CAYA Cartoons:
Sparking Conversations with and for Adolescents and Youth Around Treatment Literacy
Background:

These cartoons were created by the Community of African Youth Advisors (CAYA), an internal advisory group consisting of young people between the ages of 15-29 who are beneficiaries of services across 11 EGPAF-supported countries. EGPAF recognizes that meaningful youth participation is integral for the future success of its programs, particularly those targeting this population. CAYA is the result of collaborative, iterative engagement across global teams to create a dynamic partnership with youth across EGPAF-supported countries to better align global investment towards EGPAF’s mission.

These cartoons were created by CAYA country teams consisting of two CAYA members, a CAYA focal point, and an EGPAF staff member. The cartoons were developed for, and by, youth as an innovative way to communicate real issues and challenges youth face daily, in different contexts around treatment literacy.

We would like to acknowledge the The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation’s (EGPAF) External Affairs Department and Kelsey Brosnan in supporting the packaging of these cartoons. Additionally, we appreciate the Avert platform for providing a user-friendly, accessible platform for CAYA members to put their thoughts into creative and engaging products. We recognize the copyright of Avert and attribute the development using the platform fully to Avert. These cartoons will be used internally for EGPAF programs.

The Avert program is available at: https://www.avert.org/hubs/young-voices-africa

Use:

The cartoons are meant to be used to discuss common concerns, misconceptions, and challenges around treatment literacy [ART, adherence, viral load, Undetectable=Untransmittable (U=U)]. They can be used in (in-person or virtual) support groups, support groups, adherence clubs, etc. and are meant to be shared—read (aloud, silently, in groups) or acted out—and discussed using the guides on the back of each cartoon facilitated by adolescent peers or youth facilitators to have open and honest discussions. There are also added animations of select comics to be shared for an additional mode of sharing and discussion.

We would like to track the use of the cartoons and gather feedback to be able to improve the tools—using the simple form at the end of the package. Please contact clenz@pedaids.org to submit feedback and use of the cartons. CAYA members in-country are another great resource for information and a way to contact us.

This is dedicated in memory of Leonarda Pastory, a dedicated, passionate, and exuberant woman, advocate, EGPAF colleague, and committed CAYA focal point for our members in Tanzania. She was the epitome of a champion for building, supporting, and advocating for the meaningful engagement, participation, partnership, and leadership of adolescents and youth infected and affected by HIV.
Hello Dr. Sandra. I'm tired of taking the meds everyday while I'm doing well!

Hello Michel! How are you? Your mom informed me that you don't want to take the drugs. Can we talk about it?

No I do not know! Mom also told me it's to avoid getting sick! Yet my friends don't take drugs, but they don't get sick.

I understand your concern. Do you know why you have to take these drugs everyday?

I understand! But you are not like your friends.

What do you mean I'm not like my friends Dr?

You have a virus in your body! The drugs you take help put the virus to sleep. If you stop taking the drugs, the virus will wake up and you will get sick!

So if I keep taking the drugs, will I still be healthy?

I won't miss my medications anymore! Thank you Dr. See you next time!

Yes Michel! This is why you must take your medication everyday at the same time and when we go to do the control we will see that the virus is asleep.
The Initiation of Disclosure

**Prepare (for facilitator):** Read through the cartoon for yourself. Think through the questions and answers. Consider how this conversation would help to raise awareness, encourage more thinking about attitudes, dispel misinformation, and help support adolescents and youth living with HIV in your community. Be creative and facilitate real and open conversations that are still respectful and safe.

**Guidance for Facilitation:**

1. Introduce yourself and the cartoon activity.
2. Help share the cartoon. You can read it, act it out in a role-play, or pass it around for reading.
3. Start a discussion. Ask open-ended questions:
   - Who are the main characters?
   - What is the cartoon discussing?
   - How would you feel if you were Michel and hearing what the Dr. was saying?
   - What is/are the challenge(s) being discussed?
   - Is there a solution presented? If not, discuss potential solutions.
   - Does this scenario happen a lot? Why or why not?
   - What do we learn about being disclosed to by a provider?
   - What do we learn about accepting one’s HIV status and adherence?
   - Is this new to us?
   - What is/are the challenge(s) being discussed?
   - Is there a solution presented? If not, discuss potential solutions.
   - Does this scenario happen a lot? Why or why not?
4. Share key messages from CAYA, focus on the things not identified in the discussion (below).
5. Thank your attendees/group for joining today. Invite them to give feedback on the new activity (record their feedback on the form at the end of this tool). Ask if they would like to discuss another cartoon or topic soon.
6. Write down the number of attendees, marking their sex and age, using the simple form at the end of the tool.

**Key Messages from CAYA:**

The main topics of this cartoon are disclosure, acceptance of an HIV-positive status, and understanding the role of treatment in keeping Michel healthy. It can be difficult to disclose to someone you care about so it is alright to feel scared or confused—there are people you can turn to if you need support, such as a counselor, health care worker, or peer facilitator. It is important to understand why you are taking medication, what it does in your body, when/how often to take it, and what to do if you forget to take it one day.

Another important topic in this cartoon is that you can live a perfectly normal life with HIV (get married, have kids, work, exercise) and millions of people are doing so right now. Living with HIV should not limit your dreams or goals in life, it is possible to accomplish all of your dreams.

**Authors:**

This cartoon was created by the CAYA members from the Democratic Republic of Congo: Chadrack Mudikisi (CAYA Member), Arsene Mulopo (CAYA Focal Point, EGPAF) using the Avert platform.
Dinkie...it seems like you are not okay these days. What is bothering you my child? Open up, I am here for you always.

I hope she is not defaulting again...

Mom...I just want to know when I will stop taking this medication. I am really tired. I am not taking it anymore. I would rather die. I can't cope anymore.

Dinkie...thanks for opening up to me. I know it is hard to take medication everyday and it is tiresome...

My child, don't stop taking your meds. You will get sick again and be unable to attend school and fulfill your dream of being a doctor, if you do not adhere well.

I am super fine mom and ready for anything...what I am learning is I will eventually die. I cannot live my life like this anymore...

I know it is hard to take your medication Dinkie... Know where you are coming from until now...remember you are a conqueror.

You are beautiful and when you adhere to your ARVs as prescribed, you will achieve viral suppression, transition to tertiary level and fulfill all your dreams in life.

Thank you Doc for such words. I am feeling more comfortable and feel very supported.

That is the Dinkie I know, always happy. I promise to be a good parents to you, who will be a source of hope and positivity in the journey of living with HIV.

Thank you mom for the support you are offering me. Now I clearly know that my health matters most and it is a major asset in achieving my dreams and life goals.
You are a Conqueror

Prepare (for facilitator): Read the cartoon and think about the questions and answers. Consider how this conversation would help raise awareness, encourage more thinking about attitudes, dispel misinformation, and help support adolescents and youth living with HIV in your community. Be creative and facilitate real and open conversations that are still respectful and safe.

Guidance for Facilitation:

1. Introduce yourself and the cartoon activity.
2. Help share the cartoon. You can read it, act it out in a role-play, or pass it around for reading.
3. Start a discussion. Ask open-ended questions:
   - Who are the main characters?
   - What is the cartoon discussing?
   - How would you feel if you were Dinkie?
   - What is/are the challenge(s) being discussed?
   - Is there a solution presented? If not, discuss potential solutions.
   - Does this scenario happen a lot? Why or why not?
   - What do we learn about adherence and being supported by a caregiver or health provider? Is this new to us?
   - Is there anything this cartoon helps to show us? How can this apply to your lives?
   - What do you think happens next - in the future for Dinkie? Why?
4. Share key messages from CAYA, focus on the things not identified in the discussion.
5. Thank your attendees/group for joining today. Invite them to give feedback on the new activity (record their feedback on the form at the end of this tool). Ask if they would like to discuss another cartoon or topic soon.
6. Write down the number of attendees, marking their sex and age, using the simple form at the end of the tool.

Key Messages from CAYA:

The main topics of this cartoon are treatment fatigue and receiving caregiver and health care provider support. It can be difficult to take medication every day for the rest of your life and it is normal to feel tired or frustrated; however, there are people (counselors, health care workers, caregivers) who you can talk to and who can help make it easier. It is important to understand taking your medication every day makes it possible to do all you aspire to in life. There are also innovations in the pipeline such as long-acting antiretroviral therapy (ART), which is ART that people living with HIV (PLHIV) receive every few months rather than daily. U=U is also a powerful community-based movement that embodies being empowered to achieve viral suppression and live a long, healthy, stigma-free life as an HIV-positive individual — without limits!

Authors:

This cartoon was created by the CAYA members from the Eswatini: Mthobisi Simelane (CAYA member), Menzi Ginindza (CAYA focal point, EGPAF) using the Avert platform.

U=U [Undetectable = Untransmittable] means that if someone is taking their medication daily and has had an undetectable viral load for at least 6 months (<200 copies of the virus per ml of blood), they have no risk of transmitting HIV to their HIV-negative sexual partners. Practicing safe sex is still encouraged for the prevention of STIs and pregnancy.
Hello Juliette - how are you?

I'm okay. But would you like to talk for a minute - is that okay with you?

It's okay.

Hey, I'm good and you?

I noticed that you are not okay. Is there something wrong?

You look like you have a lot on your mind. Please share with me what's bothering you. Maybe we can find a way to solve it.

I know it can be, I'm also a girl. There is no need to be shy, you can talk freely with me.

What makes you say that?

No I think I can solve it myself, it's no bother. I'm okay.

Thank you for sharing that. I get you. Many young girls feel insecure about the same situation. Even males who are HIV positive and wish to marry also face the same struggle.

I am confused and worried I'm going to decide never to marry in my life. But that will hurt me for the rest of my life.

Okay, the thing is like this. I have a boyfriend, but I don't want him to know my HIV status, but I also don't want to transmit the virus to him. I don't know if I will get married and have an HIV-free baby and keep my husband HIV-free.

Juliette, my dear, you don't need to get worried. People living with HIV fall in love, have sex, have fulfilling relationships, marry, and have children who are HIV-free. You can enjoy life like any other person who doesn't have HIV.

The only difference for us is we take drugs. But we can do anything an HIV-negative person can do!

It's possible to keep your partner safe and have HIV-free children. I can help you prepare to disclose to your boyfriend if you decide to.

OOOh. Now I have hope for my future - thank you so much!
Love and Relationships

Prepare (for facilitator): Read through the cartoon for yourself. Think through the questions and answers. Consider how this conversation would help to raise awareness, encourage more thinking about attitudes, dispel misinformation, and help support adolescents and youth living with HIV in your community. Be creative and facilitate real and open conversations that are still respectful and safe.

Guidance for Facilitation:

1. Introduce yourself and the cartoon activity.
2. Help share the cartoon. You can read it, act it out in a role-play, or pass it around for reading.
3. Start a discussion. Ask open-ended questions:
   - Who are the main characters?
   - What is the cartoon discussing?
   - How would you feel if you were Julletie?
   - What is the challenge being discussed?
   - How does the cartoon end? What does the peer educator tell Julletie?
   - Is this discussed in our community? Why or why not?
   - What do we learn about stigma? Is this new to us? Why or why not?
   - Is there anything this cartoon helps to show us?
   - How can this apply to our lives or how can we apply the lessons to our lives?
4. Share key messages from CAYA, focus on the things not identified in the discussion (below).
5. Thank your attendees/group for joining today. Invite them to give feedback on the new activity (record their feedback on the form at the end of this tool). Ask if they would like to discuss another cartoon or topic soon.
6. Write down the number of attendees, marking their sex and age, using the simple form at the end of the tool.

Key Messages from CAYA:

The main topic of this cartoon is stigma. Stigma and discrimination are hurtful and harmful practices that can stem from misinformation or stereotyping. Often, when people fear or do not understand something, they have a negative attitude towards it. It is important to remember that even if you have HIV, you can live a full, positive life and have a very low chance of transmitting the virus once virally suppressed and engaging in preventive measures (using condoms and staying adherent). There will also always be people you can talk to or groups you can engage with—like this support group—with any challenges!

Authors:

This cartoon was created by the CAYA members from Uganda: Ismail Harelimana (CAYA member), Berna Asiimwe Odetta (CAYA member), Lawrence Mugumya (CAYA focal point, EGPAF) using the Avert platform.
I'm back from the clinic Nakani and the nurse told me that my viral load is undetectable. You don't have an idea of how elated I am.

Oh my! I've never heard of such. Does that mean that you are now HIV negative?

No, it simply means that the Hi-virus in my blood is suppressed. This is only possible if you adhere well to treatment. The nurse also told me that when the virus is undetectable it means it's also untransmittable.

Wow. That's great news. I bet there is no need for you to continue taking the medication right?

No no no. I will continue taking my medication so that I maintain the viral suppression. If I stop taking the medication I would default and get sick again. My medication is my life.

Oh yeah! I wouldn't want you to be sick again. I am also going to adhere well to my treatment so that I become like you.

Yes my friend it's possible. Remember that the power to change is in your hands. I will also help you if you need any support or questions.

Oops! It's time for my medication. I need to rush home. I will see you tomorrow my friend. Goodbye.
Suppressing the Virus

Prepare (for facilitator): Read through the cartoon for yourself. Think through the questions and answers. Consider how this conversation would help to raise awareness, encourage more thinking about attitudes, dispel misinformation, and help support adolescents and youth living with HIV in your community. Be creative and facilitate real and open conversations that are still respectful and safe.

Guidance for Facilitation:

1. Introduce yourself and the cartoon activity.
2. Help share the cartoon. You can read it aloud, act it out in a roleplay, or pass it around to be read silently.
3. Start a discussion. Ask open-ended questions:
   - Who are the main characters?
   - What is the cartoon discussing?
   - How would you feel if you were the young woman? How would you feel if you were Nakani?
   - What is the challenge being discussed?
   - What happens at the end of the cartoon?
   - Is this a common conversation in our communities?
   - What do we learn about viral load suppression?
   - What do we learn about adherence, even after becoming virally suppressed? Is this new to us? Why or why not?
   - How does this apply to our lives?
   - What do you think happens next to Nakani and the other young woman?
4. Share key messages from CAYA, focus on the things not identified in the discussion (below).
5. Thank your attendees/group for joining today. Invite them to give feedback on the new activity (record their feedback on the form at the end of this tool). Ask if they would like to discuss another cartoon or topic soon.
6. Write down the number of attendees, marking their sex and age, using the simple form at the end of the tool.

Key Messages from CAYA:

The main topics of this cartoon are understanding adherence and viral load suppression. Taking medication every day at the same time helps to lower the virus count in our body and makes us feel stronger and healthier. But even when we reach viral load suppression - which means less virus in our blood - we still need to continue taking our medication to make sure it stays that way. We have the power to take responsibility for our own health in different ways, and taking our medication and reaching out when we don’t understand something or need help are some of those ways.

Authors:

This cartoon was created by the CAYA members from Eswatini: Temahlungwane Mkhonta (CAYA member), Menzi Ginindza (CAYA focal point, EGPAF) using the Avert platform.
Hey Jero! How are you? Long time.

Tell you what - I'm so worried about this changing of my drugs every now and then.

Do you know what - there is a way to find out!

Hi Grebly - I'm good. How are you. I never knew your appointment was today. What a coincidence...

I am also worried. They changes mine recently too. Why do they change our drugs? For real, I am scared.

Good morning Grebly and Jero. How are you? How may I help you?

Yes feel free to ask me anything as a peer facilitator. I am here to help you.

There is something we need to ask you.

We would like to know why ARV regimens are changed? and what time we have left to live?

It's good you asked, I know you are worried. It is not only you - your fellow peers have similar questions.

I want to assure you that it is not that you are to die yet.

Other reasons could be suspected treatment failure - in order to help your body better fight against the virus with different medications.

ARV regimens change for different reasons, like according to a person's body weight as they grow or the introduction of better and new ARVs regimens that are safe.

All adolescents and young people living with HIV should know what drugs they are on and if their regimen changed - and that there are many reasons for optimizing their regimen.

The new ARVs are potent and can help you reach viral suppression, but you need to adhere well to the drugs given to you and you will live the rest of your life well as the rest who are not infected.
**Treatment Optimization**

**Prepare (for facilitator):** Read through the cartoon for yourself. Think through the questions and answers. Consider how this conversation would help to raise awareness, encourage more thinking about attitudes, dispel misinformation, and help support adolescents and youth living with HIV in your community. Be creative and facilitate real and open conversations that are still respectful and safe.

**Guidance for Facilitation:**

1. Introduce yourself and the cartoon activity.
2. Help share the cartoon. You can read it aloud, act it out in a role-play, or pass it around to be read silently.
3. Start a discussion. Ask open-ended questions:
   - Who are the main characters?
   - What is the cartoon discussing?
   - How would you feel if you were Grebly? How would you feel if you were Jero?
   - What is the challenge being discussed?
   - What happens at the end of the story? What is explained and how?
   - Have you witnessed this concern in your community?
   - What do we learn about the fear of switching regimens? Is this new to us? Why or why not?
   - Is there anything this cartoon helps to show us?
   - How can this apply to your lives?
   - How do you think Grebly and Jero feel at the end? Why?
4. Share key messages from CAYA, focus on the things not identified in the discussion (below).
5. Thank your attendees/group for joining today. Invite them to give feedback on the new activity (record their feedback on the form at the end of this tool). Ask if they would like to discuss another cartoon or topic soon.
6. Write down the number of attendees, marking their sex and age, using the simple form at the end of the tool.

**Key Messages from CAYA:**

The main topic of this cartoon is the fear and misunderstanding around changing treatment regimens. All adolescents and youth living with HIV should know what medication they take, and if they are switched to different medications, they should be told why. Further, they should also feel comfortable asking why their medication changed if they are not told why. There are different reasons for changing and optimizing a regimen, it could be to better help you reach viral suppression and stay virally suppressed, and be unrelated to worsening health outcomes. Knowledge is power; so if you do not understand something or someone has not explained it, just ask!

**Authors:**

This cartoon was created by the CAYA members from Uganda: Ismail Harelimana (CAYA member), Berna Asiimwe Odetta (CAYA member), Lawrence Mugumya (CAYA focal point, EGPAF) using the Avert platform.
Hi Marco
I'm fine and you?
Okay - should we go to a café to chat?
Hi Newton buddy - how are you?
I'm fine
Yes, let's go!

I can't take my cakes on time. I don't understand it and it tired me out. That's why I wanted to see you.

I can't take my cakes on time. I don't understand it and it tired me out. That's why I wanted to see you.

Cake means medicine
So what do you take?
The same as you do
Let's talk - what's bothering you?

This is my biggest difficulty right now
I really want to hear your technique

This is my biggest difficulty right now
I really want to hear your technique

Well I'll just tell you how I do it
I have my cakes at 8pm at the time of the news, so I never forget

I should have my own technique

I should have my own technique

So the news at 8pm is my signal

I think I got it. I will do it before the 19:30 soap opera

Ah you see! It's good to talk about it - we always find solutions!
I Respect the Time of Treatment

Prepare (for facilitator): Read through the cartoon for yourself. Think through the questions and answers. Consider how this conversation would help to raise awareness, encourage more thinking about attitudes, dispel misinformation, and help support adolescents and youth living with HIV in your community. Be creative and facilitate real and open conversations that are still respectful and safe.

Guidance for Facilitation:

1. Introduce yourself and the cartoon activity.
2. Help share the cartoon. You can read it, act it out in a role-play, or pass it around for reading.
3. Start a discussion. Ask open-ended questions:
   - Who are the characters?
   - What is the cartoon discussing?
   - How would you feel if you were Marco? How would you feel if you were Newton?
   - What is the challenge being discussed?
   - What happens at the end of the story? What suggestions are shared?
   - What do we learn about fear and HIV? Is this new to us? Why or why not?
   - Is there anything this cartoon helps to show us? Did you learn anything?
   - How can this apply to your lives?
   - What do you think happens next – for Marco and Newton? Why?
4. Share key messages from CAYA, focus on those things not identified in the discussion (below).
5. Thank your attendees/group for joining today. Invite them to give feedback on the new activity (record their feedback on the form at the end of this tool). Ask if they would like to discuss another cartoon or topic soon.
6. Write down the number of attendees, marking their sex and age, using the simple form at the end of the tool.

Key Messages from CAYA:

The main topics of this cartoon are adherence and stigma about HIV. You cannot tell if someone has HIV by looking at them. People discriminate when they fear or do not understand something. It is important to remember you do not need to share your status with anyone you do not feel comfortable or trust with this information. It is helpful to ask your peers how they have managed adherence—creating a notification or reminder can be a great way to stay consistent, but your peers are also great sources of support and suggestions!

Authors:

This cartoon was created by the CAYA members from CDI: Ateke Arnaud (CAYA member), Miessan Ohoman Etienne (CAYA focal point) using the Avert platform.
Hi John

I understand you are a peer mentor?

Hi Dalitso

yes I am!

I heard that ART stops working in people who have taken it for more than 10 years. How true is that?

So the drugs work like watchmen and the time you discuss with your provider should not be missed.

Once a person tests positive for HIV, the ART providers put them on ART for life because the drug does not kill the virus but lowers the load of virus in your body and boosts your body’s immunity.

Great Dalitso - you have enlightened me and more questions to come!

What happens when the person is regularly missing their doses? Is there anything that can happen to the viral load and body immunity of that person?

SO - no need to miss a dose and take it for life and we can live a full, healthy life.

For our enemy is the virus and missing doses means the virus will find ways to defeat body immunity and opportunistic infections will make the body weaker and viral load increases.

Rights - as I said - ART works like watchmen. so that means missing any does is like missing the duties of watchmen and thieves could come and steal.

if you miss one on a day it is okay - just take it the next day normally.
How ART Works in the Body

Prepare (for facilitator): Read through the cartoon for yourself. Think through the questions and answers. Consider how this conversation would help to raise awareness, encourage more thinking about attitudes, dispel misinformation, and help support adolescents and youth living with HIV in your community. Be creative and facilitate real and open conversations that are still respectful and safe.

Guidance for Facilitation:

1. Introduce yourself and the cartoon activity.
2. Help share the cartoon. You can read it, act it out in a role-play, or pass it around for reading.
3. Start a discussion. Ask open-ended questions:
   • Who are the main characters?
   • What is the cartoon discussing?
   • How would you feel if you were John? How would you feel if you were Dalitso?
   • What is being discussed?
   • What information is presented?
   • Have you heard any misconceptions like this in your community?
   • What clarification does John provide?
   • Is there anything this cartoon helps to show us?
   • How can this apply to your lives?
   • What do you think happens next – for Dalitso? Why?
4. Share key messages from CAYA, focus on the things not already identified in the discussion (below).
5. Thank your attendees/group for joining today. Invite them to give feedback on the new activity (record their feedback on the form at the end of this tool). Ask if they would like to discuss another cartoon or topic soon.
6. Write down the number of attendees, marking their sex and age, using the simple form at the end of the tool.

Key Messages from CAYA:

The main topics of this cartoon are understanding antiretrovirals (ARVs) and how they work in the body. It is important to understand how and why to take ARVs and what they do in your body, such as fighting the virus and getting you to a suppressed viral load. It is also important to know what to do if you forget to take your ARVs, run out, or cannot take a dose. Peers, caregivers, and providers can be great sources of information and support. They can help answer questions and support you in taking your medication every day so you can be healthy and achieve your dreams.

Authors:

This cartoon was created by the CAYA members from Malawi: Gilbert Mitti (CAYA member), Vanessa Mpakati (CAYA member), Vincent Nyapigoti (CAYA focal point) using the Avert platform.
This call is to tell you that you have to come to the clinic because your last viral load test shows a high viral load.

Viral load tells you much virus you have in your blood. People living with HIV will have some in their blood and if there is a lot of copies of the virus its not good for our health.

Okay I will come.

Hello Frank! How are you?

No for sure - I don't know. But I think I will learn today because you will tell me.

Ooh okay - so how does it go high and what can I do to control it?

Viral load tells you much virus you have in your blood. People living with HIV will have some in their blood and if there is a lot of copies of the virus its not good for our health.

Your welcome! My dear - do you know what I mean when I am talking about viral load?

It is simple - you have to take your medicine every day on time - and eat a good balanced diet to keep you healthy and after 3 months you come check on your viral load again.

Okay I am going to do what you are advising.

Hi my friend - congratulations on your result! it is very good - you have reached an undetectable level which means you can't transmit the virus easily.

Woo I am so surprised - so there is no need to continue with my medicine?

No you will need to continue to take you medicine like you have - it is for life. Your viral viral load would go up if you stopped again.

3 months later.
Understanding Viral Load

Prepare (for facilitator): Read through the cartoon for yourself. Think through the questions and answers. Consider how this conversation would help to raise awareness, encourage more thinking about attitudes, dispel misinformation, and help support adolescents and youth living with HIV in your community. Be creative and facilitate real and open conversations that are still respectful and safe.

Guidance for Facilitation:

1. Introduce yourself and the cartoon activity.
2. Help share the cartoon. You can read it, act it out in a role-play, or pass it around for reading.
3. Start a discussion. Ask open-ended questions:
   - Who are the main characters?
   - What is the cartoon discussing?
   - How would you feel if you were Frank?
   - What is the challenge being discussed?
   - What happens at the end of the story?
   - What does Frank learn in the end? Why is this important?
   - What do we learn about understanding viral load – Is this new to us? Why or why not?
   - Is there anything else this cartoon helps to show us?
   - How can this apply to your lives?
   - What do you think happens next – for Frank? Why?
4. Share key messages from CAYA, focus on those things not identified in the discussion (below).
5. Thank your attendees/group for joining today. Invite them to give feedback on the new activity (record their feedback on the form at the end of this tool). Ask if they would like to discuss another cartoon or topic soon.
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Key Messages from CAYA:

The main topic of this cartoon is viral load and understanding suppression. If only discussed in clinical terms, viral load can be an intimidating and complicated topic to understand. It is important to talk about adherence and viral load in youth-friendly terms. It is alright if you do not understand at first, there are plenty of people who can help you understand! Taking your medication every day can help lower the amount of virus in your body allowing you to feel healthy. However, to stay healthy, you need to stay committed to taking your medication every day. Understanding and promoting U=U [undetectable=untransmittable] is also a powerful tool to achieve viral suppression and live a long, healthy, stigma-free life with HIV. Further, reaching viral suppression and U=U allows you to also keep others healthy by preventing sexual transmission of HIV.

Authors:

This cartoon was created by the CAYA members from Tanzania: Lulu Emmanuel (CAYA member), Leonarda Pastory (CAYA focal point, EGPAF) using the Avert platform.
You look awesome! I see you have been doing well this month - I missed you too.

Hello my dears - how have you been. I have really missed you people!

For sure - a month is much - we have missed being together.

Hope you have been adhering well to your medications.

Yeah. I need to stick to my medication schedule in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

It is good to hear that we are all enforcing our adherence lifestyles to prolong our health status.

Me too, I have to strictly follow the doctor’s instructions after I was optimized to DTG.

Yeah

Sure

We still have the goal to stay adherence to ensure we remained suppressed at all costs.

Sure - my current viral load is LDL. I am looking forward to maintaining it.

Great - we all have good treatment goals!

My viral load is currently 208. I am due for another routine viral load in a month’s time. I am looking forward to a lower detectable level when the sample is taken.

It was nice meeting you guys again, I wish for you to come to our PSSG meetings.

Sure, we shall keep in touch via phone calls before the PSSG to catch up on ourselves and our medication care.

Bye for now

Exactly! Looking forward to meeting you in the coming days at the facility for a PSSG meeting.

Bye

Bye and see you next time
**Peer to Peer Self Care**

**Prepare (for facilitator):** Read through the cartoon for yourself. Think through the questions and answers. Consider how this conversation would help to raise awareness, encourage more thinking about attitudes, dispel misinformation, and help support adolescents and youth living with HIV in your community. Be creative and facilitate real and open conversations that are still respectful and safe.

**Guidance for Facilitation:**

1. Introduce yourself and the cartoon activity.
2. Help share the cartoon. You can read it, act it out in a role-play, or pass it around for reading.
3. Start a discussion. Ask open-ended questions:
   - Who are the main characters?
   - What is the cartoon discussing?
   - How would you feel being in this conversation?
   - What is/are the items being discussed?
   - What are the goals being discussed?
   - Does this scenario happen a lot? Why or why not?
   - What do we learn about discussing your treatment goals with peers? Is this new to us? Why or why not?
   - Is there anything this cartoon helps to show us?
   - How can this apply to your lives?
   - What do you think happens next - In the future for the three friends? Why?
4. Share key messages from CAYA, focus on those things not already identified in the discussion (below).
5. Thank your attendees/group for joining today. Invite them to give feedback on the new activity (record their feedback on the form at the end of this tool). Ask if they would like to discuss another cartoon or topic soon.
6. Write down the number of attendees, marking their sex and age, using the simple form at the end of the tool.

**Key Messages from CAYA:**

The main topics of this cartoon are adherence and making treatment goals to achieve and sustain viral suppression. It can be helpful to share how you are feeling about your adherence schedule or any challenges you may be facing with your treatment. It can also be beneficial to share your goals with your peers in your psychosocial support (PSS) groups to motivate each other. Attending facility-based or community-based PSS groups is a good way to know you are not alone in your journey as a young person living with HIV as they are a safe place to share and learn.

**Authors:**

This cartoon was created by the CAYA members from Kenya: Joshua Ochieng (CAYA Member), Saline Awuor Mboya (CAYA Member), Job Akuno (CAYA Focal Point, EGPAF) using the Avert platform.
## Self-care checklist

Taking care of yourself and prioritizing your health and wellbeing, which includes your physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health, is important to support positive living. There are also some things you can do for yourself to help you maintain a positive outlook.

It is normal to feel stressed, anxious, and lonely sometimes; life can be overwhelming and you might have many things to deal with. However, self-care can help you cope and if you need help, ask! There are always others available (peers, caregivers, family, teachers, providers) to reach out to if you are having a hard time.

Here are a few things you can do:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>☐ Do something that makes you happy or you enjoy doing every day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Keep your body strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Get enough sleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Eat a well-rounded diet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Get moving—exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Take your medicine as prescribed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>☐ Keep your mind strong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Reflect on your feelings and emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Connect with friends and family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Manage stress: meditate, listen to music, talk to friends/partner, do art, cook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recognize your worth (you are worth it!)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| ☐ Ask for help when you need it (identify a support system and let them know when you need their support) |

Self-care is about intentionally investing in yourself to help support growth, development, and a bright future ahead!
**Feedback Form**

Name of person who filled out the form: ________________________________ Title/role: __________

Name of the facility: __________________________________________________________________________ Date: __________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What country are you in?</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>10-14 years</th>
<th>15-19 years</th>
<th>20-24 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In what setting were the cartoons used? (example – adolescent support group)</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which cartoon or cartoons were discussed? (highlight/circle/check the ones used)

- ☐ I respect the time of treatment
- ☐ The initiation of disclosure
- ☐ You are a conqueror
- ☐ Love and relationships
- ☐ Understanding viral load
- ☐ Suppressing the virus
- ☐ Treatment optimization
- ☐ Peer to peer self-care

What was the reaction of the group to the cartoon(s) and the discussion questions?

Did they enjoy the cartoon and discussion? Did they find it useful?

Was there any input/ideas on how to improve the tool?

*When completed — please send a copy or scan a copy to clenz@pedaids.org*
Other resources if you want to explore some more!

- Avert Young voices program
  - Youth Voices Swahili
- Avert – How HIV infect the body
- Avert – What’s an undetectable viral load
- Avert – How does treatment work (video)
- Avert – Health & wellbeing when living with HIV
- U-U – prevention access resources
- Ready to Advocate: A guide for young people living with HIV
- Ready to Care: Improving health services for young people living with HIV
- Advocating for Change for Adolescents! A Practical Toolkit for Young People to Advocate for Improved Adolescent Health and Well-being
- COVID-19: Keeping young people healthy
- AIDS-Free Generation Z: A Call to Action for Improving Youth-Focused HIV Programming
- Disclosure of HIV Status Toolkit for Pediatric and Adolescent Populations
- Adolescent and Youth Transition of Care Toolkit
- EGPAF Committee of African Youth Advisors Rapid Response: Recommendations for Adolescent and Youth Programming Amidst COVID-19
- Lead the Way to an AIDS-free Generation Z (advocacy and conversation guide)
- SARS-CoV2 and COVID-19 Q&A with AYLHIV and the Committee of African Youth Advisors – Portuguese, English, French
- All About Me (CHIVA)
- Treatment literacy guide (EGPAF Kenya)
  - Flip Chart
- Learning about living with HIV
- Growing up and thinking about sex
- Stigma and self-stigma
- Deciding when to have sex

Contact

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