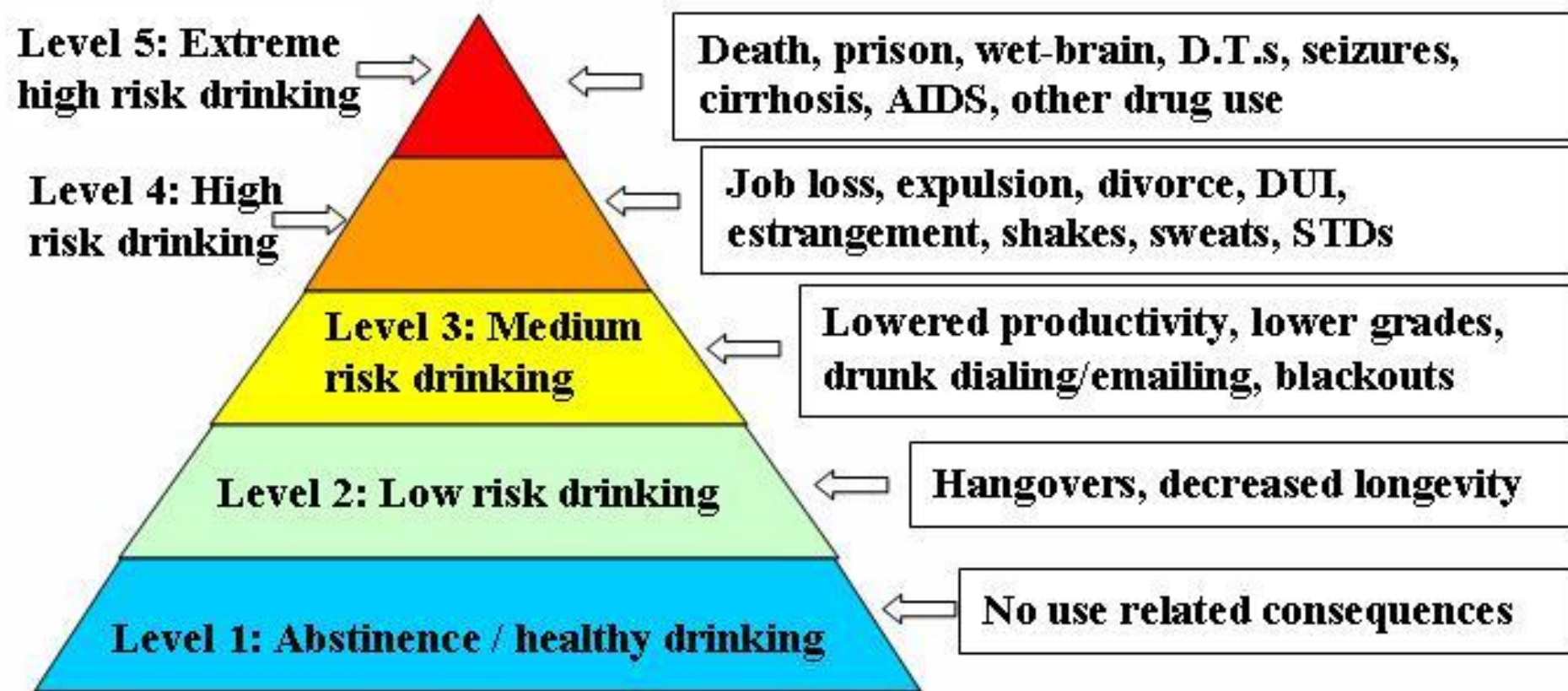


Small Steps Lead To Big Changes

HAMS Presents An Alcohol Harm Reduction Manual

Harm Is Hierarchical



The Alcohol Harm Reduction Pyramid

Alcohol Problems Exist On A Continuum

Alcohol Drinking Level and Risk				
	Men Daily	Women Daily	Men Weekly	Women Weekly
Very High Risk	20+ drinks	15+ drinks	80+ drinks	60+ drinks
High Risk Drinking	13 - 19 drinks	9 - 14 drinks	50 - 79 drinks	40 - 59 drinks
Medium Risk	8 - 12 drinks	6 - 8 drinks	30 - 49 drinks	25 - 39 drinks
Low Risk Drinking	5 - 7 drinks	4 - 5 drinks	15 - 29 drinks	8 - 24 drinks
No-Risk Drinking	3 - 4 drinks	2 - 3 drinks	14 or fewer	7 or fewer
Healthy Drinking	1 - 2 drinks	1 drinks	1 - 14 drinks	1 - 7 drinks
Alcohol Abstinance	0 drinks	0 drinks	0 drinks	0 drinks

Clients who are resistant to traditional treatments because of either the abstinence requirement or the spiritual component can become engaged in the recovery process via the HAMS alcohol harm reduction approach which encourages people to make small positive changes which they choose for themselves. The letters H, A, M, and S stand for Harm reduction, Abstinance, and Moderation Support: HAMS offers a purely secular, lay-led, free-of-charge support group for people who wish to make any positive change in their drinking habits from safer drinking to reduced drinking to quitting altogether.

The HAMS book is titled **How to Change Your Drinking: a Harm Reduction Guide to Alcohol**. It offers numerous evidence-based behavioral change exercises and can be used as a stand-alone self-help book or in conjunction with a support group or a formal treatment setting.

Clinicians can choose to use exercises from the HAMS book in a formal treatment setting and they can also choose to refer clients to a HAMS support group or suggest that they use the HAMS book as a form of self-help bibliotherapy.

Research from the NIAAA tells us that only about 20% of people with Alcohol Dependence will recover via AA or a traditional treatment program¹. The good news is that the majority of people with Alcohol Dependence will eventually recover; about half by quitting completely and about half by cutting back. However, there can be a great deal of damage on a road to recovery which can take a lifetime. Harm reduction can greatly reduce both the amount of time required to recover and the damages incurred on the path to recovery.

¹NIAAA (2009). "Alcoholism Isn't What It Used To Be." *NIAAA Spectrum, Volume 1, Issue 1, p 1-3.*

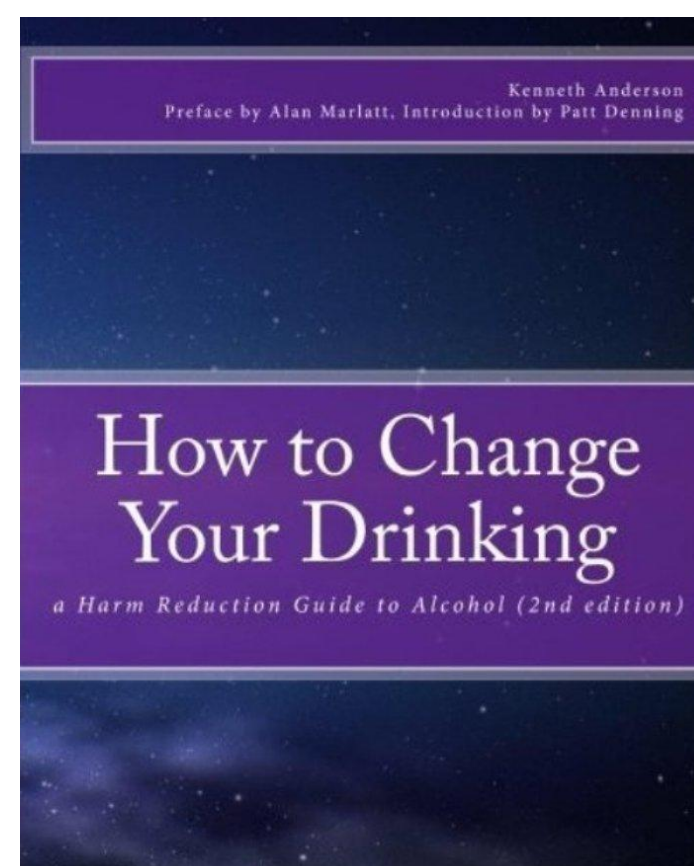
Risk Ranking Worksheet (SAMPLE)

Write down any risky behaviors you have engaged in while drinking and rank them.

Risks Associated With My Drinking	Very High Risk	High Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk
Drunk driving	4	3	2	1
Unsafe sex with strangers	4	3	2	1
Drunk dialing	4	3	2	1
	4	3	2	1
	4	3	2	1

Write down a plan to avoid each of these risks in the future.

Behavior	My Plan
Drunk driving	Leave car keys at home and take taxi to and from bar
Unsafe sex with strangers	Always carry condoms
Drunk dialing	Turn my cell phone off and put it in a drawer when I drink at home



Sample Risk Tracking Chart										
Risky Behavior	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Sub-total	Rank	Total
Drinking and driving	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
Unsafe sex	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	4	8
Drunk dialing	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	4
Grand Total										12

Mark down a number for each time you engaged in a high risk drinking behavior for each day. If you didn't engage in the behavior give yourself a zero. The goal is a low score.

Sample Drinking Chart

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Weekly
Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan
# 17	# 0	# 1	# 17	# 0	# 0	# 0	# 35
mods abs hr	mods abs hr	mods abs hr	mods abs hr	mods abs hr	mods abs hr	mods abs hr	mods abs hr
Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
# 17	# 17	# 1	# 17	# 0	# 0	# 0	# 52
success? (Y) N	success? (Y) N	success? (Y) N	success? (Y) N	success? (Y) N	success? (Y) N	success? (Y) N	success? (Y) N
Mood happy	Mood Tired	Mood happy	Mood happy	Mood happy	Mood happy	Mood happy	Satisfaction Plan was mostly successful
safety? (Y) N	safety? (Y) N	safety? (Y) N	safety? (Y) N	safety? (Y) N	safety? (Y) N	safety? (Y) N	Notes \$42.24
notes \$14.08	notes \$14.08	notes friend's birthday party \$0.00	notes \$14.08	notes work night	notes work night	notes work night	

Abbreviations: mods = moderation; abs = alcohol abstinence; hr = harm reduction