

# Challenges

## Target Groups

**Adjustment and Well-Being, Spiritual Support, Socialization, Coping Skills**

## Purpose

To help participants face the many and often difficult challenges each day brings. The *Challenges* lesson plan helps each participant recognize that challenges provide choices, as well. He or she does have some control over which path is chosen. Making the right choice means accepting risks and not being discouraged by the possibility of failure.



## Set-Up/Materials Needed

**Blackboard/dry erase board.**

## Group Opening

The leader should welcome each participant appropriately. Introduce the session plan topic, which is *challenges* and *choices*. Persons who are dealing with physical and/or mental illness often find that they become consumed in themselves in the form of personal issues, their illness and sometimes, prolonged grief and mourning. When one is so self-focused it becomes hard to see “the forest through the trees.” This lesson plan is about control and the message that each person may have more control over life than previously thought.

## Main Body

The leader will promote thinking and discussion through asking open-ended questions. Encourage each participant to participate as he/she feels comfortable. The leader should use the following questions:

- We can chose to view our own challenges as a mountain (large, intimidating and impassable) or we can climb the mountain, one step at a time. How do you view the “mountain?”
- Do you wake up in the morning thinking about how today will be

**better than yesterday or do you resign yourself to “just another dull day?”**

- **We can actively participate in our physical and mental rehabilitation or we can watch the time slip away. How do you participate?**
- **What do you do each day to become a better person?**
- **What does this statement mean? “The winner of the race is not always the swiftest but the one who keeps on trying”**

### Closing

The leader should close the session with a short summary of the ways we can face our challenges, whether they be in the form of anxiety, insecurity and depression or fear of not being able to regain physical function. Impart the message that each day is a gift. Make each day count. Thank the group for their thoughtful contributions.

### Author’s note

Few of us will ever experience the challenges faced by Lance Armstrong. Lance is a cancer survivor who at one time was expected to die by even his own doctors (cancer ravaged his body at one time spreading into his chest and brain). Today, he is a survivor and four-time Tour de France champion and continues to make history and inspire people wherever he goes. Sports Illustrated’s Rick Reilly wrote “Lance Armstrong is more than a bicyclist now, more than an athlete. He’s become a kind of hope machine... they read his book, plug into his story, let him block the wind. They see a man who once sat around the same chemotherapy rooms as theirs breaking [finishing line] tapes on the tops of the Alps. He welcomes it. He wants to lead them. He calls it ‘the obligation of the cured’ and every time he rides, he feels like they ride with him.”

