

Practicing Refusals

This exercise is designed to help you improve your ability to refuse offers to drink or use drugs.

For the **person making the offer**: Your job is to try for a full 3 minutes to persuade the other person to take a drink. Short of physical force, you are to entice, cajole, beg, plead, implore, manipulate, and/or guilt-trip the other person. You are to say whatever you need to in order to be successful. Don't take "no" for an answer! Don't give up.

During the exercise, notice the following. These will be **your questions for the discussion**:

- What was your partner's body language telling you?
- Did it seem that your partner really wanted to say "no"?

For the **person refusing the drink or drug**. The **only** thing you say during this entire 3-minute period is "No" or "No thanks." Do not provide reasons, excuses, explanations – **nothing** that will give the other person the opportunity to counter with stronger arguments. "No" really is enough of a reason. You can say "no" or "no thanks" and not necessarily sound rude or impolite. Use your body language and tone of your voice to help you say "no".

During the exercise, notice the following. These will be **your questions for discussion**:

- How did it feel to say no?
- How confident were you in your ability to keep saying "No"?
- What sensations did you notice in your body?
- What emotions did you experience?
- What were your thoughts as you were trying to refuse?