

PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID

FOR VACCINE
HESITANCY

IN THE COVID-19
OUTBREAK
RESPONSE



AIM OF TRAINING

- **Learn or deepen PFA skills to supportively respond to people who are vaccine hesitant to the COVID-19 vaccine.**
- **Build or deepen skills in demonstrating empathy and understanding, especially with others who may have different viewpoints or values.**

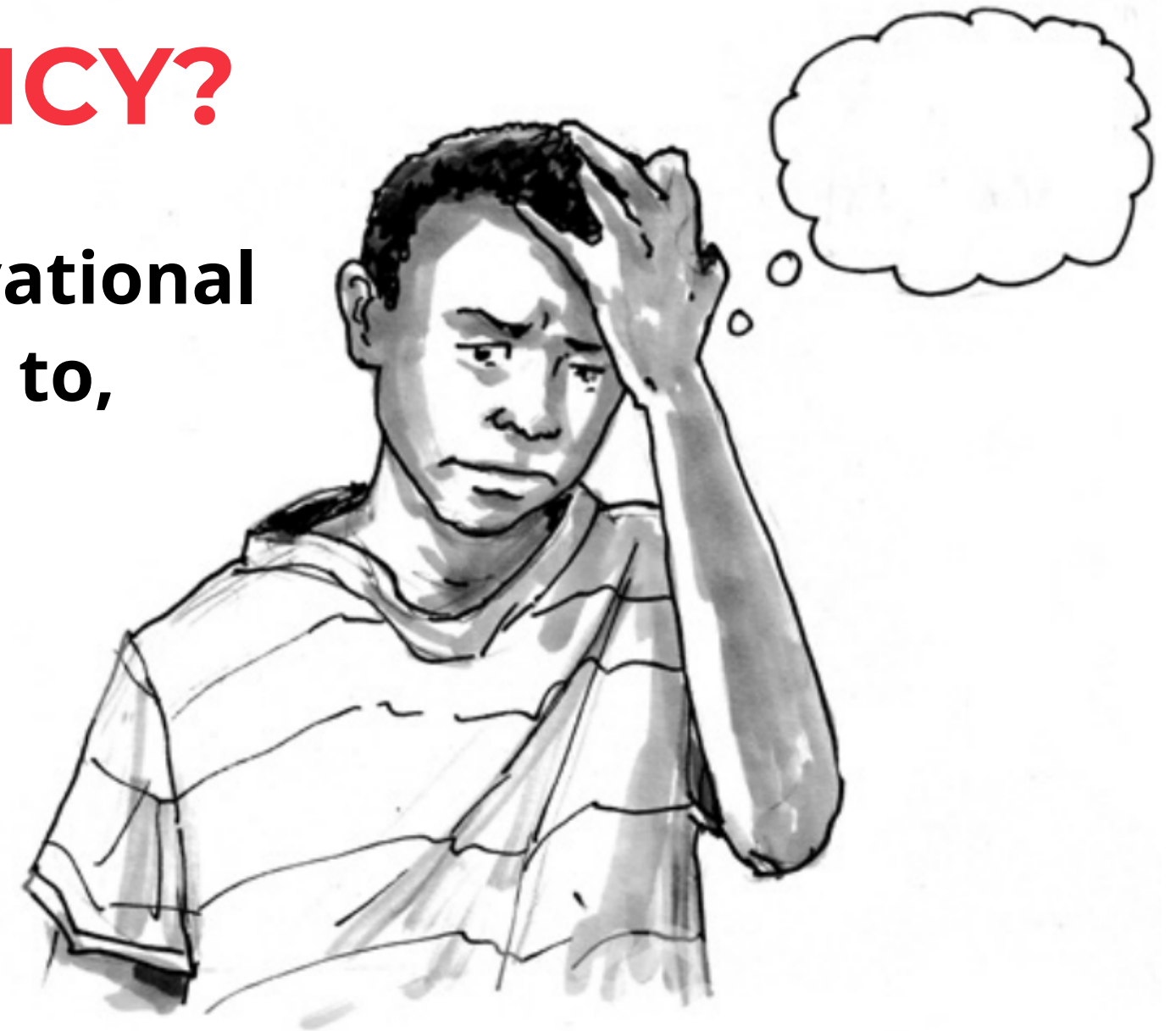
TRAINING CONTENT

- **Factors that influence peoples' reactions to vaccines**
- **PFA for vaccine hesitancy: Look, Listen and Link**
- **Promoting safety, calming, self-efficacy and connectedness**

WHAT IS VACCINE HESITANCY?

WHO defines vaccine hesitancy as “A motivational state of being conflicted about, or opposed to, getting vaccinated.”

Vaccine hesitancy can result in “a delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines despite availability of vaccination services.”



WHAT ARE SOME FEARS SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINE?

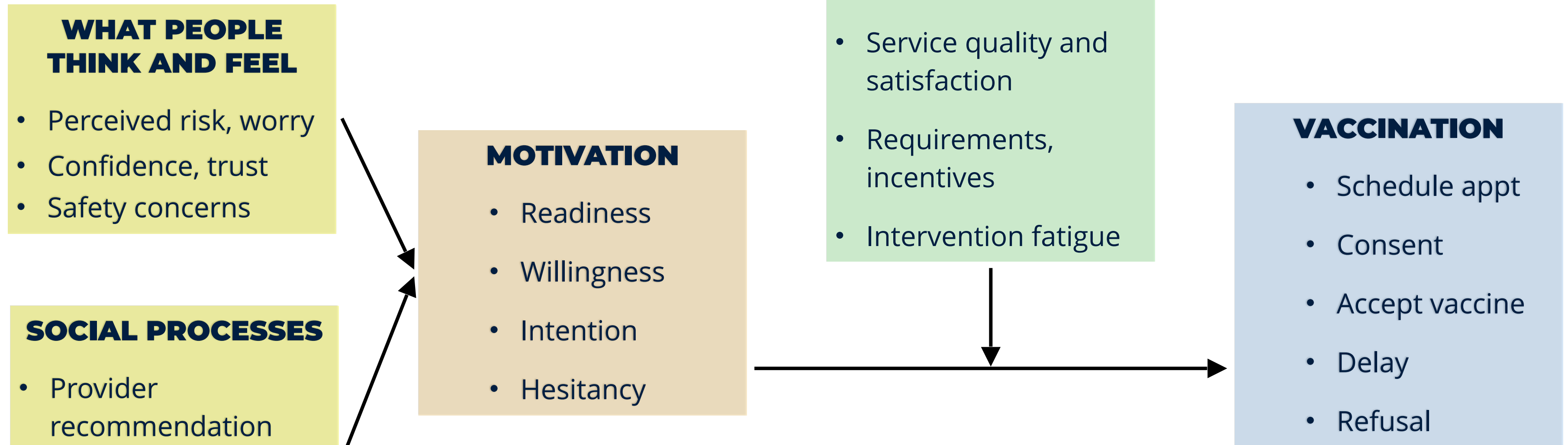
Activity 1

List some of the fears around the COVID-19 vaccine.



COMMON FEARS ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINE

- **The speed of vaccine development makes them unsafe**
- **Some vaccines use new technology, making them unsafe**
- **They are not well tested on minority groups**
- **The vaccine side effects are really bad**
- **It is unknown if the vaccines will protect against all variants**
- **Officials promoting the vaccines can not be trusted**



Source: The BeSD expert working group. Based on: Brewer NT, Chapman GB, Rothman AJ, Leask J, and Kempe A (2017). Increasing vaccination: Putting psychosocial science into action. *Psychological Science for the Public Interest*. 18(3): 149-207

WHAT PEOPLE THINK AND FEEL

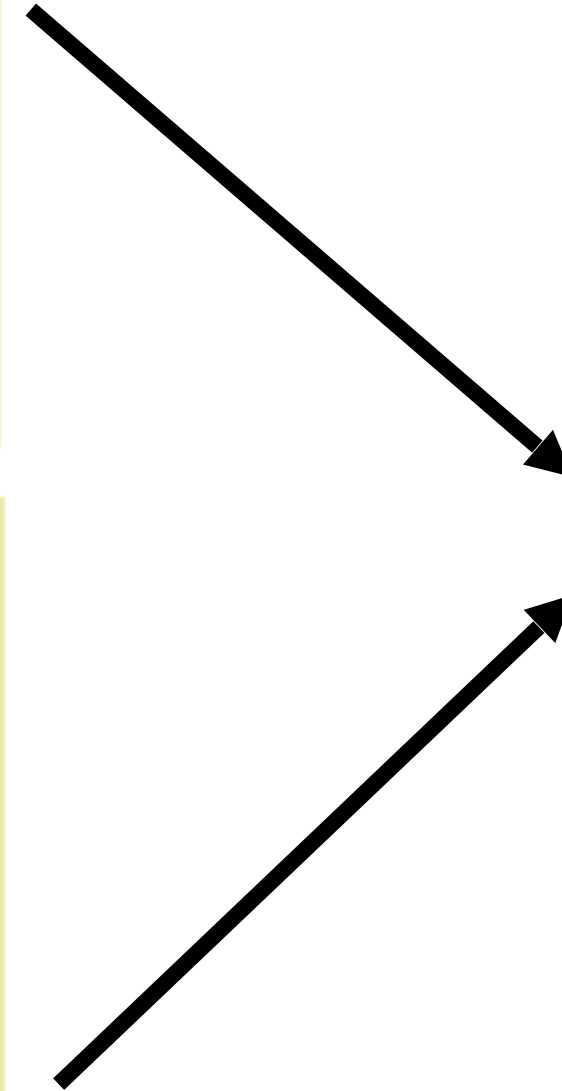
- Perceived risk, worry
- Confidence, trust
- Safety concerns

SOCIAL PROCESSES

- Provider recommendation
- Social norms
- Gender norms and equity
- Sharing info, rumors

MOTIVATION

- Readiness
- Willingness
- Intention
- Hesitancy

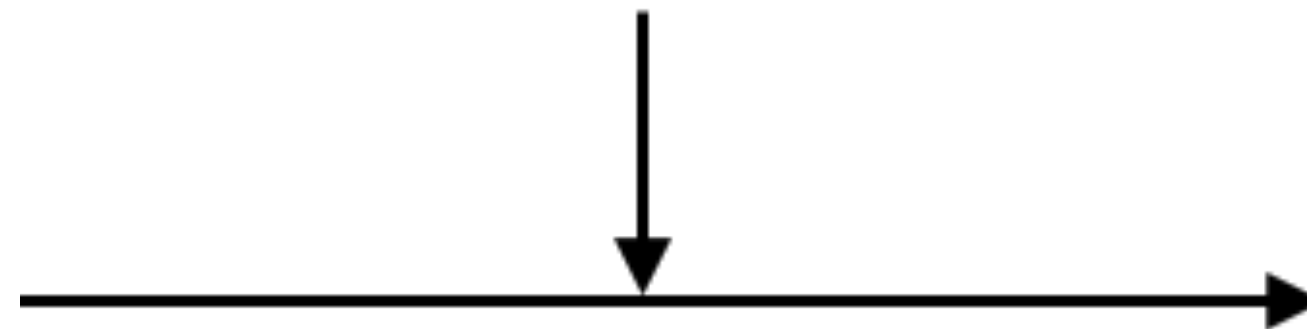


PRACTICAL ISSUES

- Vaccine availability
- Convenience, costs
- Service quality and satisfaction
- Requirements, incentives
- Intervention fatigue

VACCINATION

- Schedule appt
- Consent
- Accept vaccine
- Delay
- Refusal



Activity 1

Discuss in groups one factor of the model:

1. What people think and feel
2. Social processes
3. Motivation
4. Practical issues

How may this factor lead to someone being vaccine hesitant?

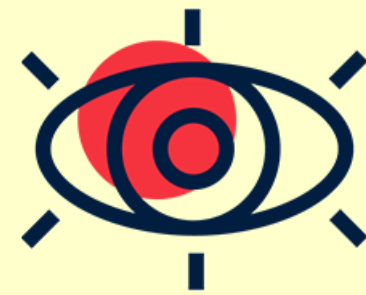
GENERAL PFA **DO'S** AND **DONTS** OF SUPPORTING PEOPLE WHO ARE VACCINE HESITANT

Activity 3

Answer “**Do**” if this is something we should do,
or “**Don't**” if we should avoid this when
supporting people who are vaccine hesitant

DO	DON'T
Find common ground	Emphasise differences in views
Take time to understand what people are thinking and why	Assume you know why they are vaccine hesitant
Be open, polite and respectful	Attack peoples character or views
Validate genuine concerns	Dismiss genuine concerns
Identify misinformation without judgement and supply useful information	Identify wrong conclusions in a judgemental or condescending way
Focus on the facts	Focus on the myth
Allow people an 'out' that doesn't cause embarrassment	Set people up for embarrassment if they change their mind

ACTION PRINCIPLES OF PFA



LOOK



LISTEN



LINK

LOOK FOR

- **Information on what has happened and is happening**
- **Safety, protection and security risks**
- **Physical injuries**
- **Immediate basic and practical needs**
- **Emotional reactions**



ALSO LOOK FOR

- **Your own biases or views**
- **Know your own limits as a helper**
- **Strong reactions from vaccine hesitant people**
- **Look for (and be prepared to respond helpfully and respectfully to) vaccine hesitancy myths or concerns**



LOOK AT YOURSELF

Activity 4



Write down your own personal views and feelings towards people who are COVID-19 vaccine hesitant.

MANAGING YOURSELF

Activity 5



What could you do to manage your views and feelings to ensure you are best supporting the person in front of you?

COMMON EXPRESSIONS OF VACCINE HESITANCY

Activity 6

Strike a pose!

I'm vaccine hesitant!



STRONG NEGATIVE REACTIONS

Activity 7

What strong negative reactions do you think you could or might encounter?

Write in the chat.



EXAMPLES OF STRONG NEGATIVE REACTIONS



- **Menacing or hostile facial expression**
- **Aggressive or threatening body language**
- **Agitated, constantly moving**
- **Raised voice or shouting**
- **Showing strong feelings of superiority or contempt for people with other views**
- **Hostile or overly combative verbal expression**



LISTEN REFERS TO HOW THE HELPER

- **Initiates contact and introduces themselves**
- **Pays attention and listens actively**
- **Accepts and validates the persons reactions and feelings**
- **Calms the person in distress**
- **Asks about needs and concerns**
- **Helps the person find solutions to their immediate needs and problems**

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR LISTEN

- **Stay in your role as a supportive listener**
 - Be prepared to listen open and actively – a lot
- **Maintain a supportive and helpful dialogue**
 - Foster trust and respect
 - Find common ground
 - Validate their genuine concerns
 - Take time to understand what people are thinking
 - Listen
 - Ask non-judgemental questions
 - Find out gaps in understanding



SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR LISTEN



- **Provide 'useful' information**
 - Relevant information they are missing
 - Factual information
 - Information which highlights misinformation or wrong conclusions
 - Plausible alternative explanations for errors or myths
- **Provide perspective and encourage an open mind**
 - Be open yourself
 - Ask perspective gaining questions

WORKING RESPECTFULLY WITH MISINFORMATION

A simple four step process:

1. Start with the fact.
2. Warn about the myth. Mention it only ONCE.
3. Explain the misbelief or misconception.
4. Finish with the fact. Say it multiple times if possible / as appropriate.



4 STEPS TO WORKING WITH MISINFORMATION

Activity 8

Use the 4-step method to tackle one of these myths. Everyone has a turn.

- COVID-19 vaccine development was rushed and unsafe
- COVID-19 vaccines cause sterilization
- COVID vaccines change or interact with DNA
- COVID-19 vaccines are safe for everybody

LINK IS TO

- **Assess information**
- **Connect with loved ones, and social support**
- **Tackle practical problems**
- **Access services and other help**



ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE

- **Address unreliable sources of information**
- **Recognise that loved ones and community may be rejecting this person**

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Activity 9

Listen to the role play

What things did the helper do well?

What advice could you give the helper?

CREATING A SAFE SPACE

Activity 10

What things can the PFA helper do to create a safe space? A space that promotes safety, calming, self-efficacy and social connectedness.

CREATE A SAFE SPACE

- **Be fully present**
- **Show acceptance, empathy and compassion**
- **Be open and allow for diversity of opinions**
- **Respond to needs, questions and concerns**
- **Clearly explain and provide only accurate information**
- **Ensure confidentiality**



Final activity

What are your most important learning points that you are taking away with you today?

**THANK YOU AND
GOODBYE!!**

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