

JUSTICE CENTER

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

Screening and assessment in reentry court program design: Incorporating Risk, Need, Responsivity

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Risk Reduction



What is risk reduction all about?

1. Accurate assessments about which individuals are likely to commit a crime.
 2. Effectively targeting interventions and supervision to lower the likelihood a person will commit a crime.
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Risk Reduction



- **Risk principle**. Match the level of service to the offender's likelihood to re-offend.
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Risk Reduction



- What do we mean by *Risk*?

We mean, “How likely is a person to commit a crime?”

RISK ≠ Crime Type

≠ Sentence or Disposition

≠ Custody or Security Classification Level



Risk Reduction



- **How do we know how likely a person is to commit a crime?**
 - Predictive assessment instruments.
 - Use algorithms to determine the probability that someone will commit a crime.
 - BUT they must be normed and validated to be predictive.
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How do we measure risk?



- The three most common recidivism measures are:
 - Arrests
 - Convictions
 - Incarceration
- Basic things we know about recidivism
 - Young offenders have higher recidivism rates than older offenders
 - Offenders with prior convictions have higher recidivism rates than offenders with no prior convictions
 - Females have lower recidivism rates than males
 - Property offenders (theft) have higher recidivism rates than person offenders (murder)

How do we measure risk?



- What is the follow-up period used for computing recidivism? A cohort of offenders should be tracked for uniform follow-up periods – usually 1, 2 or 3 years to determine recidivism rate
- What outcome measure is being used? Arrest, conviction, incarceration or other measure should be clearly stated
- Is that recidivism rate high? There must be some basis to determine if a recidivism rate is high, low or average. Ask for state trends or compare to other states. When evaluating a program, a good comparison group is necessary to answer this question.

**ADMISSION TO ADULT FIELD CASELOAD
 ASSESSMENT OF OFFENDER RISK**

OFFENDER NAME	Last	First	MI	DOC NUMBER
DATE PLACED ON PROBATION OR RELEASED ON PAROLE IN WISCONSIN (MM/DD/YY)		AGENT LAST NAME		AREA NUMBER
FACILITY OF RELEASE			CODE	DATE COMPLETED (MM/DD/YY)

(Select the appropriate answer and enter the associated weight in the score column.)

			SCORE
Number of Address Changes in last 12 Months: (Prior to incarceration for parolees)	----- 0	None	_____
	2	One	_____
	3	Two or more	_____
Percentage of Time Employed in Last 12 Months: (Prior to incarceration for parolees)	----- 0	60% or more	_____
	1	40% - 59%	_____
	2	Under 40%	_____
	0	Not applicable	_____
Alcohol Usage Problems: (Prior to incarceration for parolees)	----- 0	No interference with functioning	_____
	2	Occasional abuse; some disruption of functioning	_____
	4	Frequent abuse; serious disruption; needs treatment	_____
Other Drug Problems: (Prior to incarceration for parolees)	----- 0	No interference with functioning	_____
	1	Occasional abuse; some disruption of functioning	_____
	2	Frequent abuse; serious disruption; needs treatment	_____
Attitude: -----	0	Motivated to change; receptive to assistance	_____
	3	Dependent or unwilling to accept responsibility	_____
	5	Rationalizes behavior; negative; not motivated to change	_____
Age at First Conviction: (or Juvenile Adjudications)	----- 0	24 or older	_____
	2	20 - 23	_____
	4	19 or younger	_____
Number of Prior Periods of Probation/Parole Supervision: (Adult or Juvenile)	----- 0	None	_____
	4	One or more	_____
Number of Prior Probation/Parole Revocations: (Adult or Juvenile)	----- 0	None	_____
	4	One or more	_____
Number of Prior Felony Convictions: (or Juvenile Adjudications)	----- 0	None	_____
	2	One	_____
	4	Two or more	_____
Convictions or Juvenile Adjudications for: (Include current offense, Score must be either 0,2,3, or 5.)	----- 0	None of the Offense(s) stated below	_____
	2	Burglary, theft, auto theft, or robbery	_____
	3	Worthless checks or forgery	_____
	5	One or more from the above categories	_____
Convictions or Juvenile Adjudication for Assaultive Offense within Last Five Years: (An offense which involves the use of a weapon, physical force or the threat of force)	----- 15	Yes	_____
	0	No	_____

TOTAL _____

Total all scores to arrive at the risk assessment score

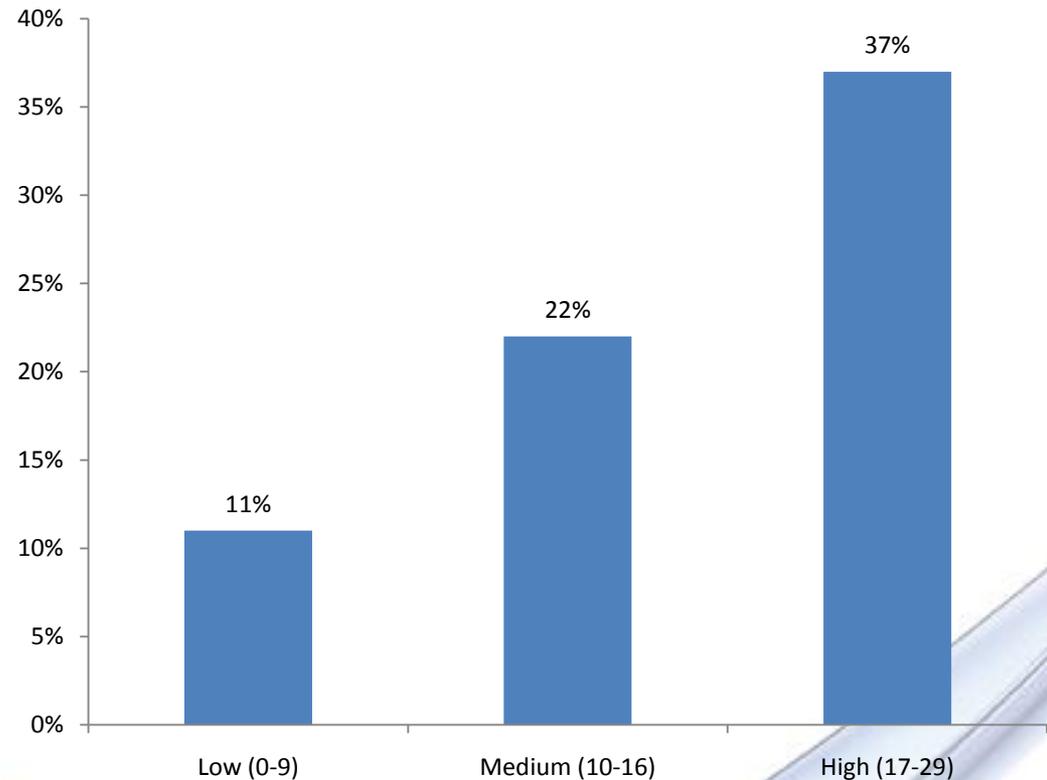
	Percent with New offense within 3 years			
		Probation	Parole	Overall
Overall		19%	32%	21%
Address Changes	None	16%	30%	18%
	One	18%	30%	21%
	Two or more	23%	34%	26%
Employment	60% or more	14%	26%	15%
	40% - 59%	19%	32%	21%
	Under 40%	25%	34%	27%
Alcohol usage	No interference	16%	27%	18%
	Occasional abuse	19%	33%	22%
	Frequent abuse	21%	33%	24%
Drug usage	No interference	14%	24%	15%
	Occasional abuse	21%	33%	24%
	Frequent abuse	24%	35%	27%
Attitude	Motivated	16%	28%	18%
	Dependent	20%	34%	22%
	Negative	22%	34%	24%
Age first conviction	24 or older	12%	23%	13%
	20-23	16%	29%	18%
	19 or younger	25%	35%	28%
Prior Probation/Parole	None	16%	31%	17%
	One or more	23%	32%	26%
Prior Revocations	None	17%	30%	18%
	One or more	27%	33%	30%
Prior Felony Convictions	None	18%	30%	19%
	One	21%	30%	24%
	Two or more	28%	34%	32%
Offense	None of listed	17%	27%	18%
	Burglary, theft, auto theft, robbery	24%	36%	27%
	Worthless checks or forgery	18%	31%	20%
	One or more of above	26%	33%	29%
Assaultive offense last 5 years	No	18%	31%	21%
	Yes	20%	32%	22%

How do we measure risk?



- By weighting each item and summing the weights of validated risk factors, an overall score can be obtained that classifies an offender into a group with an identified level of risk of recidivating.
- Wisconsin chart example:
 - 11% of low risk offenders committed a new offense with in 3 years
 - 22% of medium risk offenders committed a new offense with in 3 years
 - 37% of high risk offenders committed a new offense with in 3 years

Percent New Offense within 3 Years by Risk Score

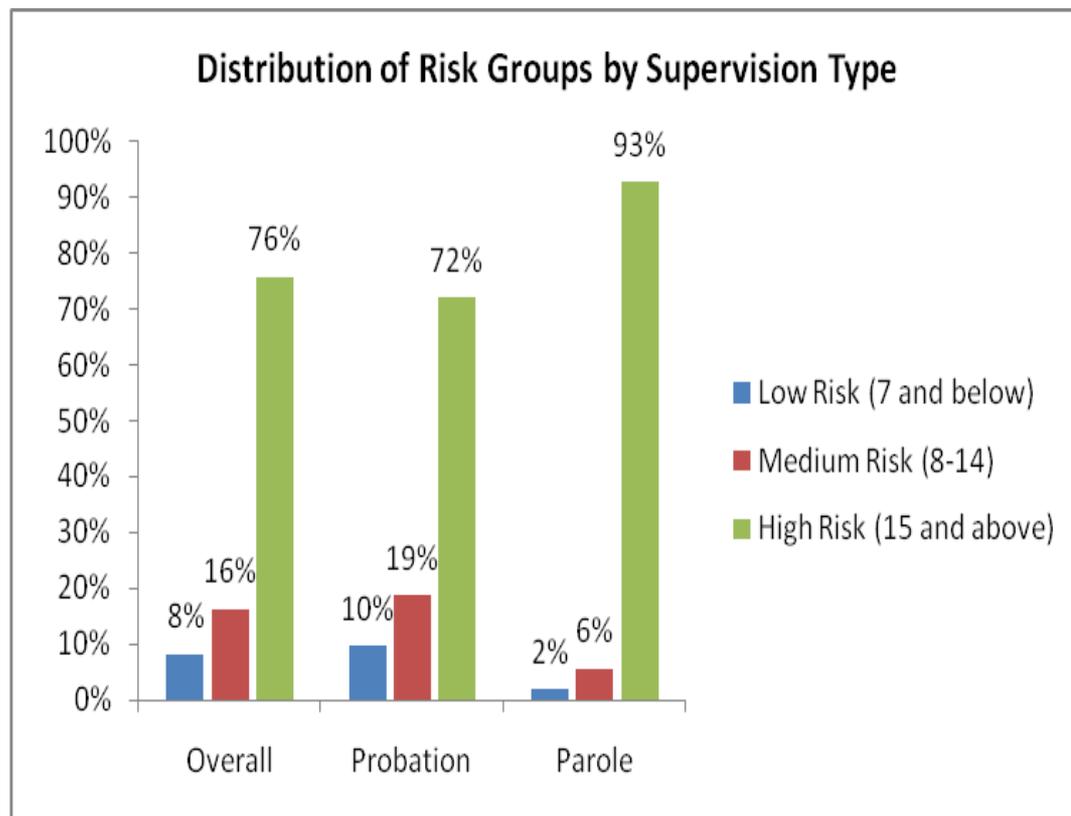


How do we measure risk?



- Because Wisconsin added an “Assaultive history” risk factor to their risk assessment instrument and gave it a weight of 15 points (automatically resulting in a High risk classification), over 70% of Wisconsin offenders were classified as High Risk

- By classifying a high percent of offenders as high risk it negates the purpose of classification – differentiate the population by risk and supervise accordingly
- The population is not validly differentiated by risk because assault is not a risk predictor



Validity?

- A valid risk assessment instrument identifies discrete groups of offenders who pose different levels of risk to public safety as measured by recidivism.
 - The greater the difference in rates between risk groups and the more even the distribution of populations among risk groups the more accurate the risk assessment instrument is.
- The risk instrument must be reliable as measured by tests of inter-rater and intra-rater reliability.
 - Inter-rater reliability means that two different staff members would score the same offender the same way on the risk instrument and intra-rater reliability means the same staff person would score the same offender the same way repeatedly with no change in circumstances.

Validity?

- The risk instrument is demonstrated to be fair to all offender populations such as by gender or race/ethnicity
 - Risk instruments should be assessed for racial and gender bias
- An instrument validated in one state or jurisdiction might not be valid in another state or jurisdiction and may require re-validation.
 - Differences in populations and offender characteristics may result in certain factors not being applicable or predictive or cut-of scores might need adjustment.

Risk Assessment Instruments Limitations

Where Can I Find a Risk Assessment Instrument

- Most probation, parole, and corrections departments use risk assessment instruments
 - With some training you could use your state or local risk instrument
- If the corrections agencies in my jurisdiction don't use a risk instrument, what are some common validated risk assessment instruments?
 - Wisconsin
 - LSI-R / LSI-SV
 - Ohio Risk Assessment System

Limitations of Risk Assessment

- Risk score predicts behavior of groups, not individuals
- Most instruments predict general offender population recidivism
- Even the best risk assessment instruments do not explain a lot of the variation in recidivism
 - The r square statistic is used to reflect explanatory power of the risk instrument
 - An r square between .25 and .4 is common, meaning that the instrument explains about 25% to 40% of the variation in recidivism
- Efforts to predict assaultive behavior, sex offending, and other low base rate offenses tend to over-predict and have high false positive rates

Risk Reduction



- **Risk principle**. Match the level of service to the offender's likelihood to re-offend.

HIGHER RISK = **MORE INTERVENTION**
= **MORE STRUCTURE**
= **MORE SUPERVISION**
= **MORE OF YOUR RESOURCES**



Risk Reduction



*To have enough resources for higher risk offenders, we have to allocate **FEWER** resources to lower risk offenders.*

**LOWER RISK = LESS INTERVENTION
= LESS STRUCTURE
= LESS SUPERVISION
= LESS OF YOUR
RESOURCES**



Risk Reduction



- **Risk principle.** Research indicates that targeting medium and high risk offenders is more effective than targeting low risk offenders.
 - It is easier to lower the recidivism rate of high risk offenders from 50% to 40% than to lower the recidivism rate of low risk offenders from 10% to 0%.
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Risk Reduction



- **Risk principle.** Tells us WHO to target
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Risk Reduction



✓ Now, we know WHO.

So, what do we **DO**?



Risk Reduction



- **Need principle**. Assess criminogenic needs and target those needs with treatment and interventions.
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Risk Reduction



- **Criminogenic needs**: Dynamic or *changeable* factors that contribute to the likelihood that someone will commit a crime.
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Risk Reduction



People involved in the justice system have many needs deserving treatment, but not all of these needs are associated with criminal behavior. Andrews & Bonta (2006)



Risk Reduction



1. Anti-social attitudes
 2. Anti-social friends and peers
 3. Anti-social personality pattern
 4. Family and/or marital factors
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5. Substance abuse
 6. Lack of education
 7. Poor employment history
 8. Lack of pro-social leisure activities
- 

**Major risk/need (criminogenic) factors and associated dynamic needs
(i.e.: promising intermediate targets for reduced recidivism)¹**

Major Risk/ Need Factor ²	Characteristics	Dynamic Need
Antisocial Attitudes	Attitudes, values, beliefs, and rationalizations supportive of crime, and cognitive emotional states of anger, resentment, and defiance. Criminal/reformed criminal/anti-criminal identity.	Reduce antisocial cognition; recognize risky thinking and feeling; build up alternative, less risky thinking and feeling; adopt reform/anti-criminal identity.
Antisocial Friends and Peers	Close association with criminal others and relative isolation from anti-criminal others; immediate social support for crime.	Reduce association with criminal others; enhance association with anti-criminal others.
Antisocial Personality Pattern	Adventurous pleasure seeking, weak self control, restlessly aggressive, callous, and disagreeable.	Build problem-solving skills, self-management skills, anger management and coping skills.
Family/Marital	Two key elements are weak nurturance/caring and poor monitoring/supervision.	Reduce conflict, build positive relationships, and enhance monitoring and supervision.
Substance Abuse	Abuse of alcohol and/or other drugs.	Reduce substance abuse, reduce the personal and interpersonal supports for substance-oriented behavior, enhance alternatives to drug abuse.
School/Work	Low levels of performance and satisfactions in school and/or work (low socio-economic achievement).	Enhance performance, rewards, and satisfactions.
Leisure/ Recreation	Low levels of involvement and satisfactions in anti-criminal leisure pursuits.	Enhance involvement, rewards, and satisfactions.

¹ Excerpted from Andrews, D., & Dowden, C., *The Risk-Need-Responsivity Model of Assessment in Human Service and Prevention and Corrections: Crime Prevention Jurisprudence*, Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice, 49 (4), 439-464 (2007).

² The minor risk/need factors (and less promising intermediate targets for reduced recidivism) include the following: personal/emotional distress, major mental disorder, physical health issues, fear of official punishment, physical conditioning, low IQ, social class of origin, seriousness of current offence, and other factors unrelated or only mildly related to offending.

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Major Risk/Need Factor ²	Characteristics	Dynamic Need
Antisocial Attitudes	Attitudes, values, beliefs, and rationalizations supportive of crime, and cognitive emotional states of anger, resentment and defiance. Criminal identity.	Reduce antisocial cognition; recognize risky thinking and feeling; build up alternative, less risky thinking and feeling.
Antisocial Friends and Peers	Association with anti-criminal peers.	Reduce association with anti-criminal peers.
Antisocial Personality Pattern	Adventurous pleasure seeking, aggressive, callous, and disregard for others.	Management and coping skills.
Family/Marital	Two key elements are weak nurturance/caring and poor monitoring/supervision.	Reduce conflict, build positive relationships, and enhance monitoring and supervision.
Substance Abuse	Abuse of alcohol and drugs.	Substance abuse treatment.
School/Work	Low levels of performance at work (low socio-economic status).	Education, job training, and employment readiness.
Leisure/Recreation	Low levels of involvement in leisure pursuits.	Leisure and recreation activities.

Communication Skills

Judges, probation officers, service providers, mentors, jail staff, prison staff

Services

**Addiction Treatment
Co-Occurring Disorder Treatment
Job Training/Employment Readiness**

¹ Excerpted from Andrews, D., & Dowden, C., *The Risk-Need-Responsivity Model of Assessment in Human Service and Prevention and Corrections: Crime Prevention Jurisprudence*, Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice, 49 (4), 439-464 (2007).

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Risk Reduction



Need Principle

- **Put higher-risk/higher-need offenders in treatment slots.**
 - **Prioritize a person's "high" needs FIRST when developing a case plan.**
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Risk Reduction



- The RISK principle tell us WHO to target.
 - The NEED principle tells us WHAT to target.
 - The RESPONSIVITY principle tells us HOW to target.
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Risk Reduction



- **Responsivity: Maximize a person's ability to learn!**

Responsivity is all about what helps a person learn.



Risk Reduction



- **Responsivity means:**

It's not enough to target higher risk people with the right interventions, you have to do it in a way that supports them as they learn the new skills you are trying to teach.



Risk Reduction



So, how do we support a person as they learn new skills?

- Consider a person's personal **strengths** and personal **characteristics** when interacting with them and designing their interventions.
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Risk Reduction



Personal characteristics? Strengths?

- High anxiety?
 - Mental disorders?
 - Motivation level?
 - Verbal skills?
 - Concrete thinking style?
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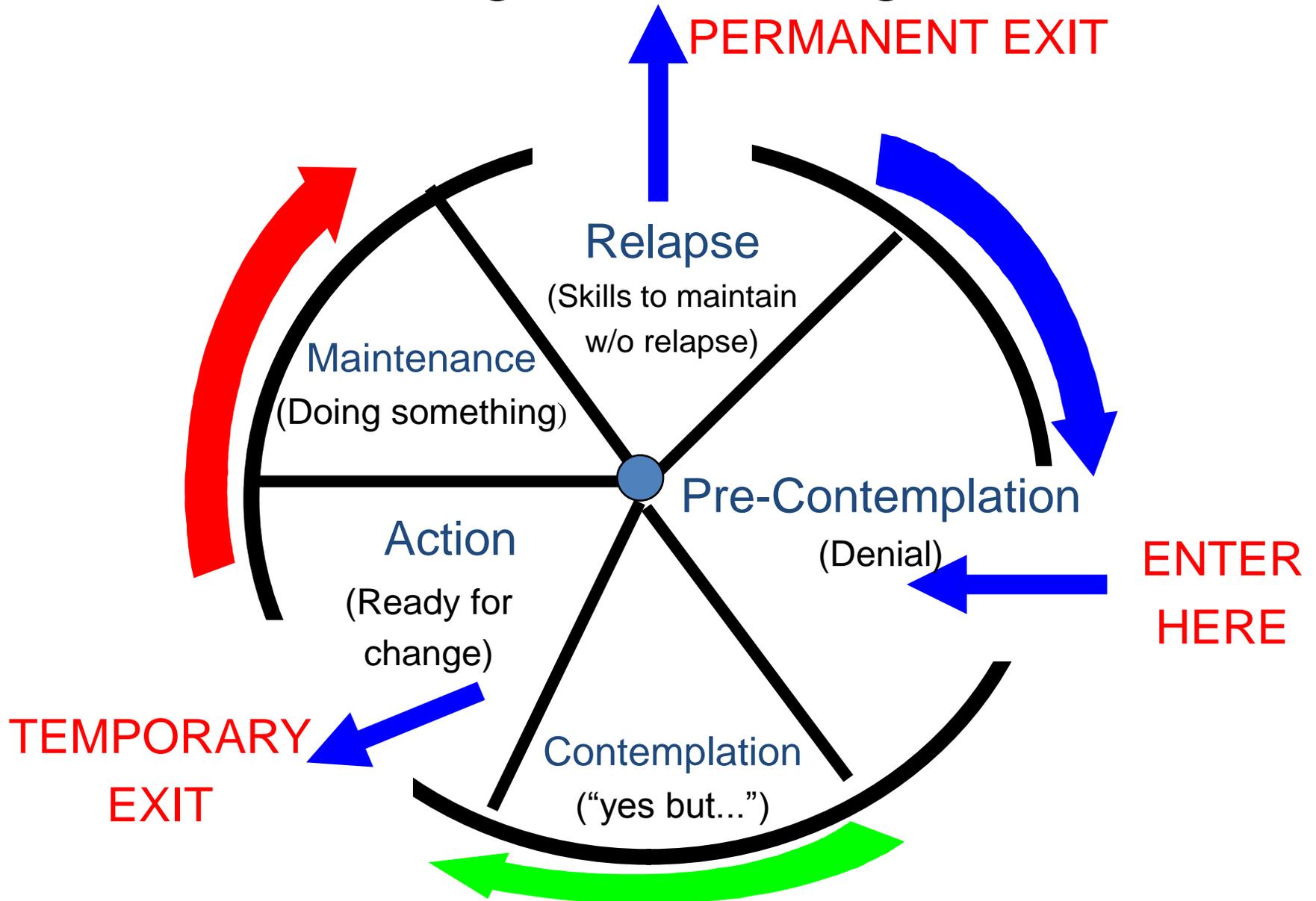
Risk Reduction



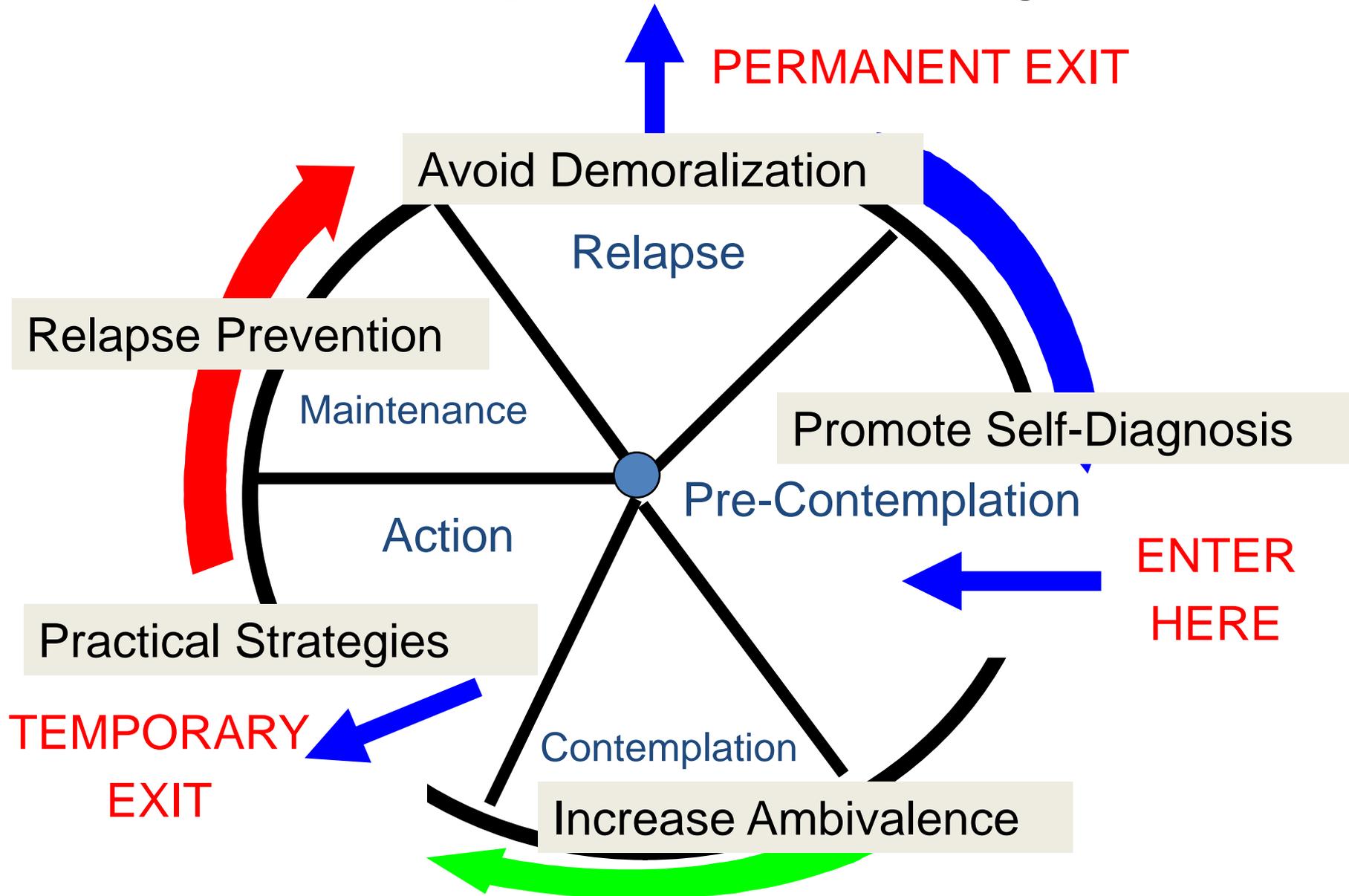
How can you build on strengths and reduce barriers to treatment?

- *How ready is the person to change?* → Meet the person wherever they are in their change process!
- *Is their mental health creating a barrier?* → Treat their mental disorders and free up their attention to participate fully in risk reduction interventions!

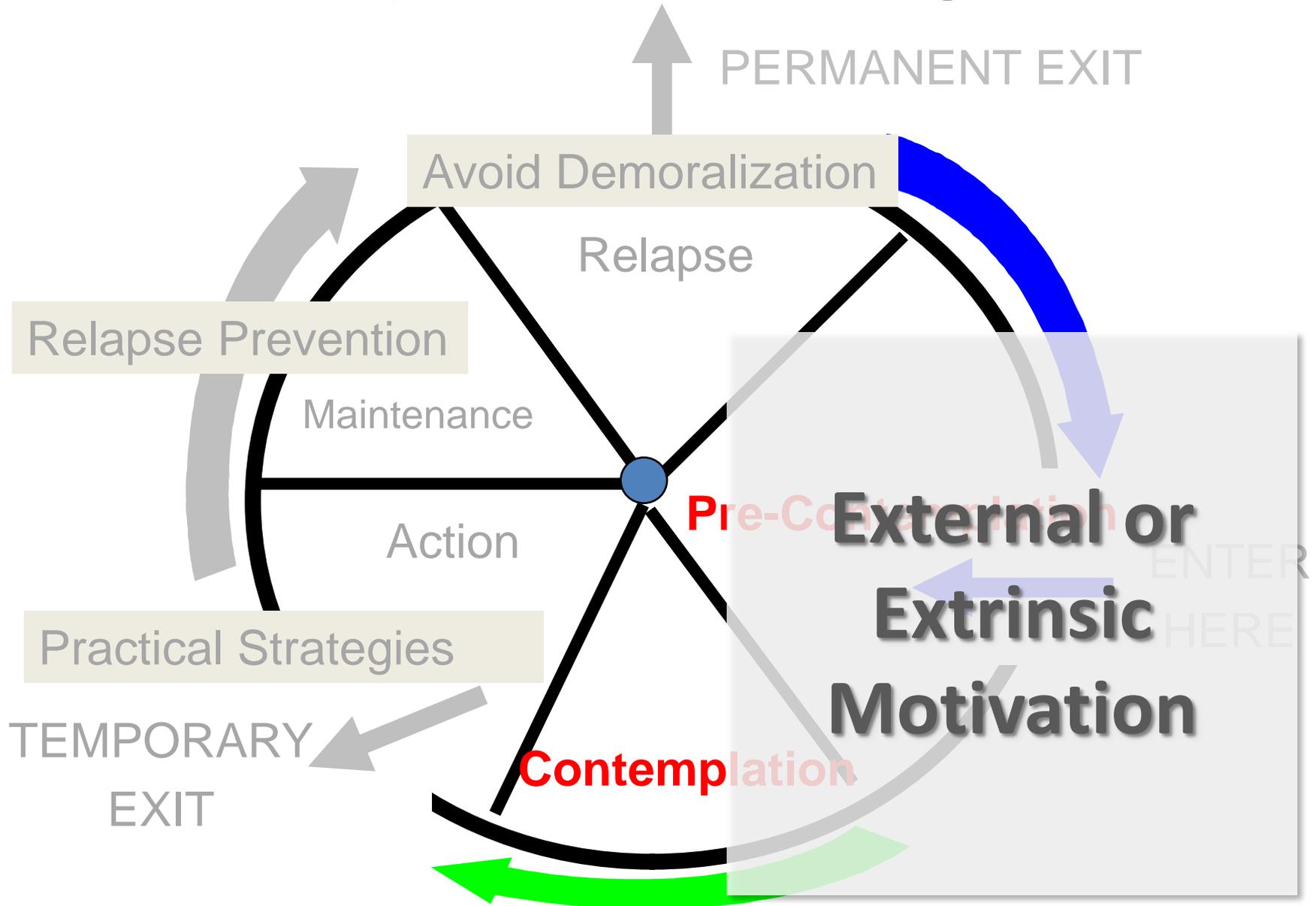
Stages of Change



Responses to Changes



Responses to Changes

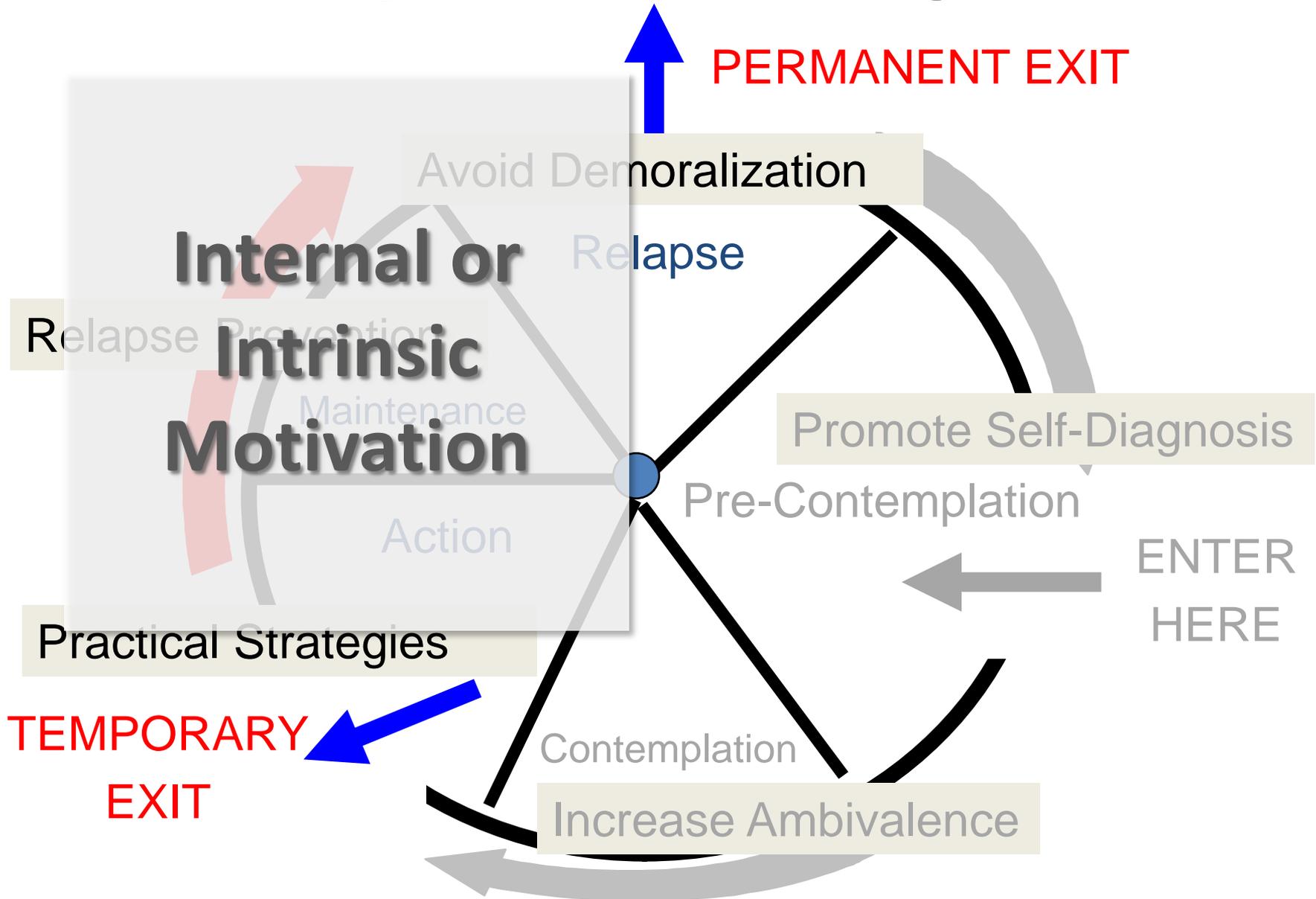


Risk Reduction

External Motivation Strategies

- **Incentives** = Offender-defined incentives to respond to offender-defined goal achievement
- **Graduated Sanctions** = Described BEFORE the behavior and issued QUICKLY after criminal behavior is known

Responses to Changes



Internal Motivation



Behavior

Visible

Thoughts
Feelings

Sometimes
Aware

Cognitive Structure
(Beliefs and Attitudes)

Beneath
the
Surface



Risk Reduction



- **Express empathy** \neq approval or sympathy
 - **Roll with resistance** = give up being right
 - **Develop discrepancy** = notice the teeter-totter
 - **Promote change** = Help 'em believe they have the power to change.
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— A project of the CSG Justice Center —

www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org

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