Effective Use of Rewards & Sanctions

Douglas B. Marlowe, J.D., Ph.D.
Basic Terminology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SANCTION</th>
<th>REWARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GIVE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punishment</td>
<td>Positive Reinforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TAKE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Reinforcement</td>
<td>Response Cost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Carrot and Stick

- Reduce undesirable behaviors and increase desirable behaviors
- Positive vs. negative reinforcement
Certainty

- FR1 to initiate, then thin the reinforcement
- Reliable detection is most influential
- Random drug testing twice per week, including weekends & holidays
- Sufficient detection windows & panels
- Community supervision
- Last supervisory burdens to be lifted
- Second chances
• Effects degrade over time
• Interference from new behaviors
• Status hearings every 2 weeks until the case has stabilized
**Magnitude**

- **Habituation Effects**
- **Effective Zone**
- **Ceiling Effects**

**MAGNITUDE OF SANCTION**

- **MINIMAL**
- **MODERATE**
- **SEVERE**

EFFECTIVENESS
Procedural Fairness

- Clearly communicated policies and procedures
- Presumptive consequences with flexible application
- Opportunity to be heard
- Respect and dignity
Target Behaviors

- Don’t expect too much
  - Learned helplessness, ratio burden, and ceiling effects

- Don’t expect too little
  - Habituation, complacency

- Proximal vs. distal goals

- Phase specificity
  - What was once distal becomes proximal
Treat or Punish?

Substance Dependence or Addiction
Substance Dependence or Addiction

1. Triggered binge pattern
2. Cravings or compulsions
3. Withdrawal symptoms
Substance Dependence or Addiction

1. Triggered binge pattern
2. Cravings or compulsions
3. Withdrawal symptoms

Abstinence is a distal goal
Substance Dependence or Addiction

1. Triggered binge pattern
2. Cravings or compulsions
3. Withdrawal symptoms

Abstinence is a distal goal

Substance Abuse
Substance Dependence or Addiction

1. Triggered binge pattern
2. Cravings or compulsions
3. Withdrawal symptoms

Abstinence is a distal goal

Substance Abuse

Abstinence is a proximal goal
**Treat or Punish?**

**Substance Dependence or Addiction**

1. Triggered binge pattern
2. Cravings or compulsions
3. Withdrawal symptoms

Abstinence is a distal goal

**Substance Abuse**

Abstinence is a proximal goal

**Collateral needs**

- Dual diagnosis
- Chronic medical condition (e.g., HIV+, HCV, diabetes)
- Homelessness, chronic unemployment
Substance Dependence or Addiction

1. Triggered binge pattern
2. Cravings or compulsions
3. Withdrawal symptoms

Abstinence is a distal goal

Substance Abuse

Abstinence is a proximal goal

Collateral needs

- Dual diagnosis
- Chronic medical condition (e.g., HIV+, HCV, diabetes)
- Homelessness, chronic unemployment

Regimen compliance is proximal
Tangible Rewards

- Most important for reinforcement-starved participants
- Fishbowl procedure or point systems
- Symbolic rewards
Phase Regression

- An example of response cost
- Often a sign that services were withdrawn prematurely
- Temporary regression and remedial plan (accelerated redemption)
- Avoid the Abstinence Violation Effect (A.V.E.)


