

Appendix 1. Helpful phrases for each stage of change^{3,17}

Precontemplation

'I ask all of my patients about their alcohol use who present with ...'
 'Is it ok if we discuss your alcohol drinking?'
 'You say you like using methamphetamines, are there any things you like less about smoking methamphetamines?'
 'What does your spouse/family/friends think?'
 'What does a typical day look like when you smoke cannabis?'
 'Can we talk about how you might make your injecting safer?'
 'You need your car for work, are you worried that you might be driving above the legal alcohol limit? What would happen if you lost your licence?'
 'Is it ok if we discuss the risks your smoking has to your health?'
 'I respect your decision to continue taking heroin and I am concerned about the health risks, but it's important that you know you are welcome here to discuss all aspects of your health and wellbeing.'
 'I make no moral judgements about your opioid use but is it ok if we discuss the effect it might have on your health?'

Contemplation

'People weigh up the pros and cons when thinking about change.'
 'Wanting to change but not feeling ready to change is a normal part of the process.'
 'You say you like the feeling of methamphetamines but not how it affects your life. What worries you most?'
 'What might improve/get easier if you stopped or reduced your benzodiazepine use? (eg physical health/mental health/relationships/financial/hobbies/work)'
 'Where do you see yourself in five years?' (eg I want to be a better parent, daughter, son, friend, or student)
 'How do you see your opioid use fitting in or not into the future?' (Aim to 'tip the scale' in favour of change)
 'What would you do with the money you could save from cutting back?'
 'You know what is best for you.'
 'Only you can decide whether you do or don't change.'

Preparation

'Where would you like to go to from here?'
 'What has worked in the past?'
 'Something others have found helpful is ...'
 'Is there someone close to you who would be supportive of your plan to cut down?'
 'Would it be ok if you brought them in with you next time?'
 'What do you hope to get out of treatment?'
 'Does this feel like the right time to make change?'
 'Is there anything getting in the way that we can look at?'
 'Let's make a list of things that worked to cut down and things that were a challenge so you can add some extra strategies going forward.'
 'Have you thought of the best time to start cutting down with what's going on around you now with work/family/stress?'

Action

'What steps have you made to reduce your alcohol intake?' (eg having one less beer that week, changing your after work routine, attending Narcotics Anonymous or Alcoholics Anonymous etc)
 'Let's meet up again in a fortnight to give you some time to think about your change plan and what strategies might work?'
 'Let's set a date to make change, what might be reasonable for you?'
 'How will you make the change?'
 'If you had a best friend in your situation, what kind of advice would you give them?'
 'What's in your diary this month, do you have a strategy for your friend's wedding?'
 'What strategies worked for you this week? What didn't work so well and why?' (Identify barriers to change)

Maintenance

'Patients who are in recovery find it helpful to have a regular review, what would suit you for follow up? Two weeks? A month?'
 'Let's re-visit your physical health/mental health/relationships/hobbies/work that might have improved since ceasing substance x.'
 'No one else could have done this for you.'
 'These are your efforts.'
 'What's working for you?'
 'What kind of strategies are you using when things are difficult?'
 'Who in your life is most supportive right now?'
 'Have you considered a peer recovery group?'
 'How have things changed physically/mentally/socially/legally/etc since you made this change?'
 'Imagine times when you used substance x or found it difficult to say no and how you might do things differently.'
 'It can help to record alternative coping strategies that don't involve substance x.'
 'Who close to you would you feel comfortable discussing your crisis plan and triggers with?'
 'If you felt triggered or found yourself in a high-risk scenario what would you do?'

Relapse

'It must have been hard to come in today, well done for coming in.'
 'Studies show that when in recovery, relapses tend to become shorter and abstinence length longer.'
 'Relapse is common, it's one step in your journey.'
 'I'd like to hear more about what happened so we can learn from this occasion.'
 'You've stopped successfully once, you've overcome a lot; I'm positive you can do it again.'
 'What could you do differently in the situation?'
 'Can we look at things that worked before to get you back on track to where you want to be?'
 'What could you do differently next time?'