

Harm Reduction for Alcohol Use: Meeting people where they're at...

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Speaker disclosures

- ✓ The author declares no conflicts of interest.

Talk timeline

Defining harm reduction

A white downward-pointing arrow indicating the flow from the first step to the second.

Rationale for harm reduction

A white downward-pointing arrow indicating the flow from the second step to the third.

Basic tools

objectives

1. Defining harm reduction
2. Rationale for harm reduction
3. Basic clinical tools

Harm reduction applied to various behaviors

From: <http://www.adcouncil.org>



Stephen Dyrkas



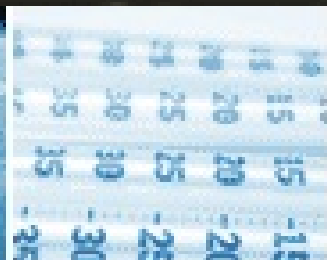
from: nswp.org



FRIENDS DON'T LET FRIENDS DRIVE DRUNK



HIV



SYRINGE ACCESS



HEPATITIS C



OVERDOSE



DRUG TREATMENT



SAFER USE

from: harmreduction.org



Todd Huffman



From <http://www.desc.org/1811.html>

Harm reduction can be described as a set of strategies...



Harm reduction is a grass-roots and “user-driven” set of compassionate and pragmatic approaches to reducing the substance-related harm and improving quality of life.

...but the attitude counts more.



“More of an attitude than a fixed set of rules or approaches...”

David Purchase, Director of the North America Syringe Exchange Network cited in Marlatt (1998)

The philosophy is COMPASSIONATE



The approach is PRAGMATIC



Harm reduction ≠ Use reduction

Use reduction *can* be “one mean to the end.”



HOWEVER



Harm reduction is the true “end.”

Harm reduction ≠ ...

Relapse
prevention

Cognitive
behavioral
treatment

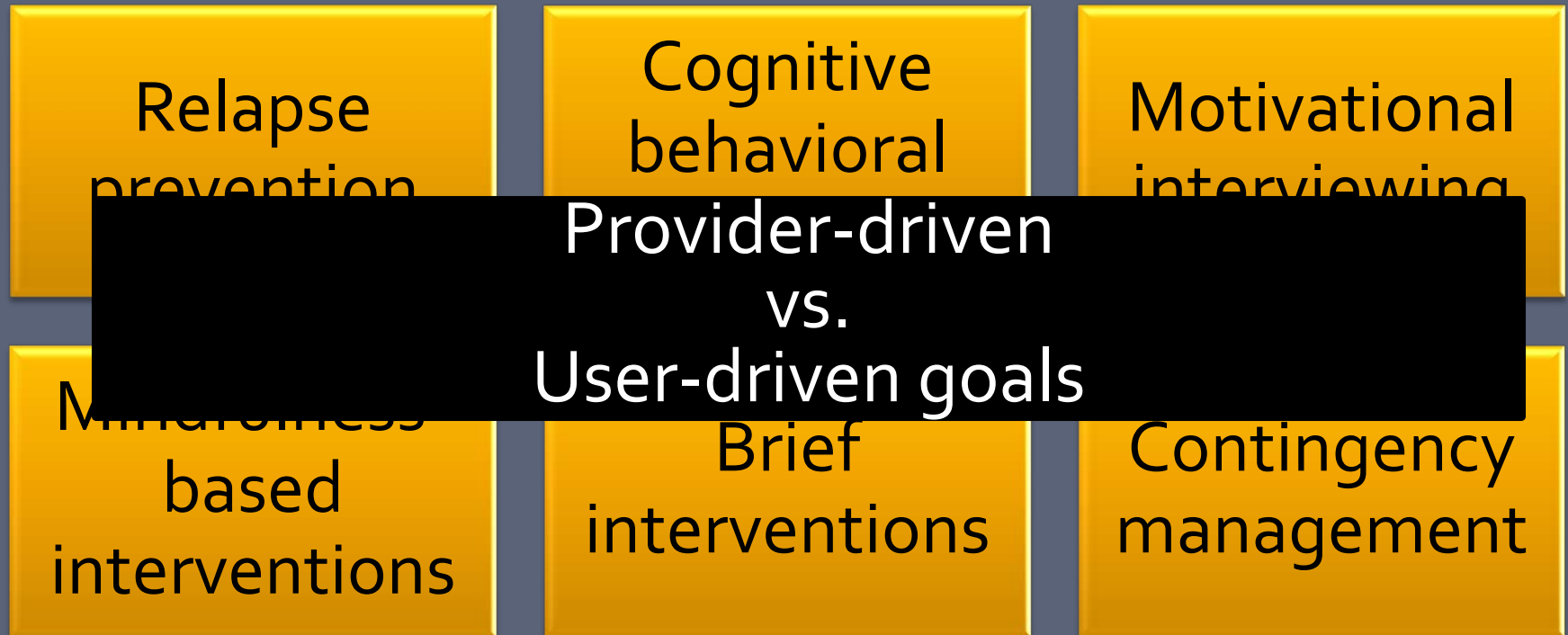
Motivational
interviewing

Mindfulness-
based
interventions

Brief
interventions

Contingency
management

Harm reduction ≠ ...



“Therapists from a humanistic or existential orientation might object to the directional aspect of MI, whereby clients would be intentionally guided toward what the counselor regards to be appropriate goals.” – Miller & Rollnick (2012)

Why harm reduction?

Traditional approaches may be disempowering

"Our clients
are very sick
and they
often lie to
us."

Disease Model

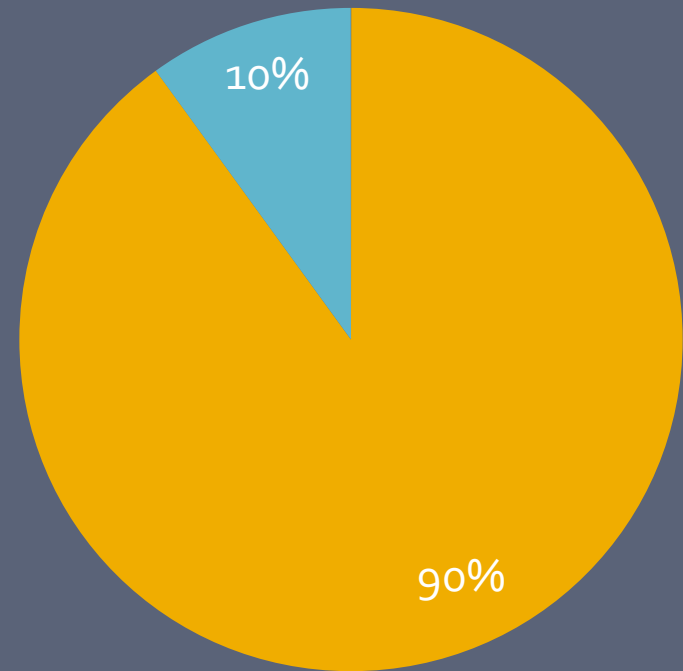
Moral Model

and sometimes they tell the truth

Moving towards harm
reduction 😊

Traditional approaches don't work for some...

- Chronically homeless individuals with alcohol dependence report an average of 16 treatment episodes in their lifetime (Larimer et al., 2009)
- This traditional treatment didn't resolve the problem:
 - Still endorsed a mean of 11/15 alcohol problems
 - 44% reported experiencing DTs in last 3 mos (Collins et al., 2012)



- meets criteria for current alcohol dependence
- does not meet criteria

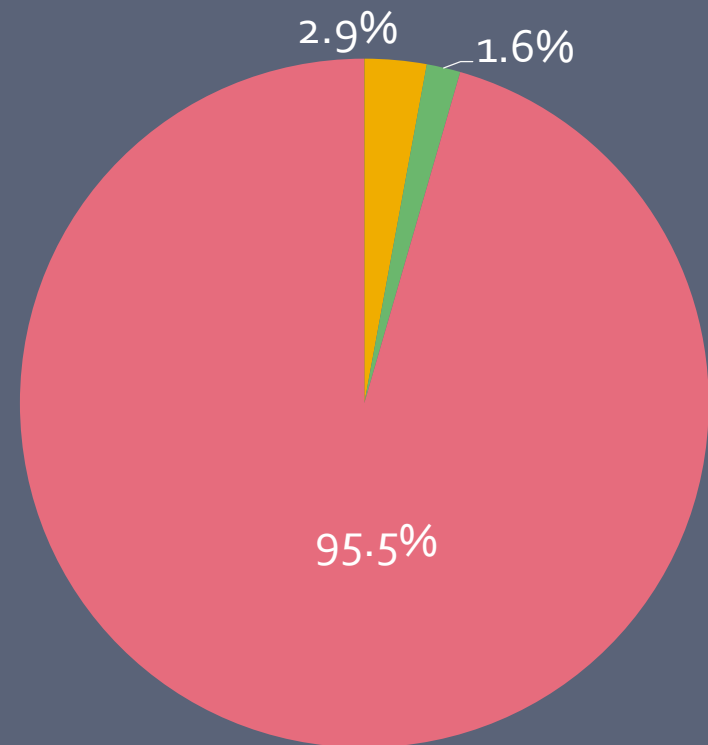
Traditional approaches don't engage some...

- According to SAMHSA, in 2013
 - 22.7 million Americans needed treatment
 - 2.5 million received treatment

Well, really, they don't engage most.

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 - 22.7 million Americans needed treatment
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Of Americans who needed but did not receive treatment...

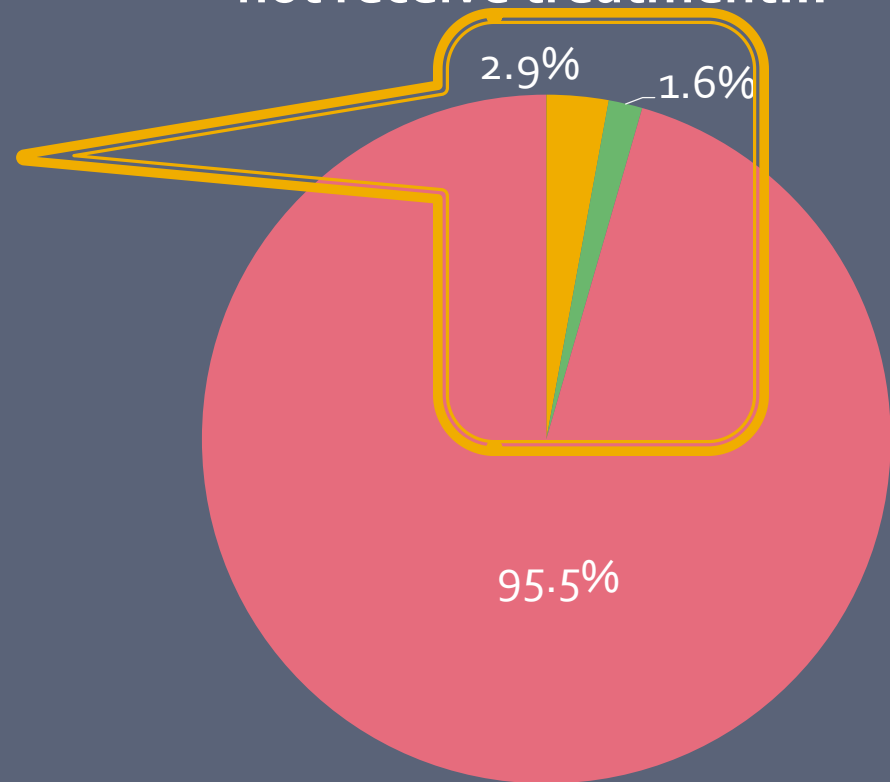


- Felt they needed treatment & did not make effort
- Felt they needed treatment & did make effort
- Did not feel they needed treatment

Well, really, they don't engage most...

- Of those who felt they needed treatment, made an effort but did not get it:
 - 25% said they weren't ready to stop using.
 - 6% said they could handle it on their own.

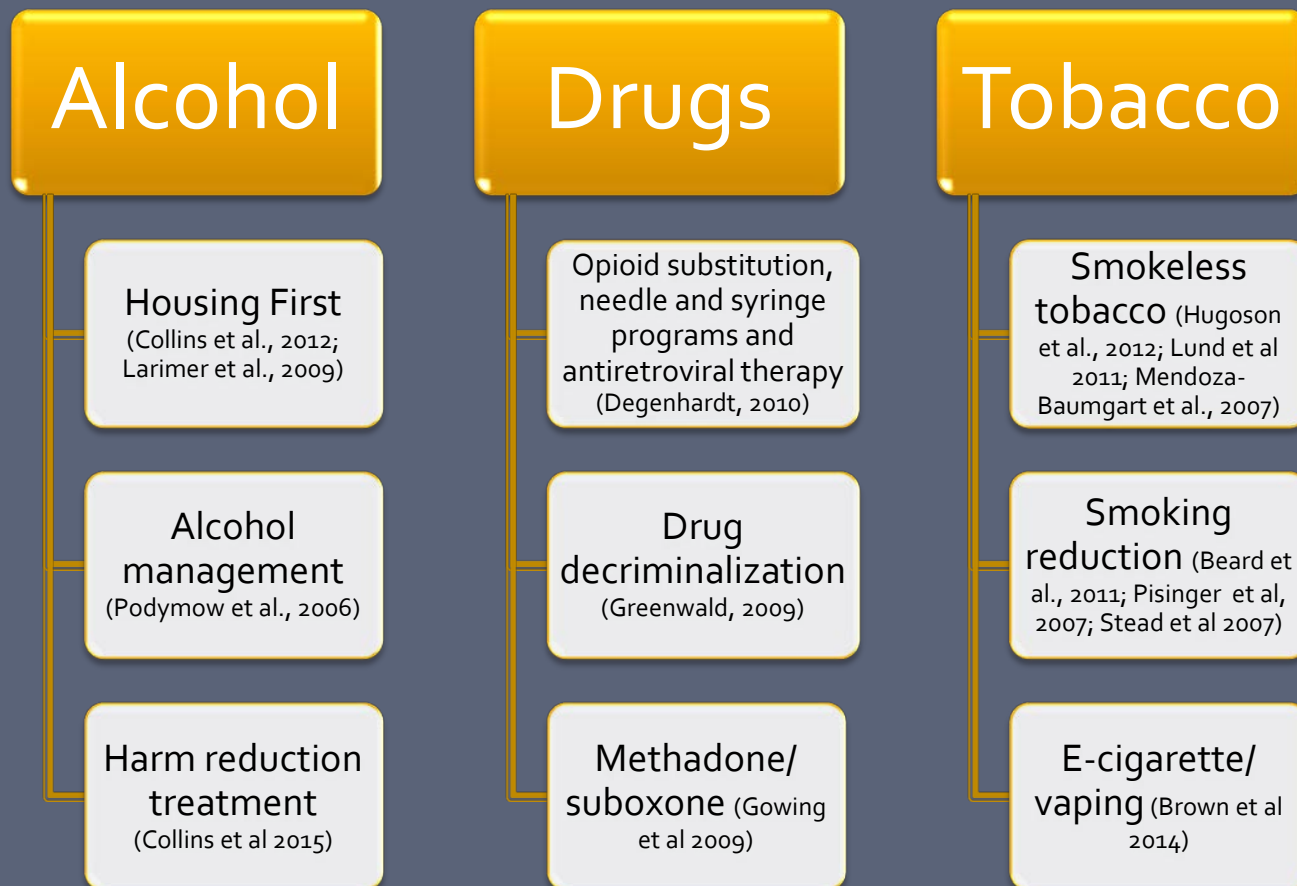
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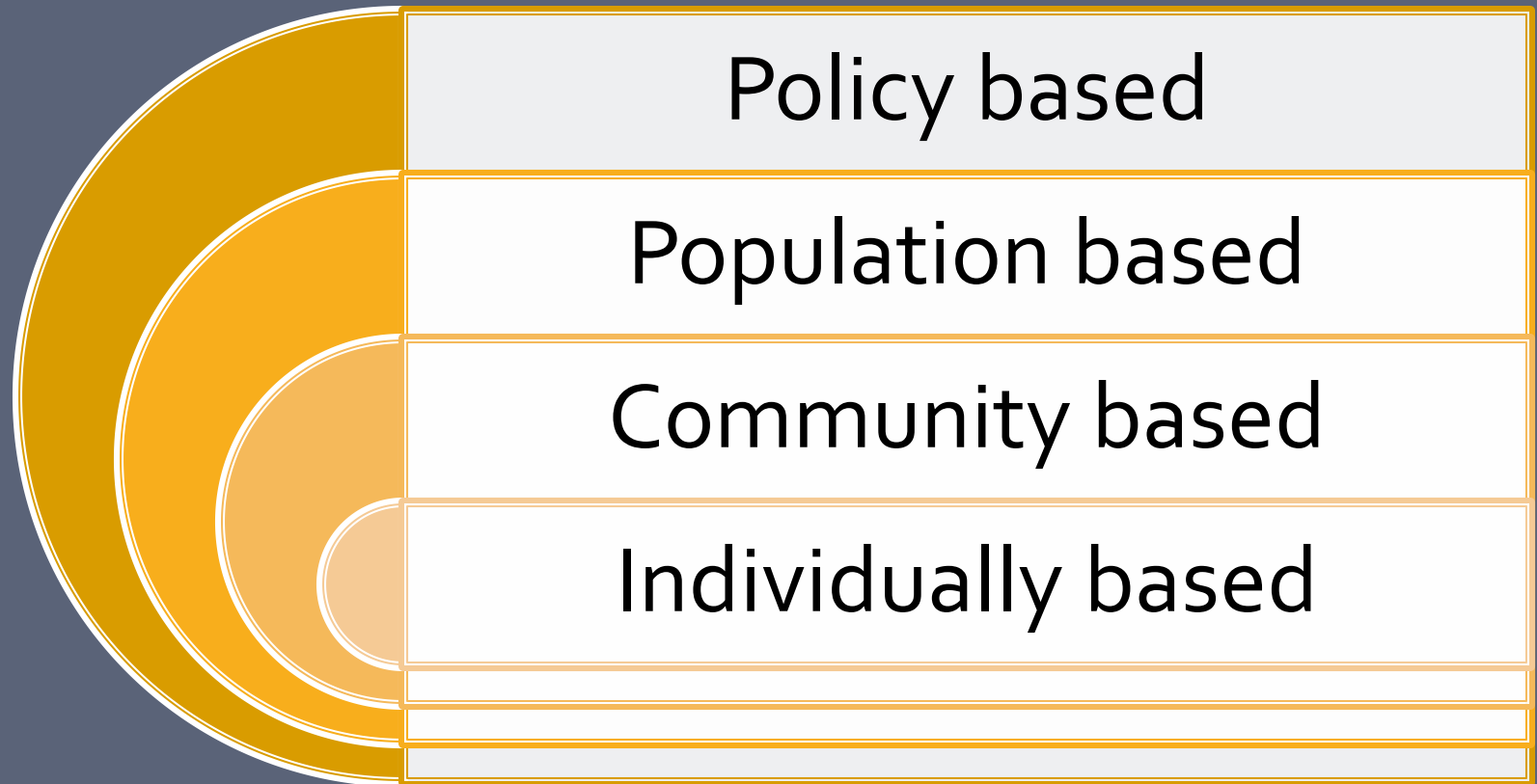
- Felt they needed treatment & did not make effort
- Felt they needed treatment & did make effort
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Harm reduction provides an effective alternative...

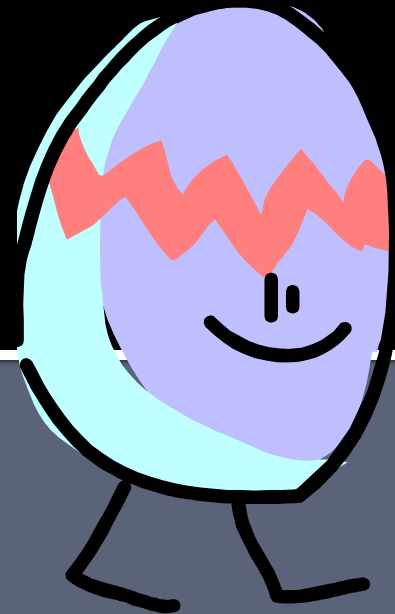
...for those who are not yet ready, willing or able to stop using



Harm reduction at various levels



This is your brain on harm reduction.
Any questions?



We would like to acknowledge our staff and trainees at the Harm Reduction Research and Treatment (HaRRT) Center; our research partners, including DESC, REACH, Neighborcare, Dutch Shisler Sobering Center; MHCADSD; and the many community members and participants who have shaped our work. We dedicate this training to Dr. Alan Marlatt who was a legendary alcohol researcher, compassionate clinician, mentor to many, and inspiration to all.

Resources on harm reduction

■ Websites

- <https://depts.washington.edu/harrtlab/>
- www.harmreduction.org
- www.andrewtatarsky.com/links_harmreduction.html
- www.ihra.net/
- www.harmreductiontherapy.org/
- www.drugpolicy.org
- www.anypositivechange.org
- <http://hamsnetwork.org/>

■ Self-help for clients

- Anderson, K.A. (2010). *How to change your drinking: A harm reduction guide to alcohol (2nd edition)*. New York: The HAMS Network.
- Denning, P., Little, J., & Glickman, A. (Eds.). (2004). *Over the influence: The harm reduction guide for managing drugs and alcohol*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Sorge, R., & Kershner, S. (1998). *Getting off right: A safety manual for injection drug users*. New York: Harm Reduction Coalition.

■ Literature on harm reduction approaches and psychotherapy

- Denning, P. & Little, J. (2012). *Practicing harm reduction psychotherapy: An alternative approach to addictions (2nd edition)*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Marlatt, G. A., Witkiewitz, K., Larimer, M.E. (2011). *Harm reduction: Pragmatic strategies for managing high-risk behaviors (2nd edition)*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Marlatt, G. A. (1996). Harm reduction: Come as you are. *Addictive Behaviors*, 21, 779-788.
- Stout, D. D. (2009). *Coming to harm reduction kicking and screaming: Looking for harm reduction in a 12-step world*. Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse.
- Tartarsky, A. (2002). *Harm reduction psychotherapy: A new treatment for drug and alcohol problems*. Plymouth, UK: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

For more information regarding these slides,
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