

Talking to Parents About Behavior Change: A Motivational Interviewing Approach

Patricia Cluss, Ph.D.
University of Pittsburgh

AAP Healthy Tomorrows

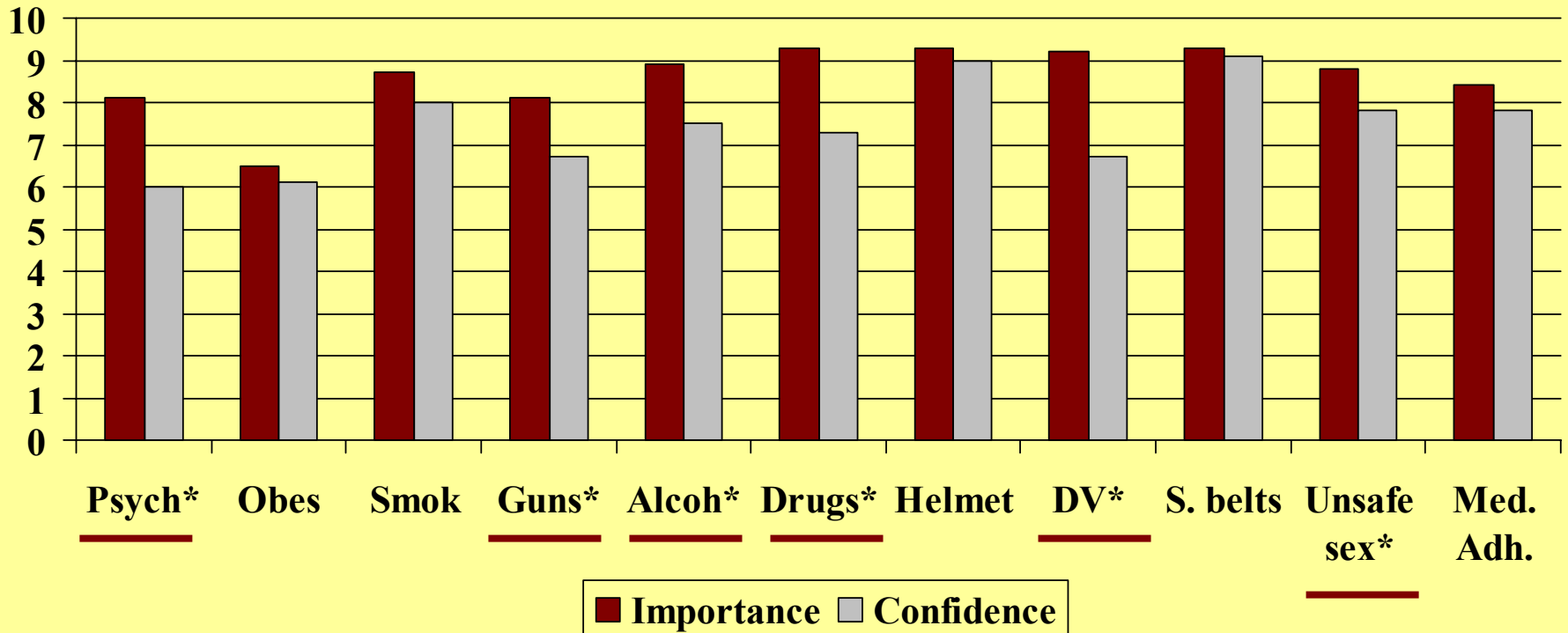
August 12, 2006
Chicago, IL

The speaker in this session has no relevant financial relationships with the manufactures(s) of any commercial products(s) and/or provider of commercial services discussed in this CME activity.

Addressing Health Behavior Change Issues with Parents

Your experience?

ED Residents: Comparing Importance & Confidence



[*indicates $p \leq .05$]

**How, why, and when do
people change important
health-related behaviors?**

[A question....]

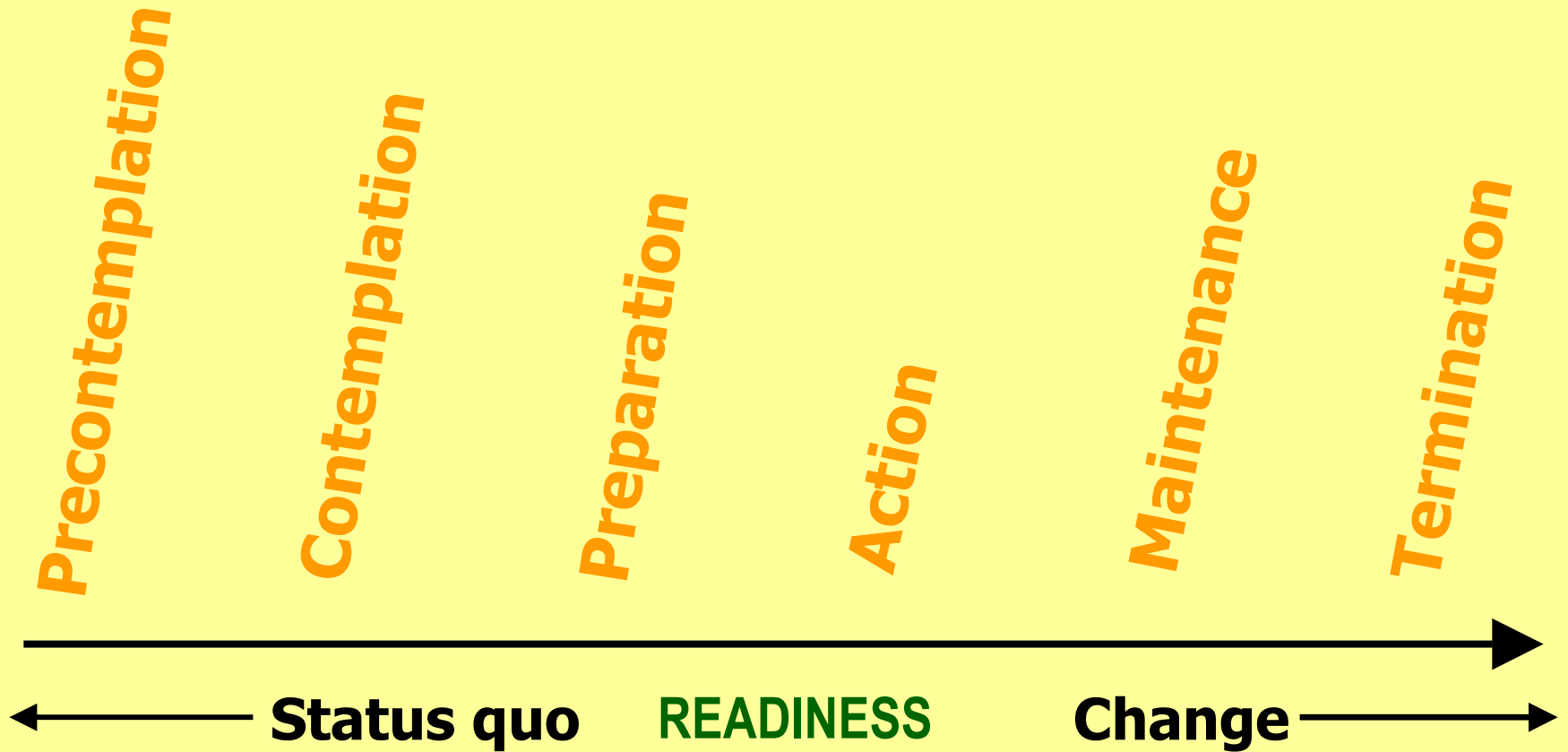
Typical parent responses to feeling pushed to make a behavior change:

- Anger & opposition
- Panic & anxiety
- Helplessness & hopelessness
- Agreement without commitment
- Relief & decision to change

Goal of this presentation:

To get you thinking about what might constitute a successful patient encounter around health behavior change


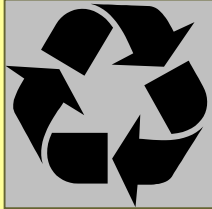
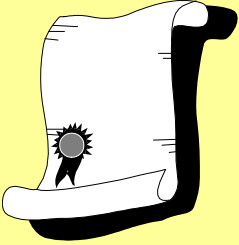
THE PROCESS OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE



STAGES OF CHANGE

- **Precontemplation:** No problem recognition. Resistance, reluctance, rebellion, rationalization, resignation
- **Contemplation:** Ambivalence & weighing of the pros and cons
- **Preparation:** Determination & planning for action in the near future
- **Action:** Taking steps & monitoring progress
- **Maintenance:** Integration of changes & relapse prevention

When Thinking about Health Behavior Change, Expect People to:

- Fail on first attempts 
- Recycle through the stages 
- Eventually be successful 

A MOTIVATIONAL APPROACH TO BEHAVIOR CHANGE

- Motivation to change is not a personality trait, but is affected by interpersonal interaction.
- Ambivalence about proposed behavior change is NORMAL.
- Direct persuasion or advice giving is NOT an effective method for resolving ambivalence for most patients.

With regard to parent interactions about health behavior change

We set ourselves up for failure when we:

- Expect unreasonable results from ourselves and our patients
- Don't understand what's normal in the process of change

WHAT COUNTS AS A SUCCESSFUL PARENT ENCOUNTER



**In One Given Interaction
You probably CANNOT:**

- Get the parent to totally change both the child's eating and exercise habits**
- Get the parent to decide to quit smoking once and for all**
- Etc.**

IN A SUCCESSFUL PARENT ENCOUNTER



You probably CAN:

- 1. Provide advice (carefully)**
- 2. Assess readiness for change**
- 3. Engage with the parent so that she sees you as someone who would be willing to help if and when she wants help**
- 4. Say something that encourages the parent to consider even a small step toward change**

Giving Advice about Health Behavior Change 3 things:

- 1. We like to.**
- 2. It's not very effective.**
- 3. We do it anyway.**

In a successful patient/parent encounter you can....

1. Provide advice

“Mrs. S., I’m concerned about Timmy’s weight. We are just beginning to understand that children who are overweight are at risk for developing _____. I’m encouraging parents to help their children eat more healthfully and get more physical activity.”

In a successful patient/parent encounter you can....

2. Assess readiness for change

“What do you make of that?”

[or]

“How does that sound to you?”

In a successful patient/parent encounter you can....

3. Engage with the parent so that she sees you as someone who would be willing to help.

[and]

4. Say something that encourages the parent to consider even a small step toward change.

HOW???



The key is:

Reflective listening and responding

REFLECTIVE RESPONDING:

After listening to the person,
delivering a statement that demonstrates that you
understand, **value**, and **are considering**
the person's point of view.

**Note: This is not the same as
Agreeing with the person**

REFLECTIVE RESPONDING: The Good News

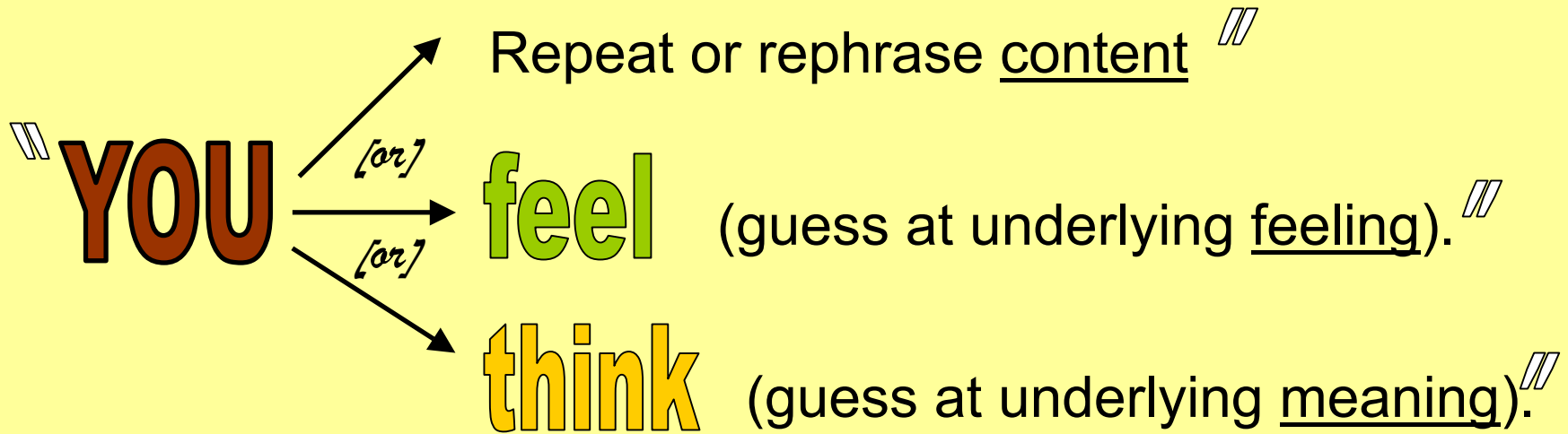
A Three-for-One Strategy:

- 1. Builds rapport**
- 2. Gathers relevant information
(more effectively than asking questions)**
- 3. Quickly points you in the direction of
what might be most helpful**

REFLECTIVE RESPONDING: The Not-So-Good News

It can be hard (at first).

MAKING REFLECTIVE STATEMENTS



*Look for and respond reflectively to “**change talk.**”*

Keys to using reflective responding effectively:

- Resist the urge ask questions
- Resist the urge to give more advice
- Make 3 to 4 reflective responses, then ask yourself:
 - What have I learned about this parent's concerns?
 - What have I learned about her readiness to make changes?
 - What's my next best thing to do, given the above? Then do that.

Some options for the next best thing:

- If considering change:
 - Offer printed information
 - Offer support
 - Offer resources (web, community, other)
 - Problem solve with parent about who might be supportive in her efforts to help family/child make indicated changes
 - Other
- If not considering change:
 - “Would it be OK if I check back in with you about this next time?”

PRACTICE / DISCUSSION