

A black and white image of a spiral-bound notebook. The notebook has a dark, textured cover with a spiral binding on the left side. The pages are white and framed by a dark border. The text is centered on the page.

Harm Reduction:

Ideal to Nitty Gritty

### Philosophy Of Harm Reduction

- ☛ ALL HAVE RIGHTS FOR COMPREHENSIVE NONJUDGMENTAL MEDICAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES
- ☛ LICIT/ILLICIT SUBSTANCES ARE NEITHER GOOD NOR BAD; RATHER, IT IS THE INDIVIDUAL'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE SUBSTANCE
- ☛ ALL HUMANS INTRINSICALLY HAVE VALUE AND DIGNITY
- ☛ PEOPLE WHO USE ARE COMPETENT TO MAKE CHOICES
- ☛ OUTCOMES ARE IN THE HANDS OF THE CLIENT

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### Principles Of Harm Reduction

- > PROVIDES FACTUAL INFORMATION TO MINIMIZE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES
- > IDENTIFIES RANGE OF RISK
- > PROMOTES RISK MINIMIZATION
- > ASSUMES INDIVIDUALS WILL MAKE BEST POSSIBLE CHOICES FOR THEMSELVES
- > RECOGNIZES THAT SUBSTANCE USE IS ONE OF MOST STIGMATIZED PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES

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### Harm Reduction

- ✓ is a pragmatic and nonjudgmental approach to substance use and people who use, that recognizes quitting is neither realistic nor desirable for everyone
- ✓ is client centred
- ✓ meets people who use "where they are at"
- ✓ recognizes the client is the expert on her/his own health

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**DEFINITION**

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a policy or programme directed toward decreasing adverse health, social and economic consequences of substance use whether the person who uses continues to use psychoactive substances or not

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**HARM REDUCTION PRACTICE**

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- Presents an alternative and a challenge to the more traditional disease and/or moral, criminal models of substance use and brings it into a social justice context
- Requires the creativity and innovation reflective of the complexity, fluidity and individuality of the person's life, including, but not limited to, his/her substance use
- Follows the rule of psychology 'don't remove a person's primary coping mechanisms until others are in place'. Start wherever a person is at, and move at the pace of that individual

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- Operates from the principle that any positive change can reduce harm, i.e. saving just one vein, being able to rotate sites, altering the route of admission
- Accepts risk as a natural and universal part of all lives and places harm on a continuum within the context of the person's life
- Strives to reduce not only risky behavior of individual who uses, but also to change the substance using culture in which risky behaviors are normalized

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*More info to smoke*

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> Is not specific to substance use. The underlying theory and principles are applicable to any social welfare and/or public health issue, particularly those that largely affect vulnerable individuals and communities

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### NITTY GRITTY

ISSUES/BARRIERS:

- > CHOICE OF SUBSTANCE
- > METHOD OF USE
- > CLIENT HISTORY
- > SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

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### DIFFERENT WAYS SUBSTANCES ARE TAKEN

- A. Oral/Eating
- B. Smoking
- C. Snorting
- D. Rectal/Vaginal
- E. Skin Popping
- F. Muscling
- G. Intravenous Injection

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