

Way Safe!

Mapping Your Way to a Healthy Future



Participant Workbook *Workbook 2*

N. G. Bartholomew, D. F. Dansereau, K. Knight, and D. D. Simpson
TCU Institute of Behavioral Research

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Risks and Reasons



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Introduction

What good is there in thinking about risks?

Elton John, the award winning singer-songwriter, recently said he was frustrated by peoples' attitudes about HIV/AIDS. He said he was frustrated because it seems that about every 10 years or so, we have to educate people all over again about this virus and how life-changing and deadly it can be.

People die every day of AIDS in the United States. People die every minute of AIDS around the world. This makes the risks associated with getting or spreading HIV very serious indeed.

What makes people take sex risks or drug risks?

Precaution is common. We do it all the time. A precaution is something we do to prepare for risk. We wear seat-belts, road helmets, steel-toed work boots, hard hats, goggles, gloves. It seems second nature to do some of these things. We worry about the consequences or bad things that could happen if we don't.

But judging risk is much harder when it involves things we like and make us feel good. Things like sex, drug use, being cool or popular. It seems like it would be simple but it's not. Even people who really want to practice safe sex or stay away from drug use can be overly confident and not plan wisely. "Tweaked" feelings are a big part of the reason.

What are "tweaked feelings?"

When we are experiencing strong or heightened feelings, we can make some pretty bad choices. Let's call this experience of really feeling something "tweaked-up feelings." This can include both good and bad feelings.

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For example, there's the good or positive feeling of celebration or being happy. But feeling really happy and wanting to celebrate could work against us. We could quickly forget our goal to quit using drugs because the feeling of wanting to celebrate has been "tweaked." So we could make a fast, stupid decision to hit the pipe. This is risky for recovery and freedom.

Most of us are familiar with feeling really upset or down about something. Say our feelings of loneliness are "tweaked" because our one true love broke our heart and left us blue. We end up going home from a club with someone we just met. We don't use a condom because we have heightened feelings that make getting laid more important than being safe. It is not crazy to worry about HIV or hepatitis.

Here's a map that helps outline the key points:

STRONG FEELINGS

POSITIVE & NEGATIVE

RISKS



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So how does knowing all of this help us?

Mostly, just by being aware. Becoming more aware.

When our feelings are really strong, either happy ones or sad ones, we run the risk of making bad decisions. This is especially true for decisions about sex or drugs, because these are things that are highly enjoyable.

Using the tool of mapping, we can “lay out” our own thoughts about risk, the reasons we take risks, and ways we can be more aware of how feelings can drive our bad decisions. This is important in areas that involve a risk to our health, safety, freedom, and recovery.

Practice:

Here is a set of 3 “guide” maps for you to complete. These maps will give you a chance to think about yourself, in terms of taking risks:

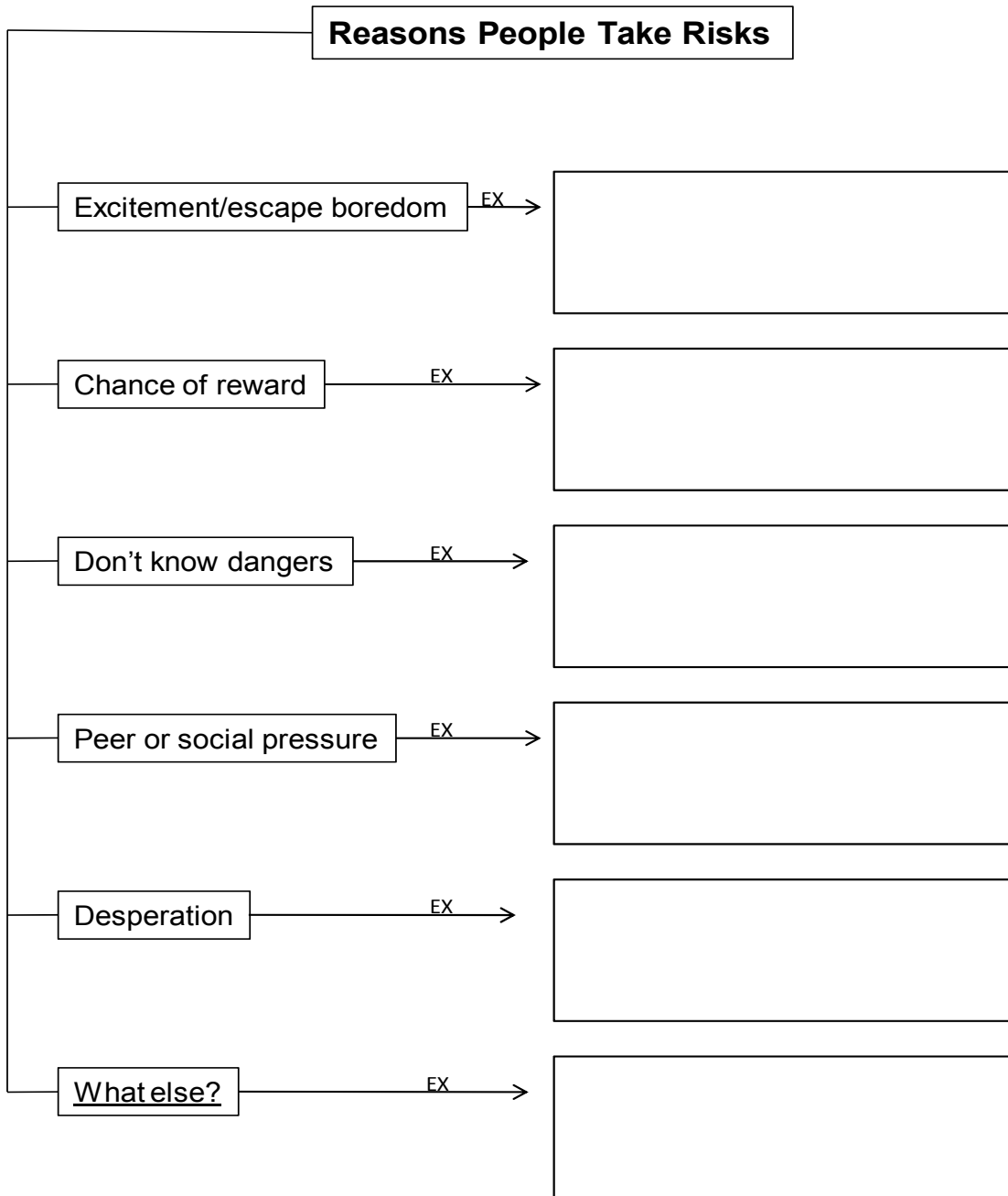
To complete a guide map:

- *Find some space and a little privacy; read over the maps*
- *For Map 1 and 2, think about an example to write in each box*
- *For Map 3, write a brief response inside each box, based on a situation that could be real for you.*
- *It’s okay to write over the lines or on the back if you need more room*
- *Read over your completed guide map and think about your answers*
- *Be ready to talk about your maps in your next group meeting*
- *There’s also a free-mapping worksheet if you want to map more ideas*



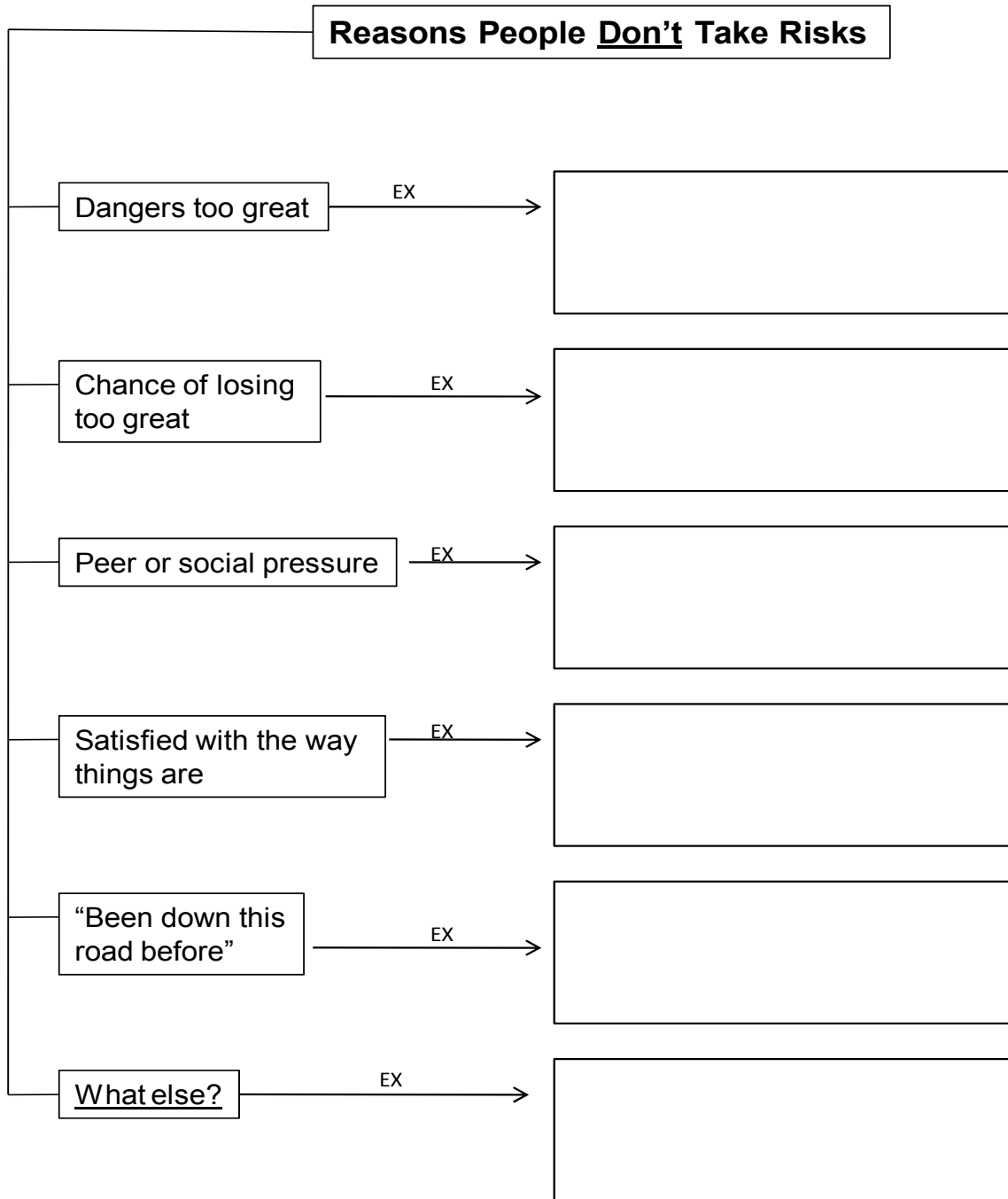
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Risks and Reasons Guide Map 1



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Risks and Reasons Guide Map 2



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Risky Business

Describe a sexual situation you might run into when you are released that could be risky?

What is the situation?

What are your choices?

What are the hidden risks?

What are the long term risks?

How do you rate these risks? (Place an X to show risk level)

 HIGH

LOW 

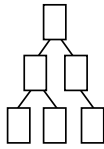
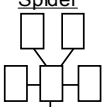
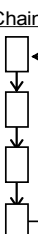
How can you reduce the risks?

If it turns out to be a riskier situation than you thought, what is "Plan B?"

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TCU Node-Link Mapping	FREESTYLE MAPPING SHEET	WEBSITE: ibr.tcu.edu
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LINK TYPES
Action
Leads to L →→→→
Next N →→→→
Influences I →→→→
Description
Part P _____
Type T _____
Characteristics C _____
Elaboration
Example E -----
Comment Co -----
Analogy An -----
PERSONAL

STRUCTURE TYPES
Hierarchy 
Spider 
Chain 
PERSONAL
HINTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw pictures in nodes • Use colors and highlighters • Make mini-maps • Put numbers in nodes to make continuation maps • Use "Thought Team" quotes, etc., to aid mapping

IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION	NODE TYPES	GENERAL						PERSONAL	COMMENTS ABOUT MAP
		GENERAL PURPOSE	POSITIVE ITEM	AGITATING ITEM	DEPRESSING ITEM	ACTION ITEM	DECISION ITEMS		
	