

**HARM  
REDUCTION**

# What Harm Reduction Is Not...

- For or against drug use
- Permission to use drugs
- “Trojan horse” for drug legalization
- “Anything goes”
- Anti-abstinence

# Areas of Harm Reduction

- Safer Sex – condom use, avoidance of risky sexual practices, abstinence.....
- Safer Driving – speed limits, seat belts, intoxication limits, air bags, defensive driving, alternatives to driving.....
- Safer Drug Use....

# AOD Harm Reduction: Overview

- Harmful consequences of drug use can be placed on a continuum
- Goal: to move client along this continuum by taking steps to reduce harm

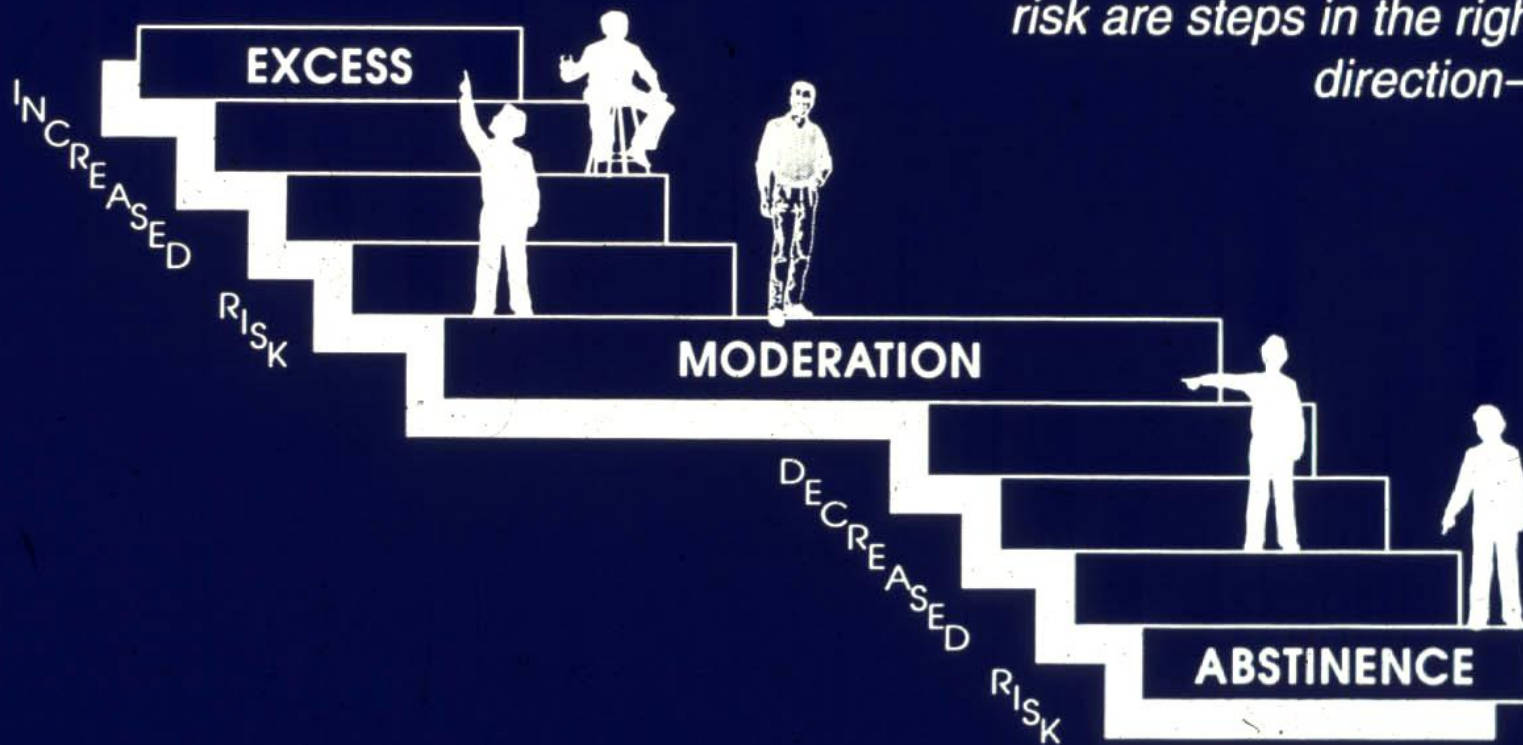
# Harm Reduction

“Habit is habit and not to be flung out of the window by any man, but coaxed downstairs a step at a time.”

Mark Twain,  
Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar,  
Chapter 6

# Continuum of Excess, Moderation, and Abstinence

*—Any steps toward decreased risk are steps in the right direction—*



# What is Harm Reduction?

- Areas of harm:
  - Addiction in general
  - Physical problems directly related to AOD use
  - Physical problems related to lifestyle
  - Involvement with criminal justice system
  - Death (OD, DUI)

# What is Harm Reduction?

- Reduces damage done to:
  - User
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Co-workers
  - Society



# What is Harm Reduction?

- Family
  - Worry
  - Fear
  - Anger/Resentment
  - Broken promises
  - Negative role model for children

# What is Harm Reduction?

- Friends
  - \$
  - Worry
  - ↓ contact/activities
  - ↑ risk of their use
  - Involvement in illegal activities

# What is Harm Reduction?

- Co-workers
  - More work for them
  - Can't finish job/project
  - Supervisor takes heat for absences
  - Supervisor has to write you up

# What is Harm Reduction?

- Society
  - DUI accidents, injuries, deaths
  - Crime
  - Law enforcement costs

# Harm Reductive: DUI

- Don't drink
- ↓ drinking to levels below 0.08
- Don't drink and drive
- Don't drive



# Harm Reductive: DUI

- Don't drink
- ↓ drinking to levels below 0.08
- Don't drink and drive
- Don't drive

# Why Harm Reduction?

- Users see some AOD use as risky
- Users see some AOD activities as risky
- Medical problems
- Pressure from
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Work
  - Criminal justice system
- Integration into a recovery program



# Harm Reduction: Drug/Alcohol Use

- Get into treatment
- Don't inject drugs
- Safer methods of i.v. drug use (clean syringes/"works"/"rig", don't share works, utilize needle exchanges, use 1:9 bleach/H<sub>2</sub>O to clean works)
- Obtain naloxone
- ↓ frequency/amount of use
- Don't mix alcohol and other drugs
- Have your drugs checked out
- Don't use street drugs

# Harm Reduction: Methods

- If a person cannot or will not stop AOD use:
  - Safer route of drug administration (e.g., stop i.v. use)
  - Safer methods of i.v. drug use (clean syringes/"works"/"rig")
  - Reduce intensity of drug use (e.g., lower dose)
  - Reduce frequency of drug use
  - Stop mixing AOD
  - Progressive abstinence (begin with more harmful substances)

# Harm Reductive: Drug/Alcohol Use

- Don't use someone else's Rx
- Begin abstinence with most harmful drugs
- Don't use tobacco
- ↓ smoking
- Stay home when drinking/using
- Avoid high-risk activities when drinking/using
- Don't involve family/friends
  - Criminal justice involvement
  - Relationship
  - Child abuse/neglect
- Don't have sex when drunk/high