

## Searching for Root Causes: Sally's Story



A joint initiative of  
BC Recreation and Parks  
Association and the Heart  
and Stroke Foundation of  
BC & Yukon.



ActNowBC.ca

An initiative of these  
BC Healthy Living Alliance  
members



This activity has been adapted from the the Public Health Agency of Canada's "What Makes Canadians Healthy or Unhealthy?" website.

### INTRODUCTION

There is strong and growing evidence that higher social and economic status is associated with better health. Your income, your level of education and even your ability to make choices about your life are among a number of key influencers which are often spoken of collectively as the "Social Determinants of Health" (SDOH).<sup>1</sup>

This simple, role-playing group activity will help you recognize some of the factors—or determinants—that have a negative impact on our ability to be healthy and physically active. Try relating these concepts to your own community after playing "Searching for Root Causes: Sally's Story"

**Time: 10-15 minutes**

### Materials:

Role playing cards  
Sheet of instructions  
Debriefing questions

### Objective:

To provide participants with the opportunity to understand the different factors that influence a person's health choices.

- The social, economic and environmental inequalities that impact the ability to attain and maintain health.
- The influences on the development of a healthy active lifestyle.
- The resources available to a variety of individuals for involvement and participation in active living opportunities.

**INSTRUCTIONS:****Activity Description**

Each individual is assigned a role playing card. The facilitator introduces Sally (read “Sally’s Story” below) and different people in Sally’s life give their opinion about why Sally developed Type 2 diabetes.

**Alternative**

Facilitators may also improvise if time is limited, and read out loud to participants Sally’s story and the opinions on the role playing cards as a story. This option is less interactive, but may save time.

**Sally’s Story**

We all know that active living is good for us. We all know where to go to be physically active, but what stops us? It is more complex than just individual choice. Here is Sally’s story.

Sally just came back from the doctor and was surprised to learn that her blurry vision and intense lack of energy was because she had developed Type 2 diabetes. Sally just thought she needed glasses and was worried about having to pay for them. Now she finds out it is worse than poor vision. Why did Sally develop this condition?

**DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS:**

1. What did you learn from this activity?
2. What did you learn about root causes of chronic disease?
3. What factors have a negative impact on Sally’s participation in physical activity?
4. If you were Sally, what would YOU say you need in order to be physically active?
5. How can we minimize the negative impacts on health and well-being?
6. Was there something in this activity that surprised you?
7. How will you apply what you have learned from this activity in your life/work?

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**References**

- <sup>1</sup> Coleman, R. and Howard, K. “The Tides of Change.” Population and Public Health Branch, Health Canada. July 2003.













**Role Playing Cards:**

Print the following role playing cards. Cut along the dotted line and distribute to participants.

If using this game more than once, please consider laminating and re-using.

Card Face:  
Page 3 backs up onto page 4.

 <p><b>EVERYBODY ACTIVE</b></p> <p><b>ROLE PLAY</b></p> <p><b>Why does Sally Have Type 2 Diabetes?</b></p> <p>I am her Family Doctor and I say she has a sedentary lifestyle.</p>	 <p><b>EVERYBODY ACTIVE</b></p> <p><b>ROLE PLAY</b></p> <p><b>Why does Sally Have Type 2 Diabetes?</b></p> <p>I am her Specialist and I say her blood sugar is too high.</p>
 <p><b>EVERYBODY ACTIVE</b></p> <p><b>ROLE PLAY</b></p> <p><b>Why does Sally Have Type 2 Diabetes?</b></p> <p>I am a Dietitian and I say she can't afford to buy the healthy foods she needs and she doesn't know how to cook.</p>	 <p><b>EVERYBODY ACTIVE</b></p> <p><b>ROLE PLAY</b></p> <p><b>Why does Sally Have Type 2 Diabetes?</b></p> <p>I am the City Planner and I say she has no grocery stores near her home and it's not a very safe neighbourhood for her to walk around in.</p>
 <p><b>EVERYBODY ACTIVE</b></p> <p><b>ROLE PLAY</b></p> <p><b>Why does Sally Have Type 2 Diabetes?</b></p> <p>I am her Employment Counsellor and I say she's a single mom on a fixed income and doesn't have a lot of job prospects since she only finished high school.</p>	 <p><b>EVERYBODY ACTIVE</b></p> <p><b>ROLE PLAY</b></p> <p><b>Why does Sally Have Type 2 Diabetes?</b></p> <p>I am a front desk clerk at the pool and I say Sally can only afford to pay the admission for her two children so she watches from the observation area while her children swim.</p>
 <p><b>EVERYBODY ACTIVE</b></p> <p><b>ROLE PLAY</b></p> <p><b>Why does Sally Have Type 2 Diabetes?</b></p> <p>I am her neighbour and I say Sally has no one to talk to about problems because I never see her go out with friends or have visitors over, so she must be very lonely.</p>	 <p><b>EVERYBODY ACTIVE</b></p> <p><b>ROLE PLAY</b></p> <p><b>Why does Sally Have Type 2 Diabetes?</b></p> <p>I am from her church and I say her husband had a steady job at the local mill, but the mill closed down and their marriage ended shortly after.</p>
 <p><b>EVERYBODY ACTIVE</b></p> <p><b>ROLE PLAY</b></p> <p><b>Why does Sally Have Type 2 Diabetes?</b></p> <p>I am the bus driver and I say Sally works too far away. I estimate that she has to take the bus for two hours each way to get to and from work.</p>	 <p><b>EVERYBODY ACTIVE</b></p> <p><b>ROLE PLAY</b></p> <p><b>Why does Sally Have Type 2 Diabetes?</b></p> <p>I am her mother and I say she got married too young. And we didn't really do a lot of active things as a family. She was a bit gawky as a child.</p>

**EVERYBODY ACTIVE**

**ROLE PLAY**

**Why does Sally Have Type 2 Diabetes?**

I am the Recreation Programmer and I say she never goes swimming even though the pool is just a block away from where she lives.





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onto page 4.

**Cut along the dotted  
line on page 3  
and distribute to  
participants.**