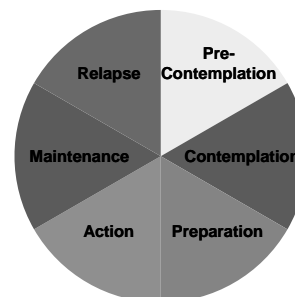
### Some Barriers to Change

- Lack of support
- Lack of confidence
- Low literacy, low health literacy
- Cultural differences
- Living environment: food deserts, unsafe outdoor areas
- Economics
- Lack of time

### Stages of Change

- Precontemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance
- Relapse

### Recognizing Stages of Change



### Meet Janica

- Twenty something, mother of three
- Overweight to start, never lost her baby weight
- Spends a lot of time with screens

### Meet Alicia

- Nineteen years
- First time mom
- Family takes care of son while she is in school

### Pre-Contemplation:

(Do not intend to take action in the foreseeable future - next 6 months)

- Janica says “Man would I love to be skinny like you!”
- Alicia says, “I hate that Juan’s front teeth are black.”

### Contemplation:

(Have intention of starting a healthy behavior in the next 6 months)

- Janica says, “Girl, I sure would like to look like you, but I know that would be too much work for me now...maybe soon.”
- Alicia says, “The doctor says if I change Juan’s diet it might help his teeth, but I don’t know...”

**Preparation:**

(People are ready to take action within the next 30 days and believe that making a change can lead to a healthier life)

- Janica asks, "How do you stay so skinny? I want to give it a try."
- Alicia says, "I was watching Good Morning America and they said that certain foods can rot out a child's teeth."

**Action:**

(Have made a recent behavior change and plan to continue)

- Janica says, "Guess what? I joined a walking group and we walk 3 days a week!"
- Alicia says, "Guess what? I threw away all of Juan's bottles."

**Maintenance:**

(Have sustained their behavior change for more than 6 months and plan to continue)

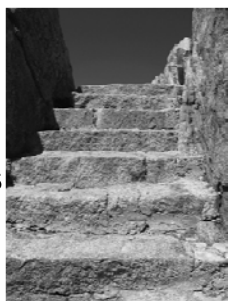
- Janica says, "Look at this - my pants are gettin' baggy!"
- Alicia says, "Now I only put water in his sippy cup."

**Relapse:**

(Start to stop good habits or slip back into unhealthy ones)

- Janica proclaims : "It's too cold to walk outside now. Guess I'm not going to lose any more weight."
- Alicia confides: "Juan got sick and I was afraid he would get dehydrated so I bought him a bottle and put juice in it again."

**What are YOUR Barriers to Helping Clients Change?**



**The First Step to Success in Health Behavior Change is *Know Your Audience!***

**What Do You Know About Millennials?**

### What is a Millennial?

- Born between “about” 1982 - 2004
- 100 million people - the biggest generation in history
- Have been tagged the “Me - Me Generation” and “Generation Nice”
- Opinions about money and the economy are affected by the Great Recession
- 49% of this group consider themselves “lower or lower middle class”

### First Digital Natives: “The iPhone Generation”

- For entertainment, 50% play video games, 45% download music or video  
– Close to 40% watch TV online
- After searching online about a service, product or brand, 45% use text messaging, 38% use social media and 38% use instant messaging to communicate with others about it

### Financial Picture

- Higher unemployment rates
- Smaller incomes
- Encumbered with student loan debt
- Only 23% between 18 - 31 married couples lived in their own household
- In 2010, 30% of 18 - 34 year olds lived with their parents

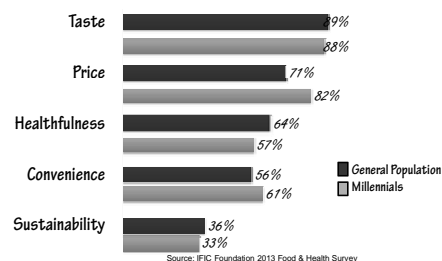
### How Do Millennials Eat?

- The average grade they give their eating pattern is a C+
- Meals consist of too many red meats or fried foods with few or no vegetables or produce

International Food Information Council Foundation,  
2012 Food & Health Survey, Marcia Greenblum MS, RD

**According to the Journal of Business Psychology: “The Millennial generation has poor health habits, including inactivity and poor nutrition, which contribute to the early development of overweight and obesity.”**

### Taste is The Primary Driver of Food And Beverage Selection, Followed By Price



### IFIC Foundation Millennial Focus Group Research (2013)

- **Top Barriers to Healthful Diet**
  - Nearly all Millennials acknowledged that they generally do not eat as healthfully as they would like
  - Their top 2 reasons - lack of money and lack of time - same as what drives their food choices

### IFIC Foundation Millennial Focus Group Research (2013)

- Most of their meals are unplanned and based primarily on what is available or accessible at the moment

### From the Mouths of Millennials:

“Moneywise, I do not make that much.”

“It is hard and when you do not make that type of money, you cannot go buy the healthier foods.”

### IFIC Foundation Millennial Focus Group Research (2013)

Social situations are a nutritional challenge, because they are both more likely to go to a restaurant when they are with others and to choose less healthful options.



### Some Millennial Eating Behaviors

- Lack of meal planning
- Breakfast skipping
- Susceptibility to emotional triggers that precipitate eating behavior

IFIC Foundation Americans' Perceptions and Approaches to Eating and Drinking Occasions and Behavior Research

### IFIC Foundation Millennial Focus Group Research (2013)

- **Top Food Purchasing Goals**
  - Minimize the time it takes to shop for and prepare meals
  - Pick up foods or eat in restaurants that are close to their home or workplace
  - Eat "on the go"
  - Minimize cost



### IFIC Foundation Millennial Focus Group Research (2013)

- From the Mouths of Millennials:

“I had soup and salad from Olive Garden for lunch today. It was driven by convenience and price, because it is all you can eat for \$6 and it is right next to my job.”

### IFIC Foundation Millennial Focus Group Research (2013)

- Top Knowledge Gaps

- How many calories are appropriate for them to eat in a day?
- What portion sizes are appropriate for them?
- How they can eat healthfully for a reasonable cost?
- How to minimize preparation time / effort with healthful foods?

### IFIC Foundation Millennial Focus Group Research (2013)

- From the Mouths of Millennials

“I know how to be healthy, I know what is healthy, but it is just hard to get on a routine to eat portioned meals and to balance it out to eat what you are supposed to get the right nutrients.”



### Where Do Millennials Get Their Nutrition Information?

- Social media
- Mobile apps
- TV talk shows
- Popular magazines
- Food related documentaries
- Few say health professionals



### Where Do Millennials Get Their Nutrition Information?

More than any other age group, millennials are more likely to believe something about food or health when they hear or see it on social media.



### Youngest Millennials: Drug and Alcohol Use

- Monitoring the Future Survey
- Surveying 8th, 10th and 12th graders from 400 schools across the country
- 40 - 50,000 students surveyed annually since 1975

### Alcohol Use

- Any in the last 12 months: 41%
- Binge drinking: 5 drinks in a row any time in last 2 weeks: 12%
- 19% of 12th graders reported binge drinking at least once in the last 2 weeks



### Alcohol Use

- 7% of 12 graders reported drinking 10 drinks in a row on at least one occasion in past 2 weeks
- 4% reported having 15 drinks in a row at least once in the last 2 weeks



### Good News About Smoking

- 8% reported any smoking in prior month – a historic low
- Disapproval of smoking has increased



### Drugs

- Marijuana
  - 24% report using in the prior 12 months
  - The belief that regular marijuana use harms the user has fallen
  - Disapproval of use is down in 8th and 12th graders
- How will opinion of marijuana change as it becomes decriminalized in more states?



### Other Drugs: Use Increases with Age

- 15.9% of 12th graders reported use in the last 12 months
- 6.4% of 8th graders reported use
- 11.2% of 10th graders reported use

### Refining Your VENA Skills

- Why VENA?
- How is it different than “I talk, you listen?”
- What are the benefits?



### Communication + Critical Thinking = BARK

- Build rapport (listen more - talk less, open ended questions, connect with emotions, dig when needed)
- Avoid stereotyping (take your glasses off)
- Reflective listening (validates emotions, summarizes)
- Keep it simple (empower client to solve their problem)

### Messages that Make Sense to Millennials

- Positive, upbeat, encouraging
- Short and to the point
  - Suggest a goal they believe is attainable
  - Reflect information they already know or something they are already doing

### Emotions

- Do not forget to connect emotionally
    - Listen for and discuss feelings to connect with client
  - Use metaphor images:
    - Magic wand, ball & chain, doors
- More ideas:  
[www.gettingtotheheartofthematter.com](http://www.gettingtotheheartofthematter.com)

### Emotions

- Emoticons:

How do you feel about your role as a parent?



- More ideas:

– [www.gettingtotheheartofthematter.com](http://www.gettingtotheheartofthematter.com)

### How to Reach Millennials

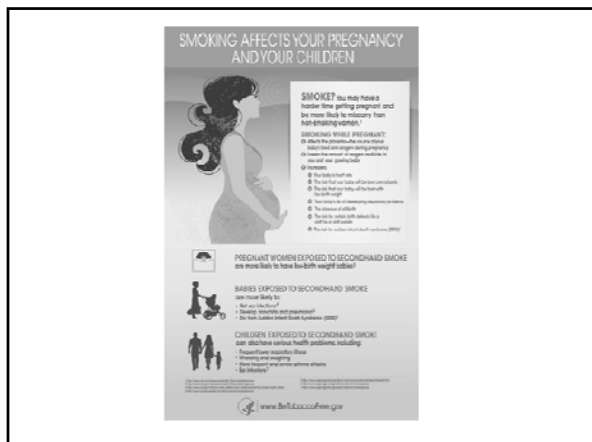
- They are highly skeptical of nutrition information from any source
- They will believe information when it makes sense to them or if it can be found from multiple sources
- They respect information that comes from someone who is educated - especially with an advanced degree

### Think Small Bytes



- Instead of a long explanation, think twitter - 140 characters
- Instead of a one page brochure - think infographic






**Find Ways to Engage Clients After They Leave You:**

- **Appealing yet credible, easy to remember websites**
  - WebMD, healthychildren.org
- **What are your favorite reliable websites?**

**Engage Clients After They Leave You:**

- **Games / apps**
  - QuizUp the #1 rated trivia game in the world
  - Food/Health Questions from International Food and Information Council



**Engage Clients After They Leave You:**

- **Health IQ: A health trivia app to increase health literacy**
  - 10,000 questions across 300 topics, www.healthiq.com
- **www.Text4Baby.org**



**WIC Clinic Scenario**

- A mom, Ellie, her one - month - old baby and boyfriend are in the waiting room
- Maggie the nutritionist is just about to call them back to her office when there is some shouting from the break room
- She goes to find out what happened

**WIC Clinic Scenario**

- There was a car accident involving some health department employees
- Nothing is known yet about injuries
- Some friends of Maggie's left about half an hour to go to lunch - she is worried they were in the accident
- Maggie is very upset but wants to stay on schedule so she can leave on time today, so she goes to get her client

### **A Tale of Two Counseling Sessions**

- Take a moment and think about how you would react in this situation
- What would be best for you and the client?
- What could you do to make the best of a difficult situation?
- How would critical thinking skills help you be most efficient so you could return to the unfolding events at the clinic?

### **Food for Thought: Does this Ever Happen to You?**

- You try to speed up counseling to keep to a schedule or catch up
- But instead you skip some important critical thinking steps and the session ends up taking more time
- In the end, no one benefits

### **Scenario A**

- Maggie wants to stay on time so she takes a few deep breaths and calls in her client
- The baby is sleeping in her boyfriend's arms so she leaves them in the waiting room (Fewer people talking may make the counseling session faster)
- She picks up Ellie's chart on the way

### **Scenario A**

- Maggie is professional but brief
  - She asks how breastfeeding is going
  - Ellie says she is thinking of quitting
- Maggie reinforces all the benefits and asks if she would like to see the peer counselor
  - Ellie says no so Maggie signs her up for the partial breastfeeding package

### **Scenario B**

- To get her mind off the accident and back to her job, Maggie reads over previous notes in the chart from her last visit
- She learns that the client's boyfriend is not supportive of breastfeeding, and Ellie confided that he could be her biggest barrier to breastfeeding

### **Scenario B**

- Maggie calls Ellie and her boyfriend Julio to her office
- She builds rapport with Julio by guessing he is the dad because the baby looks so much like him
- She also asks if he has been to the WIC office before and explains a few things to him, such as the difference in WIC packages

### **Scenario B**

- She points to some of the breastfeeding posters and explains why WIC is so big on breastfeeding
- In talking with them, she finds that baby has not been satisfied with feedings lately, and Julio said he thinks they should switch to formula

### **Scenario B**

- Maggie explains milk supply and why breastfeeding could make their baby so much healthier, as well as make Ellie healthier, too
- She focuses her explanation on Julio in a way that addresses his uneasiness about breastfeeding

### **Scenario B**

- Maggie knows the peer counselor is busy with another client and is herself a breastfeeding educator, so as the baby starts to wake up and root, she asks Ellie to latch the baby on

### **Scenario B**

- She explains to Julio that this is a sign that baby is hungry and about hunger and feeding cues
- Maggie sees right away that her latch is not good, which could also be causing sore nipples

### **Scenario B**

- She asks Julio if he would be the “spotter” for positioning the baby because it is sometimes hard to see how the baby is latching on and if it is correct
- Julio understands the term because he is a weight lifter
- Julio appears ecstatic to be involved and leaves being a more enthusiastic supporter of breastfeeding

### **Scenario B**

- He also remembers that Ellie will be receiving a larger food package because she is breastfeeding exclusively
- Maggie ends the session by giving them some good websites to check out and blogs and twitter feeds to follow (including stay-at-home dads)

### **Closing Advice on Behavior Change from NIH**

- **Break Bad Habits**
- **Avoid tempting situations**
  - If you always stop for a donut on your way to work, try a different route
  - Keep fatty foods, cigarettes, alcohol and other tempting items out of your home

<http://newsinhealth.nih.gov/issue/Jan2012/Feature1>

### **Closing Advice on Behavior Change from NIH**

- **Replace unhealthy behaviors with healthy ones**
  - Try exercise, a favorite hobby or spending time with family
- **Prepare mentally**
  - If you cannot avoid a tempting situation, prepare yourself in advance

<http://newsinhealth.nih.gov/issue/Jan2012/Feature1>

### **Closing Advice on Behavior Change from NIH**

- Think about how you want to handle it and mentally practice what you plan
- **Enlist support**
  - Ask friends, family and co-workers to support your efforts to change
- **Reward yourself for small steps**
  - Give yourself a healthy treat when you have achieved a small goal or milestone

<http://newsinhealth.nih.gov/issue/Jan2012/Feature1>

### **A Final Thought**

**IF YOU CAN FIND A PATH  
WITH NO OBSTACLES,  
IT PROBABLY DOESN'T  
LEAD ANYWHERE!**

### **Resources / References**

- <http://www.forbes.com/sites/neilhowe/2014/09/04/the-millennial-generation-keep-calm-and-carry-on-part-6-of-7/>
- <http://www.consumerfed.org/pdfs/Millennials-Tuesday-GREENBLUM.pdf>
- [http://www.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/outlook/millennials/index.html?cid=PS\\_02\\_18\\_07\\_00\\_00\\_15\\_01](http://www.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/outlook/millennials/index.html?cid=PS_02_18_07_00_00_15_01)
- [www.Monitoringthefuture.org](http://www.Monitoringthefuture.org)
- <http://newsinhealth.nih.gov/issue/Jan2012/Feature1>