



# **Beyond CAGE: Brief Counseling Interventions For Unhealthy Alcohol and Other Drug Use**

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# Brief Intervention

- 5-15 minutes of counseling
- Components
  - **Feedback**: Provide personalized feedback and state your concern
    - Elicit + and – of continued use and change
    - Assess readiness to change
  - **Advice**: Make explicit recommendation for change in behavior
  - **Goal setting**: Discuss patient's reaction and negotiate plan
    - Menu of options
    - Arrange follow-up

# “Beyond CAGE”

- Determine the patient’s perception of his/her use, both the need and perceived ability to change behavior
  - Example: “Do you think your drug use is a problem?”
- Assess the patient’s stage of readiness to change behavior

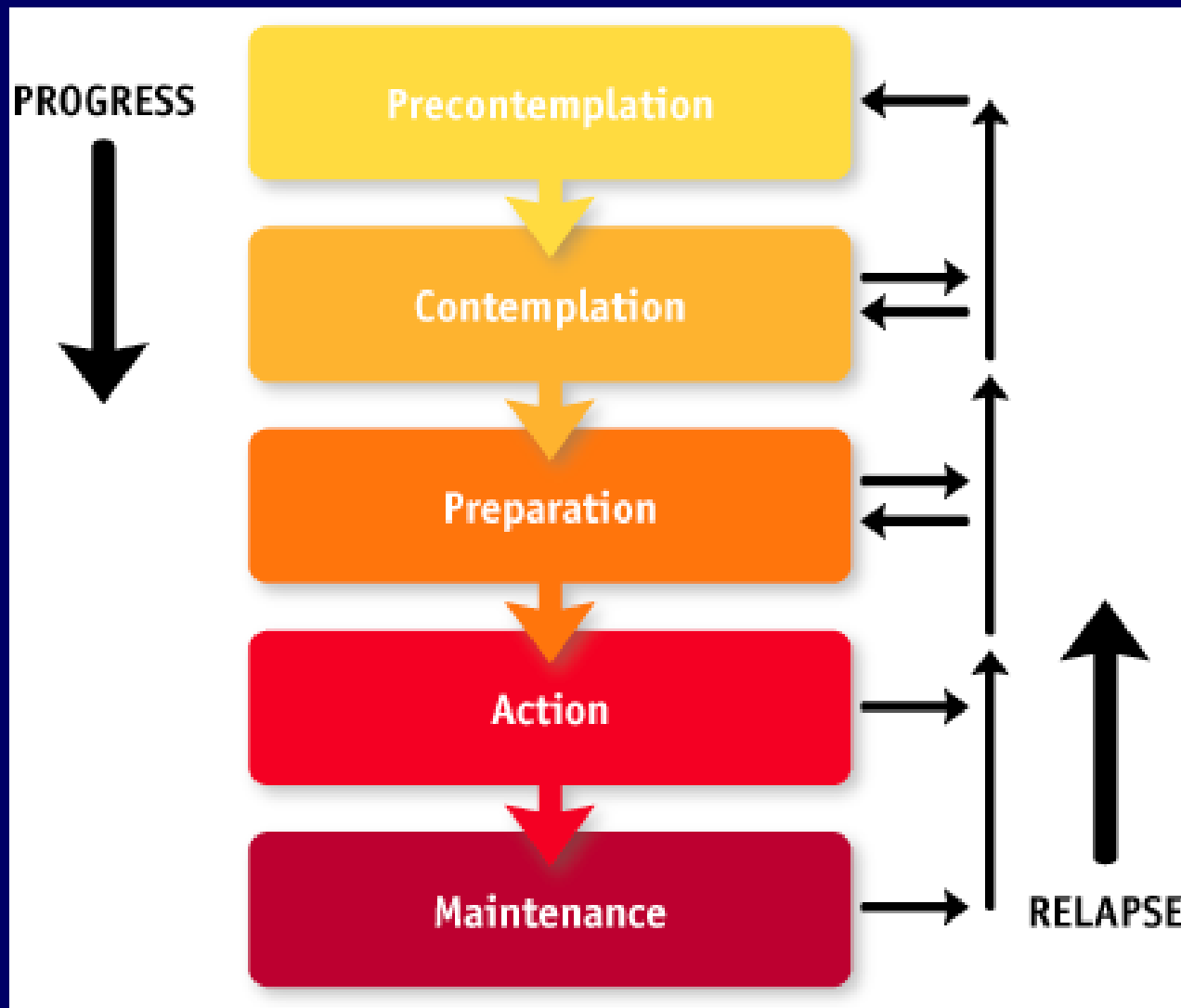
Samet, JH, Rollnick S, Barnes H. *Arch Intern Med.* 1996;156:2287-93.

# Readiness: A “Quick” Version

## “On a scale from 1 to 10...”

- “...How *important* is it for you right now to...?”
  - “Why did you say 3 and not 0?”
  - “What would it take to get you from 3 to 6?”
- “If you did decide to change, how *confident* are you that you would succeed?”
- “You’ve decided to change, and think you could succeed--When will you do it?”

# Readiness to Change Model



Prochaska JO, et al. *Am Psychol.* 1992;47:1102-4.

# Best Advice

- Abstinence
  - Failed attempts at cutting down
  - Dependence
  - Pregnancy/preconception
  - Contraindicated medical condition or medication
- Cutting down
  - Risky or problem use

# Precontemplation

- Goal is to raise doubt, increase perception/ consciousness of problem
  - express concern
  - state the problem non-judgmentally
  - agree to disagree
  - advise a trial of abstinence or cutting down
  - importance of follow-up (even if using)
  - less intensity is better

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# Contemplation

- Goal is to tip the balance
  - elicit positive and negative aspects of drinking
  - elicit positive and negative aspects of not drinking
  - summarize (patient could write these down)
  - demonstrate discrepancies between values and actions
  - advise a trial of abstinence or cutting down

# Determination

- Goal is to help determine the best course of action
  - working on motivation is not helpful
  - supporting self-efficacy is (remind of strengths-- i.e. period of sobriety, coming to doctor)
  - help decide on achievable goals
  - caution re: difficult road ahead
  - relapse won't disrupt relationship

# Action

- Goal is to help patient take steps to change
  - support and encouragement
  - acknowledge discomfort (losses, withdrawal)
  - reinforce importance of recovery

# Maintenance

- Goal is to help prevent relapse
  - anticipate difficult situations (triggers)
  - recognize the ongoing struggle
  - support the patient's resolve
  - reiterate that relapse won't disrupt your relationship

# Relapse

- Goal is to renew the process of contemplation
  - explore what can be learned from the relapse
  - express concern
  - emphasize the positive aspects of prior abstinence and of current efforts to seek care
  - support self-efficacy

# Summary

- Ask (screen)
- Assess severity
- **Feedback**
- **Advice**
- **Goal setting**