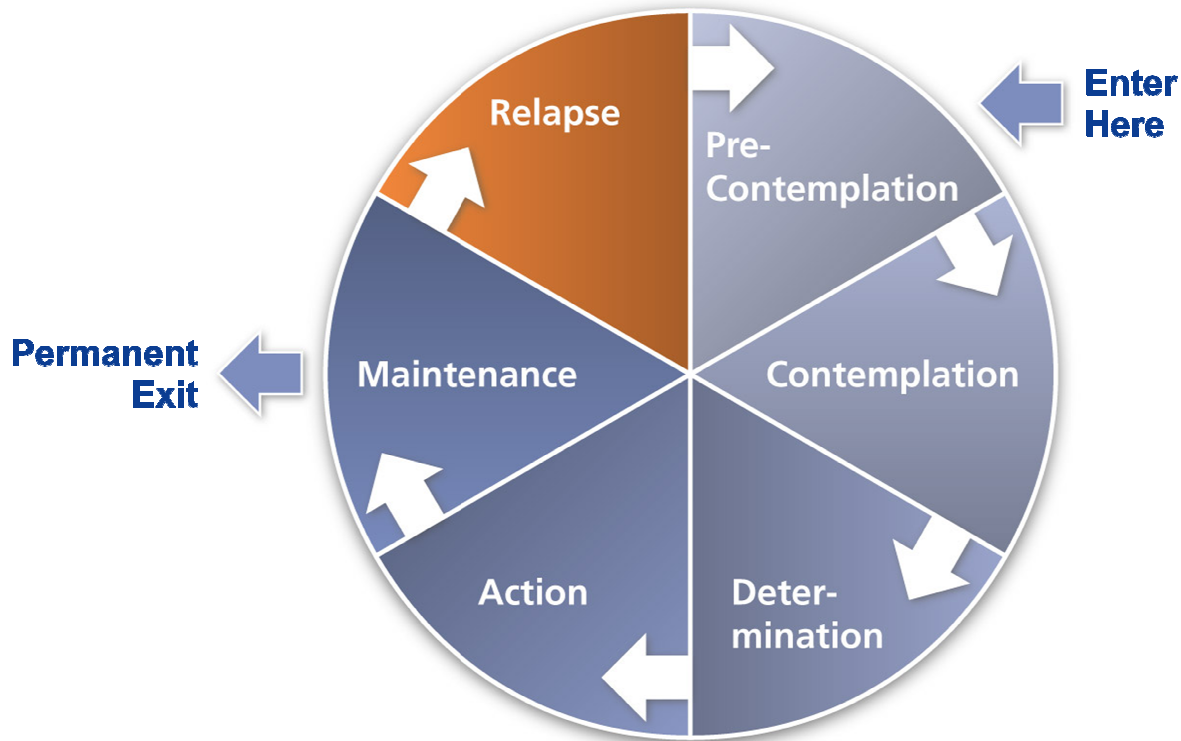


MI AND THE STAGES OF CHANGE

The research-based Transtheoretical Model of Change (DiClemente & Prochaska, 1998) is the theoretical basis for many interventions that effectively promote behavior change. This model emphasizes the decision making of the individual and has been applied to a wide variety of problem behaviors. The Transtheoretical Model of Change describes change as a process—rather than a single event—that involves progress through a series of stages, which are referred to as the Stages of Change.



Pre-contemplation:

- **Definition:** Clients/offenders in the pre-contemplation stage are not yet considering change or are unwilling or unable to take action to change in the foreseeable future. Clients/offenders in the pre-contemplation stage of change are either unaware of the consequences of their problem behaviors or have lost confidence in their ability to change.
- **Goals:** Encourage the client/offender to think about and discuss his or her problem behaviors to develop discrepancy.
- **Motivational Tasks/Strategies:**
 - Keep logs/journal
 - Raise Consciousness/Awareness
 - Raise Doubt
 - Provide feedback
 - Reflect and listen

Contemplation:

- **Definition:** Clients/offenders in the contemplation stage are aware of the consequences of their problem behaviors and are considering change but are ambivalent.
- **Goals:** Guide the client/offender using MI skills to resolve ambivalence and help them to make the decision to choose change and take action.
- **Motivational Tasks/Strategies:**
 - Explore ambivalence
 - Elicit Change Talk
 - Decisional balance matrix
 - Tip balance toward change

Ambivalence is a disharmonious state of mind characterized by coexisting but conflicting thoughts and actions about something—the “I do but I don’t” dilemma. In the early stages of change, people are very aware of both the costs and the benefits of change and ambivalence is strong. Deep ambivalence can cause people to remain in the contemplation stage for a long time.

Determination:

- **Definition:** Clients/offenders in the determination stage are committed to change in the near future but are still considering which actions to take.
- **Goals:** Help the client/offender prepare a plan for change and implement the change plan in the near future
- **Motivational Tasks/Strategies:**
 - Increase commitment
 - Create a change plan with dates
 - Remove obstacles

Action:

- **Definition:** Clients/offenders in the action stage are actively taking steps to change and are putting their change plan into action but have not yet reached stability in reaching their goals.
- **Goals:** Affirm the client/offender’s successful behavior changes, support the client/offender in addressing barriers to change, and maintain the behavior change for an extended amount of time
- **Motivational Tasks/Strategies:**
 - Support and affirm successes
 - Highlight unintended benefits
 - Continue to remove obstacles
 - Begin to talk about relapse

Maintenance:

- **Definition:** Clients/offenders in the maintenance stage have achieved their initial goals and are working to maintain the changes made.
- **Goals:** Reinforce the client/offender's commitment to change and support the client/offender in:
 - Managing relapse triggers
 - Creating a coping plan for relapse prevention
 - Sustaining behavior for long term
- **Motivational Tasks/Strategies:**
 - Support self-efficacy
 - Reevaluate and reinforce plan
 - Develop skills to maintain change

Relapse:

- **Definition:** Client/offender has returned to old behavior after initial success
- **Goals:** Help the client/offender cope with consequences and determine what to do next
- **Motivational Tasks/Strategies:**
 - Frame relapse as a learning opportunity
 - What have we learned about what did/didn't work
 - Assess current stage of change
 - "Where are we now?"

MI and the Stages of Change:

While the Stages of Change and Motivational Interviewing are not the same thing, each complements the other. It can be helpful to recognize what stage of change a client/offender is in to better determine what MI strategies are more helpful. For example, it is more helpful to use a decisional balance matrix to help a client/offender think about the pros and cons of changing and staying the same if they are in the Pre-Contemplation or Contemplation Stage of Change. However, this strategy may not be as useful for someone that is in the Action Stage of Change since it encourages the client/offender to consider reasons for not changing when they have already chosen change.