

JUSTICE CENTER

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

Incorporating the Principles of Risk, Need, & Responsivity into Reentry Program Designs

February 23, 2011



Risk Reduction



What is risk reduction all about?

1. Accurate assumptions 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.

Risk Reduction



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



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.

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.** Tells us WHO to target



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.



Risk Reduction



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



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)



Criminogenic Needs



1. Anti-social attitudes
 2. Anti-social friends and peers
 3. Anti-social personality pattern
 4. Family and/or marital factors
-
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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Antisocial Friends and Peers	Association with anti-criminal friends and peers.	Reduce association with anti-criminal friends and peers.
Antisocial Personality Pattern	Adventurous, pleasure-seeking, aggressive, callous, and impulsive.	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.	Reduce substance abuse.
School/Work	Low levels of performance at school or work (low socio-economic status).	Improve school or work performance.
Leisure/Recreation	Low levels of involvement in leisure pursuits.	Improve leisure pursuits.

Communication Skills

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

Services

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

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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.**

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.



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.



Risk Reduction



Personal characteristics? Strengths?

- High anxiety?
- Mental disorders?
- Motivation level?
- Verbal skills?
- Concrete thinking style?
- Trauma survivor?

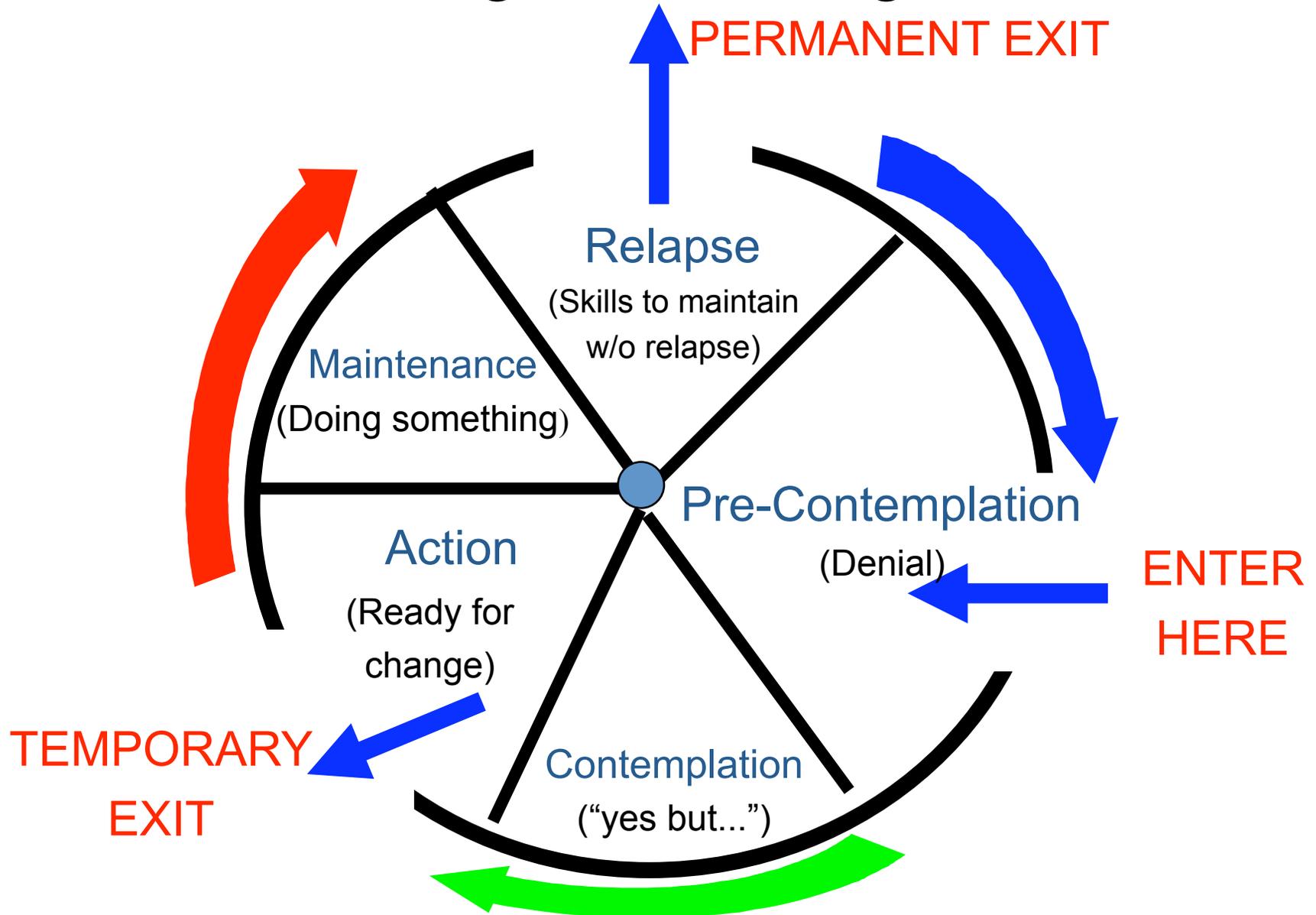
Risk Reduction



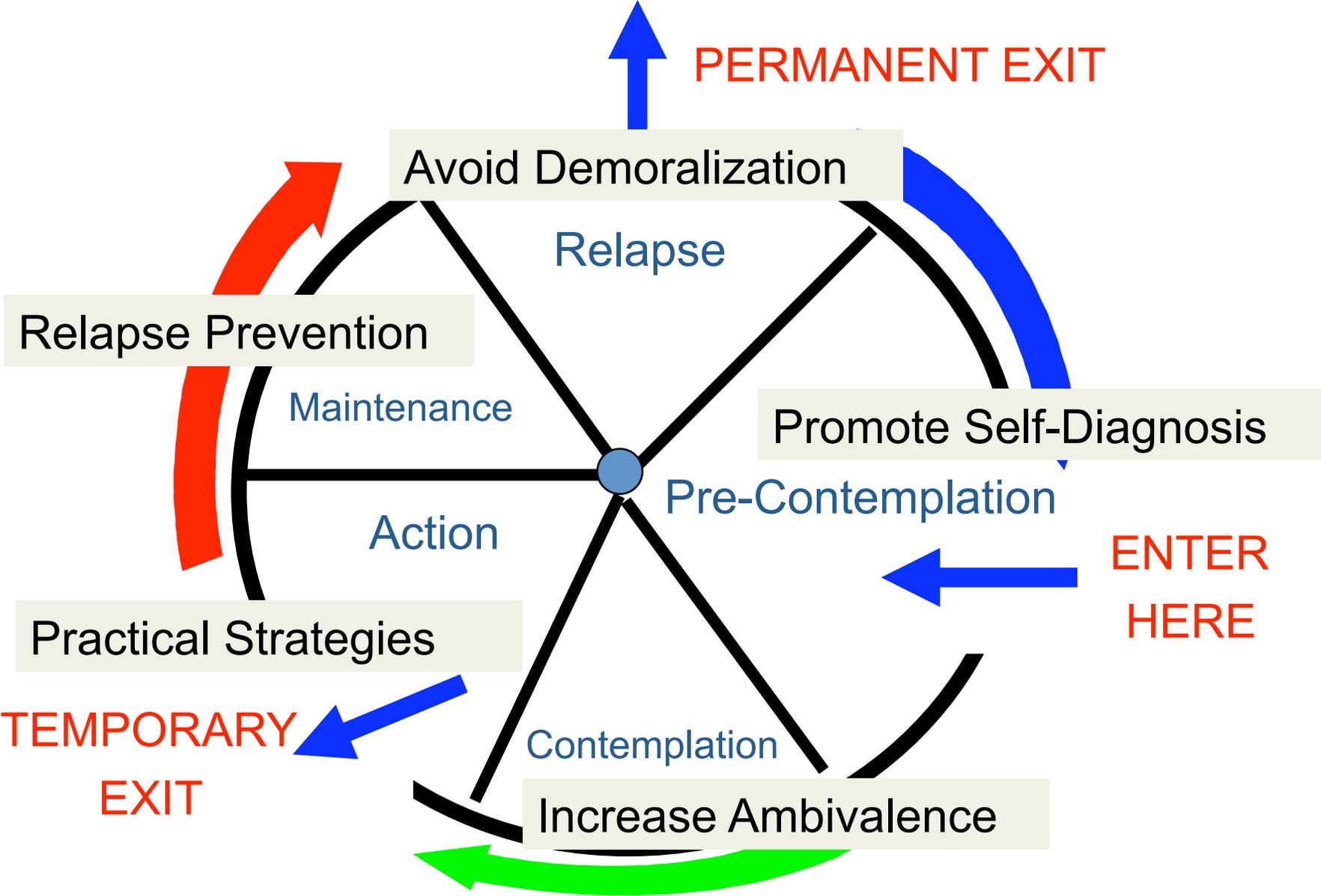
How can you build on strengths and reduce barriers to treatment?

- *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!

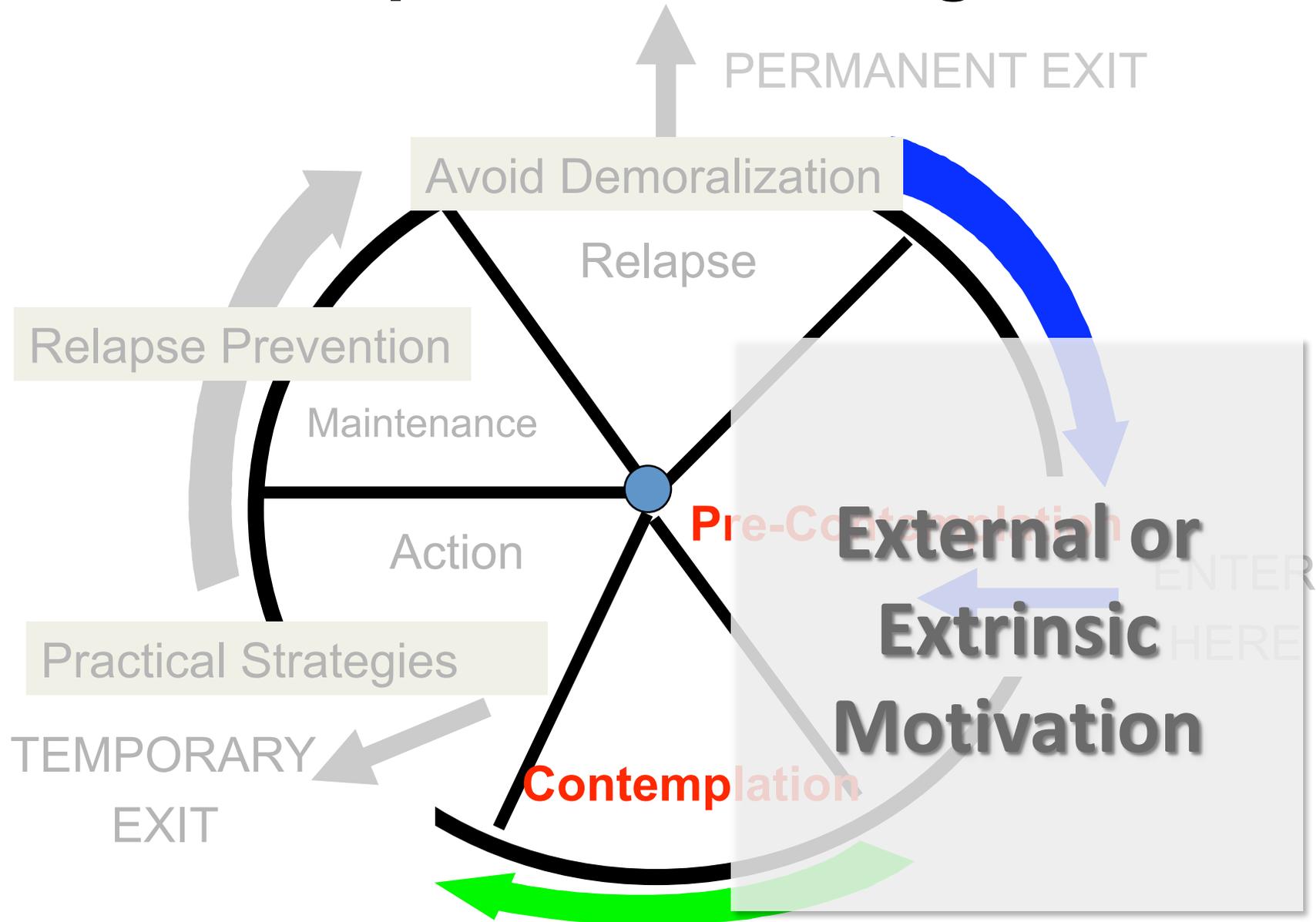
Stages of Change



Responses to Changes



Responses to Changes



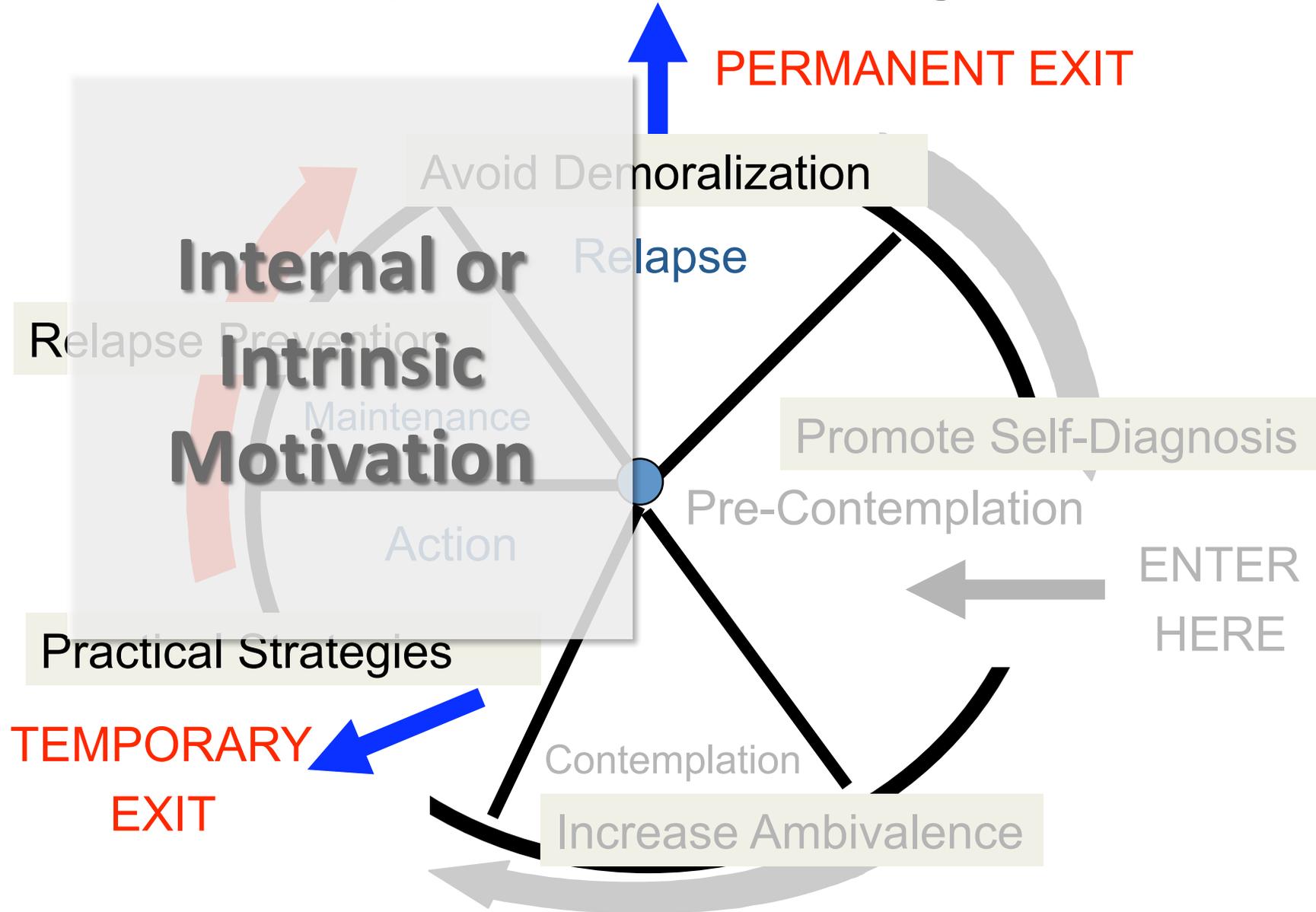
Risk Reduction



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** ≠ 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