

## CONDOM NEGOTIATIONS EXERCISE

### DIRECTIONS:

Look at the following list of questions. How would you respond to these statements if your partner made them after you had suggested that he/she use a condom?

List as many creative sex-positive responses as you can come up with. Write them down. Have one representative from each small group report back to the large group.

### STATEMENTS:

1. What kind of person do you think I am? I would never sleep with the type of person who has AIDS.
  
2. Don't you trust me?
  
3. I don't like condoms!
  
4. It's no fun for me when I wear one of those! It doesn't feel as good and I don't feel as close to you with a barrier between us.
  
5. Are you telling me you've got some kind of disease or something?
  
6. What do you mean you don't want to go all the way unless we use a condom?

7. But we're already using birth control. Why do we need condoms, too?
8. I'm clean, believe me!
9. It's too much of a hassle to stop and put one on. It always breaks the mood.
10. But only gays get AIDS. We don't have to worry about it.
11. We've been going steady six months. We don't need these.
12. I don't want to deal with any of this bad news. Everyone's making too big a deal about AIDS.
13. It makes me uptight to use condoms. I lose my erection.
14. Condoms are for whores. Are you telling me that you sleep with tons of people?

**Sample responses:**

1. What kind of man do you think I am? I would never sleep with the type of person who has AIDS.  
A. There is no "type" of person who has AIDS. Anyone can get it and you can rarely tell if the person is infected.
2. Don't you trust me?  
A. I do trust you but either of us could have the virus and not know. It would be much easier for me to relax if we would just take the precaution.
3. I don't like condoms!  
A. Why don't you like them? Why don't we try it a few times and maybe we will even enjoy them. I'd feel much better if we used one.
4. It's no fun for me when I wear one of those! It doesn't feel as good and I don't feel as close to you with a barrier between us.  
A. I understand that it might feel different but why don't we try it a few times. It would make me feel safer and more relaxed if I don't have to worry about pregnancy and AIDS.  
B. We can put a little bit of water-based lubricant inside the condom and that will make it feel better for you.
5. Are you telling me you have some kind of disease or something?  
A. I'm pretty sure I'm not infected but no one can be sure. It's just not worth the risk and it's so easy to take precautions.
6. What do you mean you don't want to go all the way with me unless we use a condom?  
A. I am very concerned about AIDS and I have made up my mind to take all the precautions I can. There are so many other things that we can do if you really do not want to wear a condom.
7. But we're already using birth control. Why do we need condoms, too?  
A. Condoms provide protection against the spread of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases as well as against getting pregnant.

8. I'm clean, believe me!  
A. *Even though you think you're safe there is really no way we can be sure and I will feel more comfortable about sleeping with you if we are protected.*
9. It's too much of a hassle to stop and put one on. It always breaks the mood.  
A. *It doesn't have to be a hassle. We can make it a part of foreplay. I'll put it on for you.*
10. But only gays get AIDS. We don't have to worry about it.  
A. *AIDS is not a disease that only gays can get. Heterosexuals already have it.*
11. We've been going steady six months. We don't need these.  
A. *Even though six months seems like a long time, it can take years for symptoms to show up. Either one of us could have been infected before we started going out and still not know.*
12. I don't want to deal with any of this bad news. Everyone's making too big of a deal about AIDS.  
A. *We don't have to deal with bad news if we are careful now. We can just use condoms and forget about it.*  
B. *If we take the initiative to use condoms now, we can reduce our anxiety about contracting the AIDS virus.*
13. It makes me uptight to use condoms. I lose my erection.  
A. *We can take time to get used to them by practicing. I don't want either of us to feel uptight when we have sex.*
14. Condoms are for whores. Are you telling me that you sleep with tons of guys?  
A. *Condoms do have a bad reputation but that's changing because they work well. I'm concerned for our health. It has nothing to do with how many people I've slept with.*

Adapted from the California Nurses Association.

AIDS Train-the-Trainer Program 1989-90 with permission from Susan B. Thorner, MA, HIV Education Coordinator, Inova Health Systems, Inc., Springfield, VA.