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School of Medicine



Clinical Addiction Research and Education

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
 - Advice: Make explicit recommendation for change in behavior
 - Goal setting: Discuss patient's reaction and negotiate plan

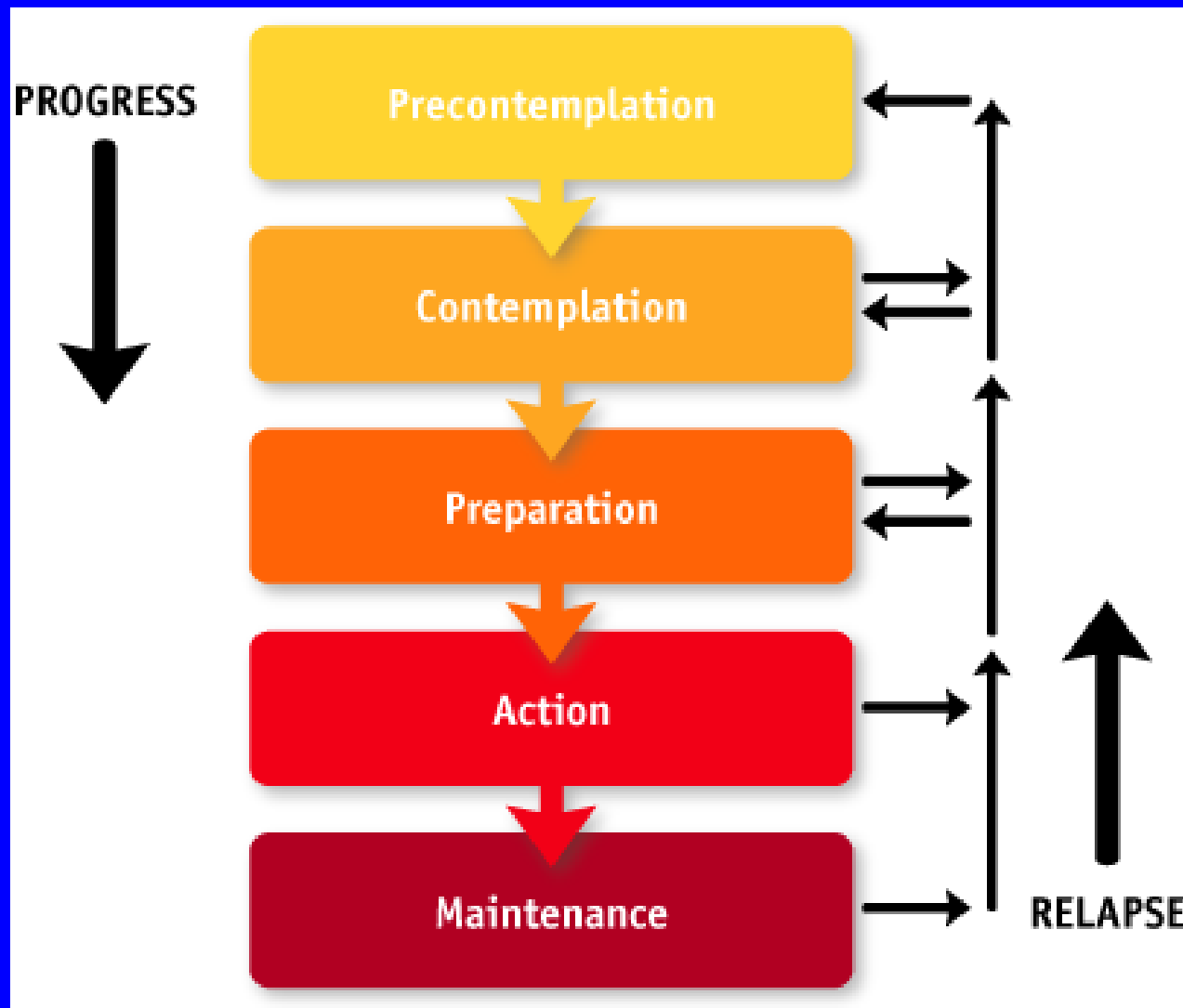
Best Advice

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

“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

Readiness to Change Model



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

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

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

Ingredients of Effective Brief Interventions (FRAMES)

- FEEDBACK of personal risk or impairment
 - i.e. GGT, concern, drinking diary, state consequences or risks
- emphasis on personal RESPONSIBILITY for change
 - “...it’s up to you to decide...”
- clear ADVICE to change
 - identify the problem, explain why change is important, advocate specific change

Ingredients of Effective Brief Interventions (FRAMES)

- a MENU of alternatives
 - a range of options
- EMPATHIC counseling style
 - by understanding and reflecting this understanding
- enhancement of SELF-EFFICACY
 - reinforce it, state your belief they can do it

Brief Counseling Interventions Summary

- Assess to determine best advice
- Assess readiness to change
- Counsel including known effective elements of brief intervention
 - Feedback, advice, goal setting