Framing for Change

Communicating the power of prevention

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what is framing and why does it matter?

5 ways to frame prevention
the problem...
you say...they think
Persistent stress can derail development and have negative long term effects on health and wellbeing.
Preventing adolescent use of drugs or alcohol may go a long way in reducing the risk of addiction and other health and developmental issues. Early intervention is key to preventing addiction.
British public wrong about nearly everything, survey shows

Research shows public opinion often deviates from facts on key social issues including crime, benefit fraud and immigration
The great enemy of the truth is very often not the lie—deliberate, contrived and dishonest—but the myth—persistent, persuasive and unrealistic.
the solution...
framing
choices in how we present information

how people think/feel/act
Framing addiction

Support for evidence-based addiction policies

N=6,000

* = P<.01

Policy Support relative to control

Interdependence

Empathy
Understanding is frame dependent
framing REALLY matters right now
“We will be living with the consequences of this lost generation for years to come”

“Parents with young children skipping well-child/vaccination visits”

“Protect the most vulnerable”

fatalism
unproductive understandings of youth

parental blame
racial/class stereotypes

othering stigma
The world as we know it is built on a story. To be a change agent is, first, to disrupt the existing story of the world, and second, to tell a new story of the world so that people have a place to go.

Charles Eisenstein
what is framing and why does it matter?

5 ways to frame prevention
The cognitive and cultural deck is stacked against prevention

Normalcy bias
Delay discounting
Declinism/fatalism
Individualism
What can we do?

#1: Connect action *now* with outcomes *later* and...repeat
early childhood field has done this

Familiar

Brain Architecture

Unfamiliar
Well, if brains are built like a house...

*early matters*

foundation built *now*, shapes everything that comes *later*

quality of early inputs affects quality of later outcomes

timing matters

*it is an active process*

Policy discussion shifts;

refocuses on early investments
What to do

• connect actions with outcomes

• show this connection over time (stretch people’s thinking on time)
Concentrated poverty and structural racism

Percent Change vs. Control

Policy support

Efficacy

Assertion
Assertion + past/now explanation
What to do

• connect actions with outcomes

• show this connection over time (stretch people’s thinking on time)

• use examples from different issues that show this connection (people learn and transfer)
What can we do?

#1: Connect action *now* with outcomes *later* and...repeat

#2: How you define the issue matters
Support for parenting programmes

Percent Change vs. Control

* = P<.01
Different definitions of problem affect public will to eliminate tobacco disparities

**Economic impacts**
increased health care costs

Backfire! Reduced policy support!
People blamed smokers for harming the economy

**Disparities as “last mile”**
overall reduction, but high prevalence in communities of color and other groups

Backfire! Reduced policy support!
People blamed affected groups for poor choices

**Justice**
a just society makes sure no community is singled out or over-exposed to harm

Increased support for equity-focused policies
Reduced stigma/blame
What to do

• think about the best way ‘in’ to your issue—where does your starting point take people?

• values define what the issue is about

• lead with values
What can we do?

#1: Connect action *now* with outcomes *later* and...repeat

#2: How you define the issue matters

#3: Spend time on solutions...not just problems
## the problem with problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Urgency</th>
<th>High Urgency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low Efficacy</strong></td>
<td><strong>High Efficacy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Baseline</strong></td>
<td>MAGIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Motivation</td>
<td>Fatalism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What to do

• bring a solution when you can

• explain how it works

• tone matters: communicate that there are solutions, not just problems

• but connect with how hard things are; don’t forget the urgency part of the equation
Individual-level solutions

Every year, roughly 3,600 babies in the US die suddenly for unknown reasons. Researchers estimate that if expectant moms would just quit smoking, we could prevent 800 of those deaths.

Systems-level solutions

Researchers estimate that if we connect expecting families to treatment for nicotine dependency, we could prevent 800 infant deaths a year.
What can we do?

#1: Connect action now with outcomes later and...repeat

#2: How you define the issue matters

#3: Spend time on solutions...not just problems

#4: Data matter, but need context
Numerical Data → Charts, Graphs, Tables, More Data → More Evidence → Epiphany
What to do

• use values to show why data matter

• state and explain what data mean (don’t let data stand alone)

• use “social math” to make data relatable and sticky

• think about using data to show something other than extent of problem
In 2017, more than 72,000 people died in the US from an overdose—over 49,000 of which involved an opioid. One study showed that more than half of those who died from an overdose had suffered at least one job-related injury.

Workplace safety practices decrease injuries, which in turn decreases opioid use and overdose. In 2017, more than 72,000 people died in the US from an overdose—over 49,000 of which involved an opioid. One study showed that more than half of those who died from an overdose had suffered at least one job-related injury. Providing safe workplaces prevents job-related injuries and opioid overdoses.
What can we do?

#1: Connect action now with outcomes later and...repeat

#2: How you define the issue matters

#3: Spend time on solutions...not just problems

#4: Data matter, but need context

#5: Explain how things work to make people better solutions thinkers (and supporters)
Sample of Americans asked about CRIME

Measurement of policy support

Reactive: Capture & Punish

Preventative: Educate, Train, Fix economy

Explain to shift perspective

Thibodeau & Boroditsky, 2011; 2013; 2015
What to do

• explain how problem works
• explain how solution works
• use examples or metaphors to help make explanation stick
“A talent for speaking differently, rather than arguing well, is the chief instrument of cultural change.”

Richard Rorty