



# Using Text Messages to Improve Substance Use Treatment Outcomes: A Practical How-To Online Training Series

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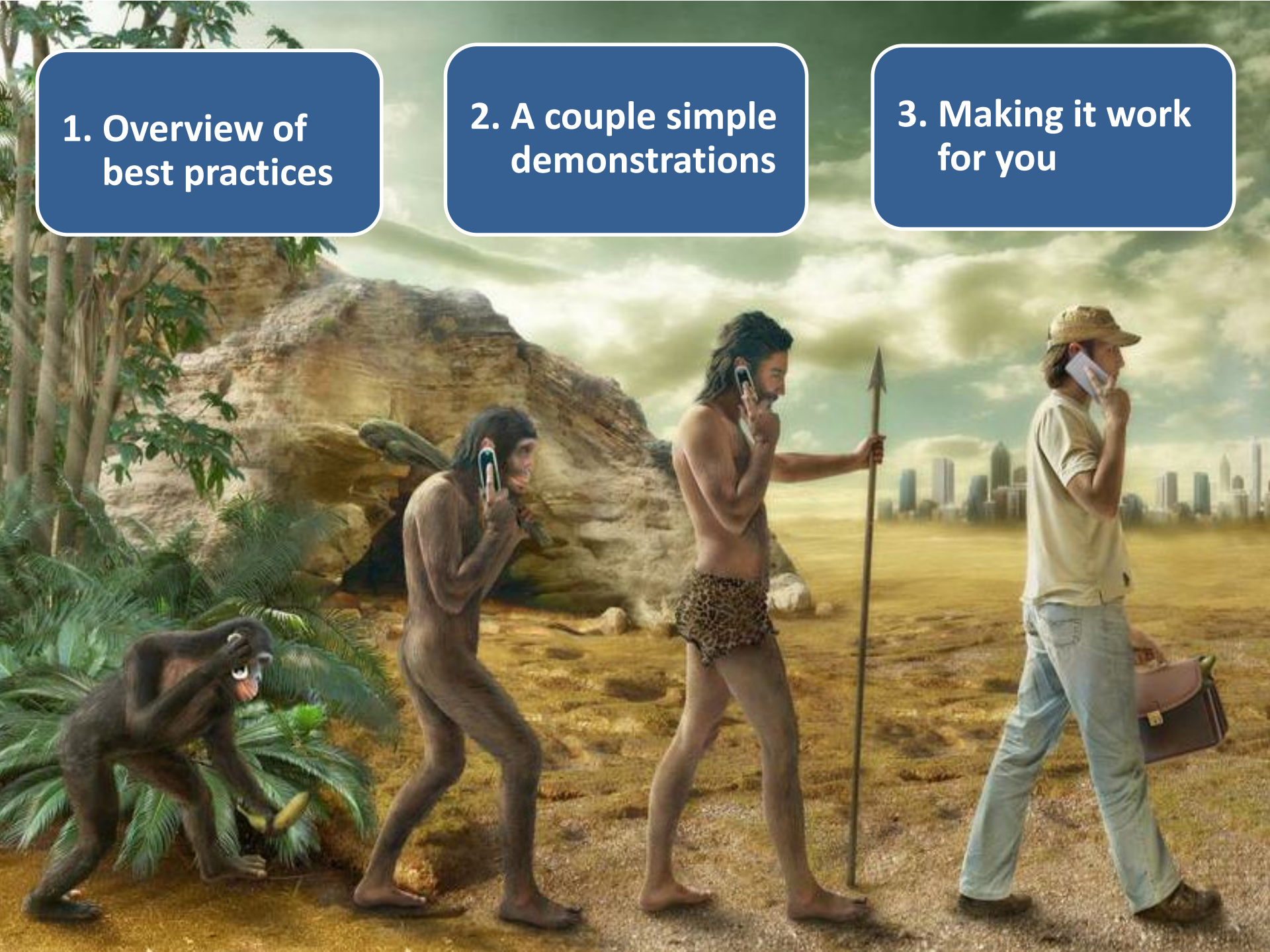
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**1. Overview of  
best practices**

**2. A couple simple  
demonstrations**

**3. Making it work  
for you**



# U.S. Phone Ownership

*% of U.S. adults who own the following devices*



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— Cellphone — Smartphone

# Text messages are everywhere!

**95**

percent

95% of U.S. adults own a cellphone;  
77% have a smartphone

**6**

billion

Over 6 billion text messages sent each  
day in the U.S.

**46**

times per day

Average adult checks phone 46 times  
per day.

**5**

under 5 sec

98% of messages are opened; most  
read in under 5 seconds

# Text messages can change behavior!

**29 vs 36**

percent no-show

Percent no-show, with vs. without text reminder

**36**

percent increase

36% increase in smoking cessation (similar to other brief interventions)

**56**

% fewer days

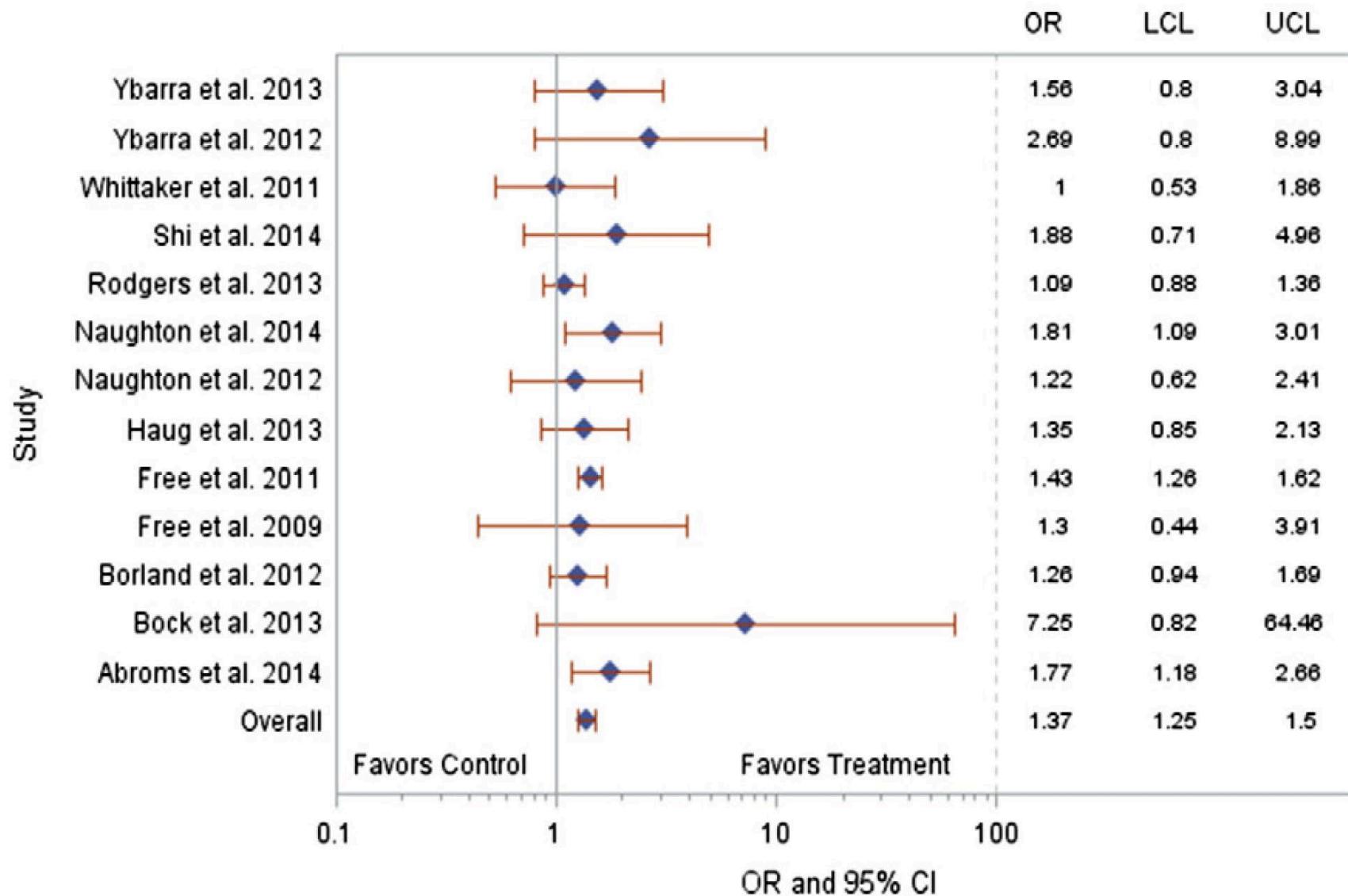
Probationers who chose not to receive reminders attended 56% fewer treatment days

Text messages are scalable, easy to use, can be tailored, and reach people in real-time!

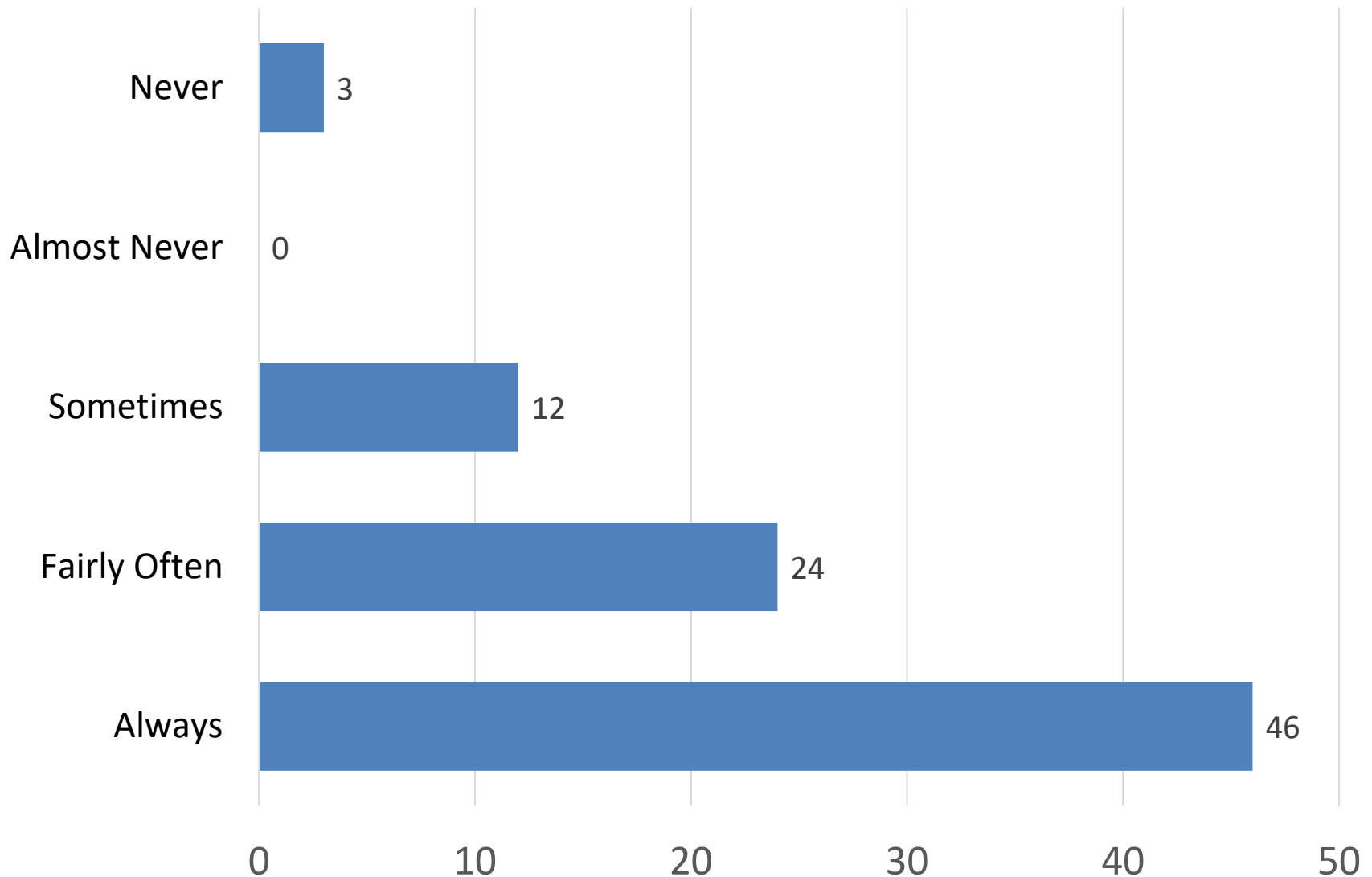


# Efficacy of Text Message-Based Interventions for Smoking Cessation

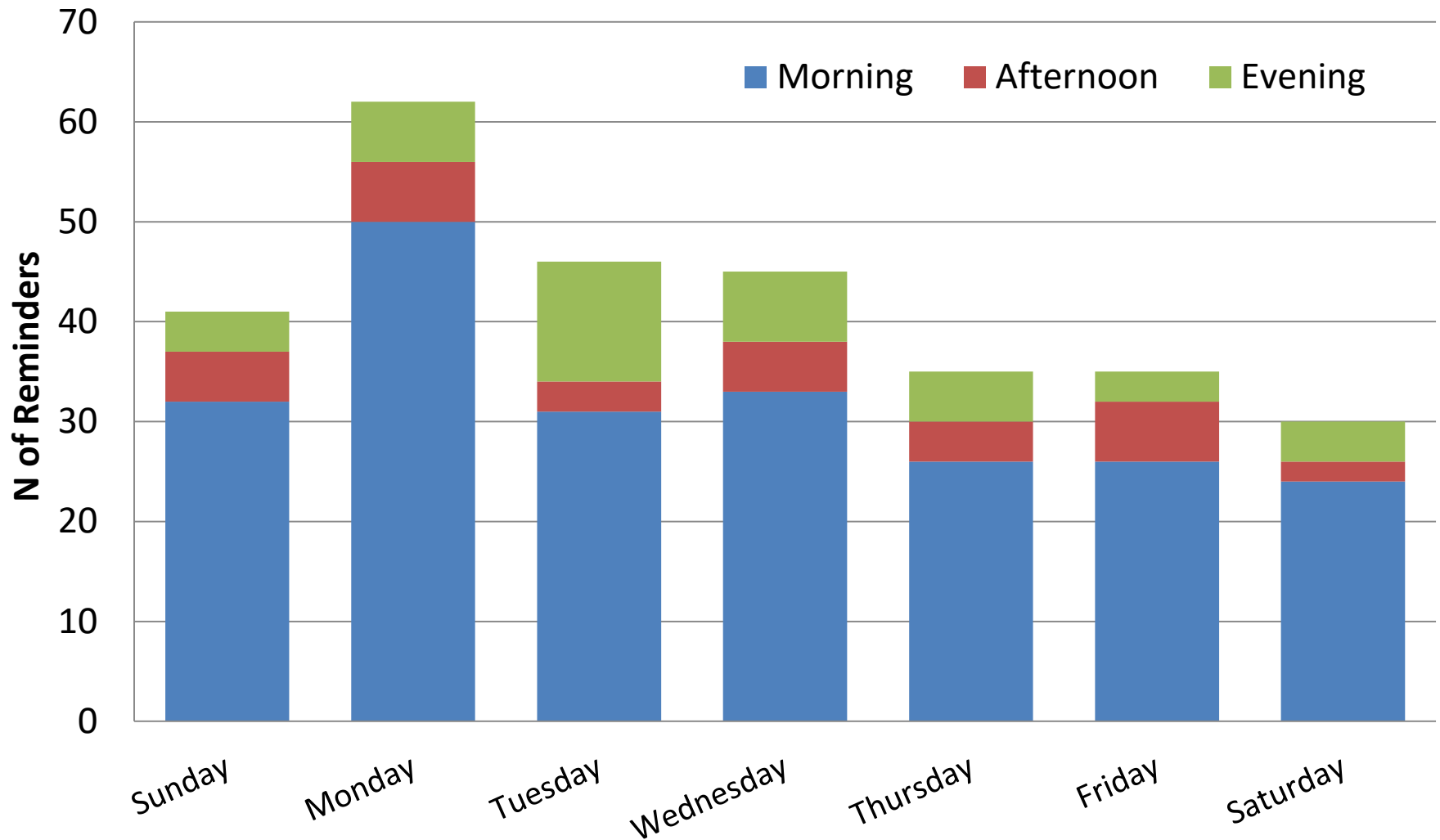
Odds Ratio and 95% CL



# Most people said messages were helpful

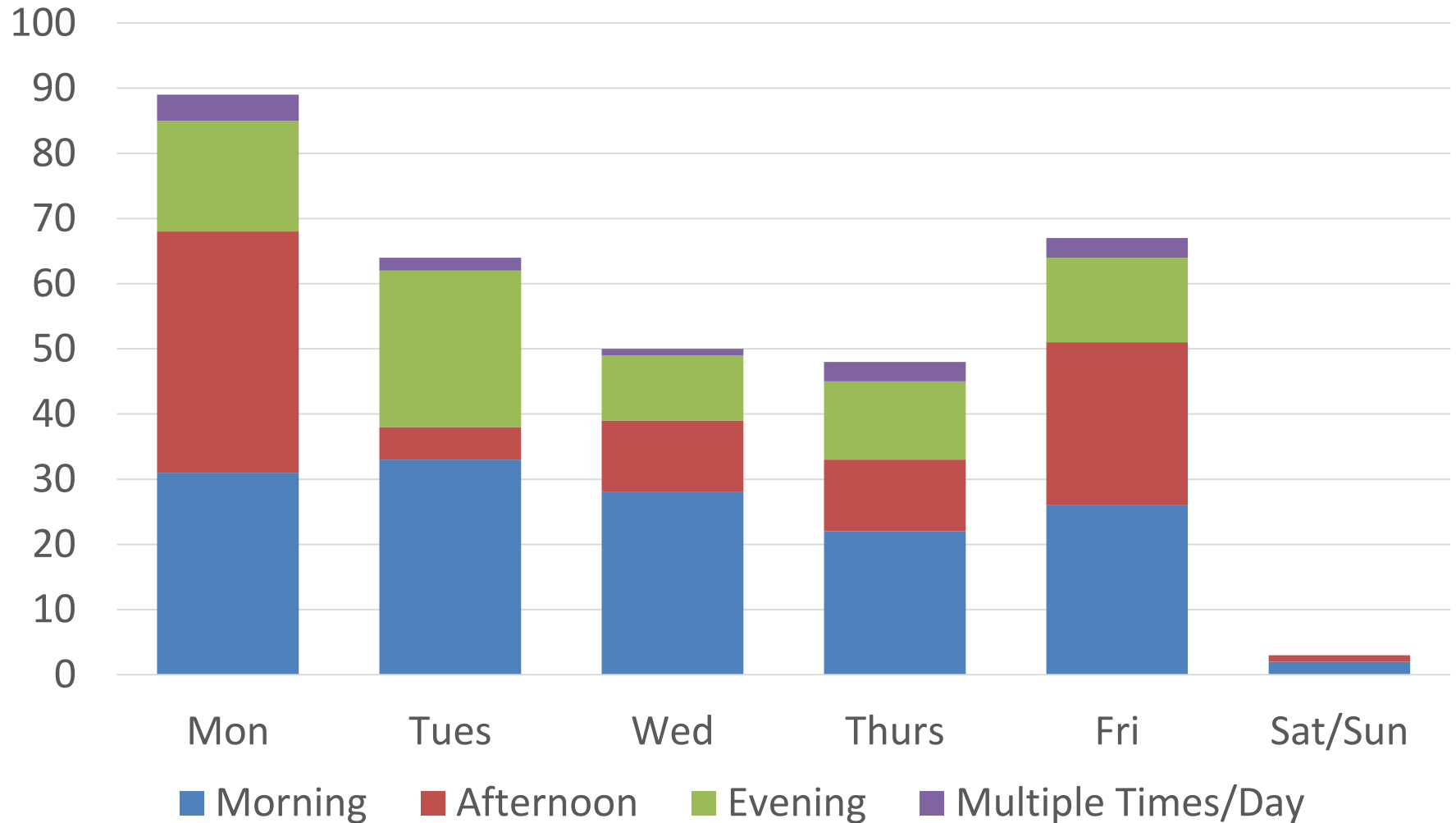


# When did people want messages? A study of substance-using probationers



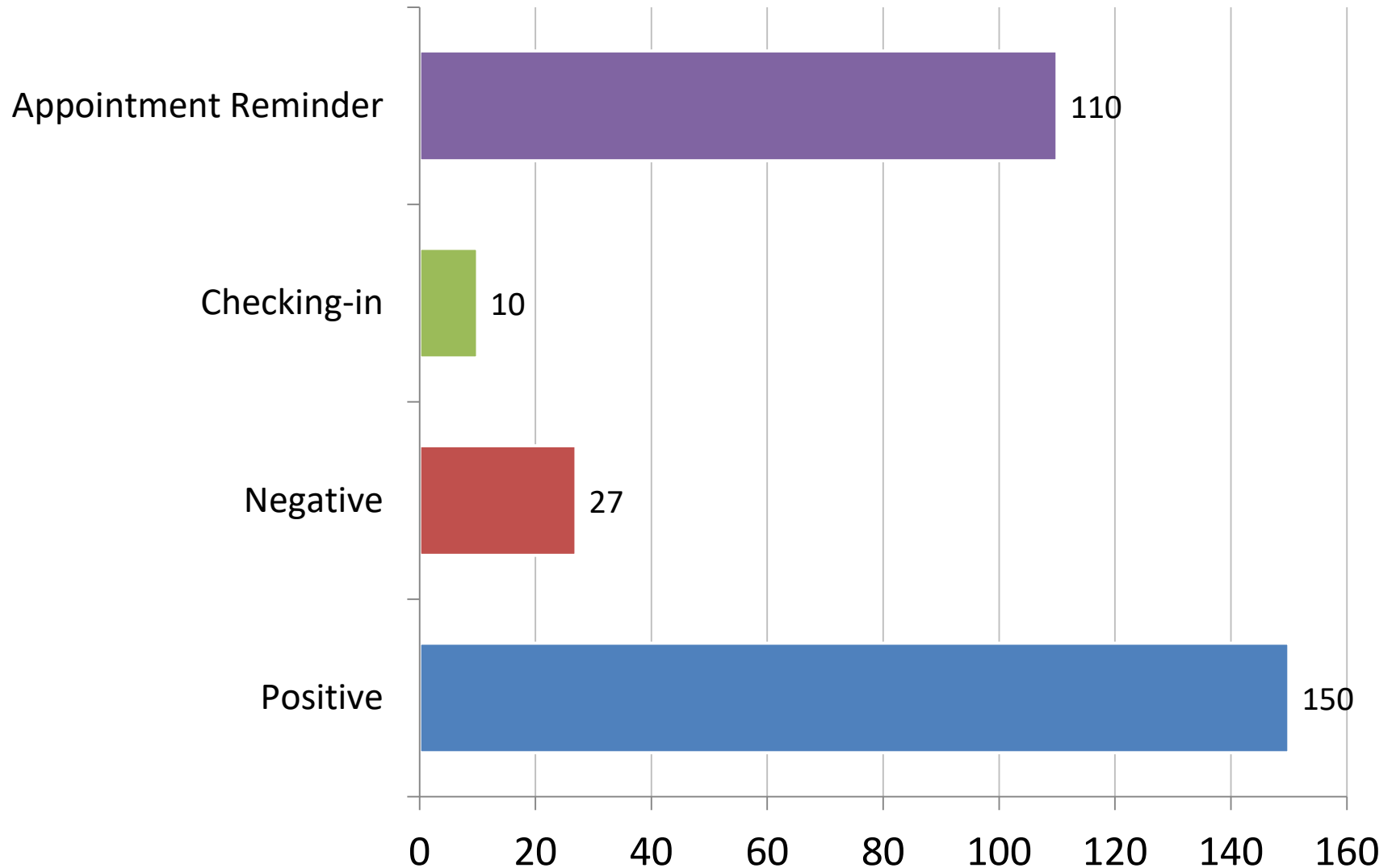


# When did people want messages? A study of supportive housing residents

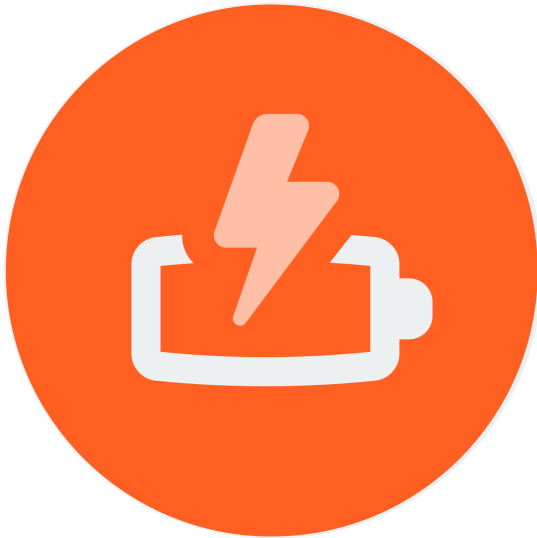


Walters & Rendon, 2017

# Types of messages people wanted



# Messages can help with...



Motivation

Remember how much money  
you are saving by being sober!



Skills, ideas,  
& planning

Some people find it's helpful to  
talk to people with clean time, to  
see how they did it.



Reminders  
about action

It's almost the weekend!  
Remember to spend  
time with sober people.

Source: Fogg (2009)

# Develop great messages (Part 1)

- **Avoid textese.** Use full words, and spell them correctly.
  - Don't say: How r you 2day
  - Say: How are you today?
- **Use benefit-oriented language.** Talk about the benefits of change.
  - Don't say: Think of what you might lose if you relapse!
  - Say: Think of what you're gaining by staying sober!

# Develop great messages (Part 2)

- **Use “I” statements.** Make it sound like the message is coming from a person.
  - Don’t say: Your group work is appreciated!
  - Say: I/We appreciate the work you’re doing in group!
- **Be directive.** Phrase messages in a directive (but not commanding) tone.
  - **Don’t say:** Some people find that it’s helpful to make a list of goals for the next year.
  - **Say:** Spend five minutes today jotting down some goals for the next year.



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# Develop great messages (Part 3)

- **Send tips and resources**
  - Links fit nicely into text messages, and can greatly expand their power
  - Consider giving options to receive tailored tips
- **Be aware of security**
  - Texting is not a secure technology
  - Talk to your legal counsel and/or obtain written permission
  - Keep messages general; never send PHI this way



# Extra Credit! How could you improve these messages?

- Attendees should bring all relevant paperwork to the orientation.
- The book we will use is, Get your Loved One Sober, by Robert Meyer.
- Attendees who arrive late will not receive a bus pass.
- Anyone who wants to volunteer should indicate so via our website.
- Your recent lab tests indicate an A1C level of 10. You should schedule a visit soon with your PCP to discuss.



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# P.S. The manual has tons of samples!

## EXAMPLES OF SOME TEXTS

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### Appreciative Stems

- Great work tonight! You really know a lot about...
- Your...has really paid off!
- You have a lot of great ideas for...
- You're doing things right!
- That's wonderful. It really shows a lot of...
- You're really strong/brave/thoughtful/proactive.
- You're very committed to...
- You're working hard to...
- You're way ahead of...

### Task Stems

- Hi! A reminder to...
- Before group tonight, jot down a couple...
- Come prepared to say something about...
- Today, spend 5 minutes...
- Take a moment today to...
- Use today to think about...

### Relationships/Social Support

- Why reinvent sobriety? Talk to someone with clean time to see how they did it.
- Have a Plan B! Put a number in your phone of someone you could call if you needed to talk.
- Surround yourself with the best people! Get in touch with old friends who might help you stay clean.
- Go to an NA or AA meeting, or other support group.
- Attend a church or faith group.
- Keep in touch with your sponsor, or find another who will better serve your needs.
- Volunteer to chair a recovery meeting in your area.

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- Distance yourself from family and friends who use substances.
- Reach out to family and friends who may have distanced themselves while you were using substances.

### Avoidance/Triggers

- Wait it out! Most urges go down with time.
- Go for a walk! Most urges are short lived.
- Stay busy! Volunteer, schedule social time with friends, or work on a project.
- Memorize sections of the big book or scripture.
- Meditate or pray. A clear mind is a happy mind.
- Don't set yourself up! Look through your house and vehicle, and throw out any drugs or drug equipment.
- Place matters! Avoid hanging out in places where you used to use substances.
- Change can be hard! Give yourself a reward for doing well.

### Cognitive Reappraisal

- Make a list of the ways that using has affected the people you care about most, like children, family, or friends.
- Think of the ways your life will be better when you're substance-free.
- Keep a picture of a loved one where you can see it. Spend just a moment each day thinking about the benefits of your sobriety for this person.
- Self-forgiveness is part of recovery. Let go of guilt, bitterness, and resentment.
- Failure to stay sober on one day does not mean failure for life. Recommit to your goals and start fresh.
- Change is hard! You should be proud of the progress you have made!



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# Use a batch texting provider

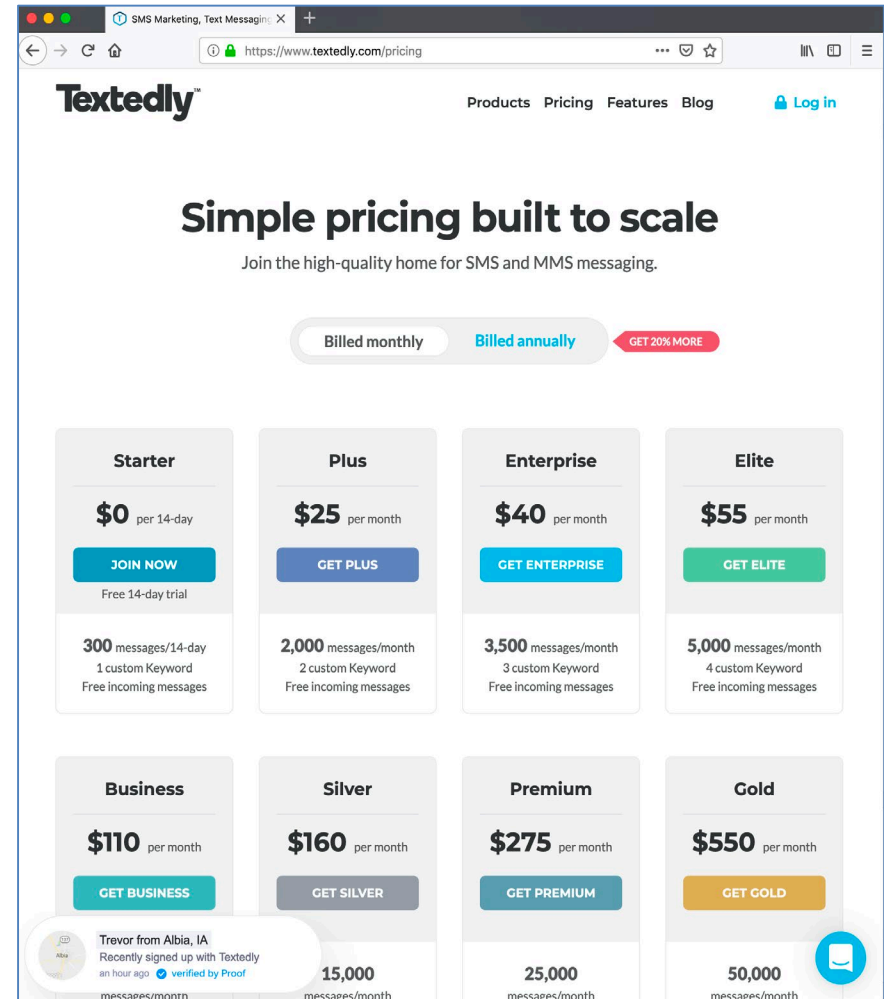


The screenshot shows the SendHub pricing page. It features a table with five pricing tiers: Lite (\$5.95/month), Starter (\$44.95/month), Basic (\$79.95/month), Pro (\$189.95/month), and Custom (Quote). The Basic tier is highlighted. The table lists various features and their limits for each tier. A 'Get Started' button is present for the first four tiers, and a 'Request Quote' button is for the Custom tier. A note at the bottom states: 'Please note, SendHub only works in the US and Canada'.

	Lite \$5.95 Monthly*	Starter \$44.95 Monthly*	Basic \$79.95 Monthly*	Pro \$189.95 Monthly*	Custom Quote Call Us!
SMS Per Month	100	2,000	4,000	10,000	Custom
Max Recipients Per SMS	20	100	200	400	Custom
Included Voice Minutes	20	100	250	500	Custom
Unlimited Keywords	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Inbound MMS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Attachments	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
API Integration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Outbound MMS					✓
Enable Short Code					✓
Dedicated Account Manager					✓
Custom Setup and Training					✓

Get Started Get Started Get Started Get Started Request Quote

Please note, SendHub only works in the US and Canada



The screenshot shows the Textedly pricing page. It features a grid of pricing tiers: Starter (\$0/14-day), Plus (\$25/month), Enterprise (\$40/month), Elite (\$55/month), Business (\$110/month), Silver (\$160/month), Premium (\$275/month), and Gold (\$550/month). The Enterprise tier is highlighted. A 'GET 20% MORE' badge is present. A testimonial from Trevor from Albia, IA is shown. A chat bubble is in the bottom right corner.

Simple pricing built to scale

Join the high-quality home for SMS and MMS messaging.

Billed monthly Billed annually GET 20% MORE

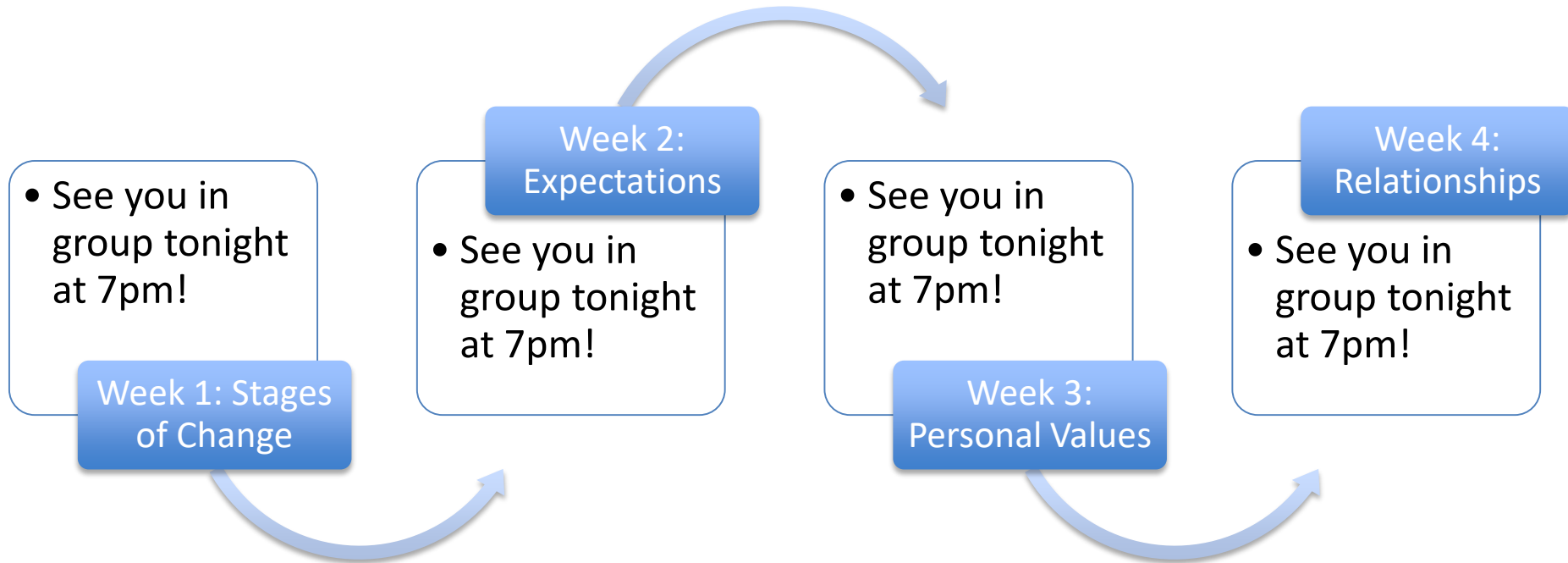
Starter	Plus	Enterprise	Elite
\$0 per 14-day	\$25 per month	\$40 per month	\$55 per month
JOIN NOW	GET PLUS	GET ENTERPRISE	GET ELITE
Free 14-day trial			
300 messages/14-day 1 custom Keyword Free incoming messages	2,000 messages/month 2 custom Keyword Free incoming messages	3,500 messages/month 3 custom Keyword Free incoming messages	5,000 messages/month 4 custom Keyword Free incoming messages

Business	Silver	Premium	Gold
\$110 per month	\$160 per month	\$275 per month	\$550 per month
GET BUSINESS	GET SILVER	GET PREMIUM	GET GOLD
	15,000 messages/month	25,000 messages/month	50,000 messages/month

Trevor from Albia, IA  
Recently signed up with Textedly  
an hour ago verified by Proof

# Example 1:

## Simple reminders with fixed content

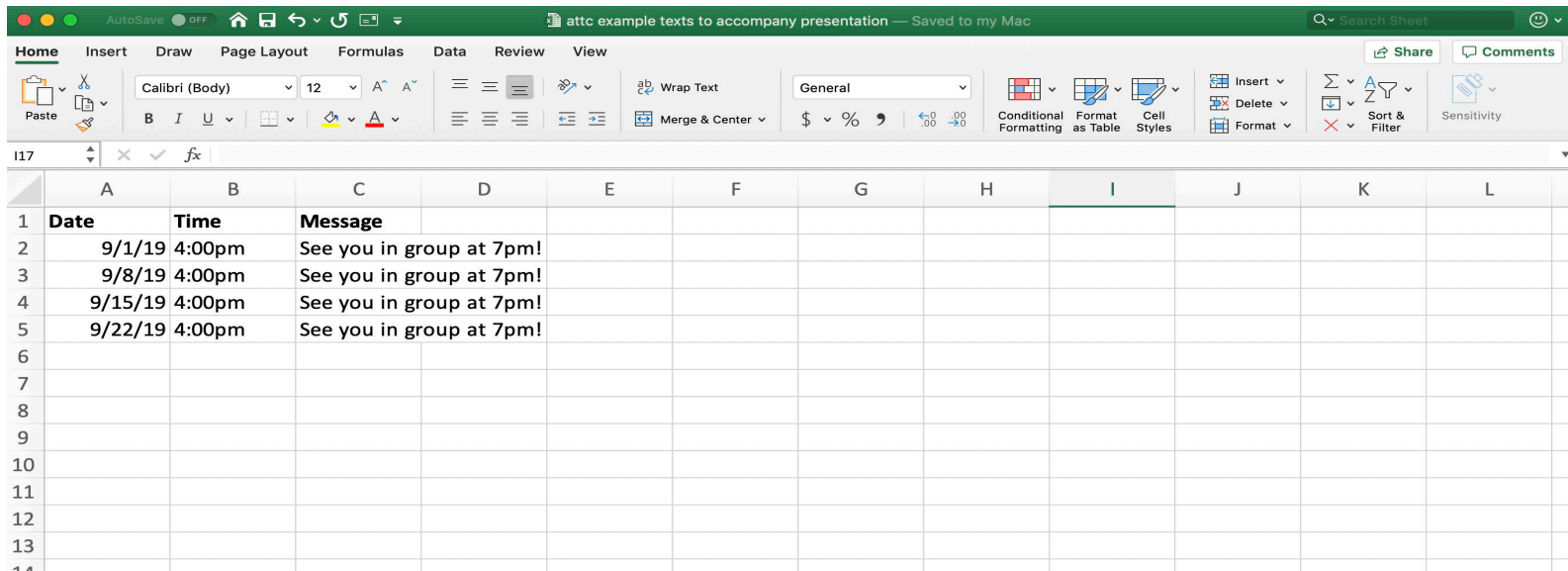


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# Simple Reminder Text Examples



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Message</b>									
2	9/1/19	4:00pm	See you in group at 7pm!									
3	9/8/19	4:00pm	See you in group at 7pm!									
4	9/15/19	4:00pm	See you in group at 7pm!									
5	9/22/19	4:00pm	See you in group at 7pm!									
6												
7												
8												
9												
10												
11												
12												
13												



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# Example 2:

## Fixed schedule, changing content

- What kind of changes are right for you? Come find out at 7pm tonight!
- Keep a picture of a loved one where you can see it. They're more important than getting high!
- Get the best information! Talk to someone with clean time to see how they did it.

### Week 1: Thinking about Change

### Week 2: Dealing with Cravings

- Tonight we'll talk about the secret to managing cravings. All will be revealed! Join us at 7pm!
- Wait it out! Most urges go down with time.
- Don't blindside yourself! Look through your house and vehicle, and throw out any drugs or drug equipment.

- Tonight we'll open up our minds to see what's inside. See you at 7pm!
- Self-forgiveness is an important part of recovery. Work on letting go of guilt, bitterness, and resentment.
- Failure to stay sober on one day does not mean failure for life. Recommit to your goals and start fresh.

### Week 3: A Positive Mindset

### Week 4: Good People

- Tonight we'll talk about the magic of social support. Become like the best people around you! See you at 7pm!
- Volunteer to chair a recovery meeting in your area.
- Reach out to family and friends who may have distanced themselves while you were using substances.

# Changing Content Text Examples

[illegible]

# Extra Credit! What kind of messages could you send...

- ...right before before a meeting? (Prep people)
- ...right after a meeting? (Reinforce concepts)
- ...a couple days later? (Give homework, tips)



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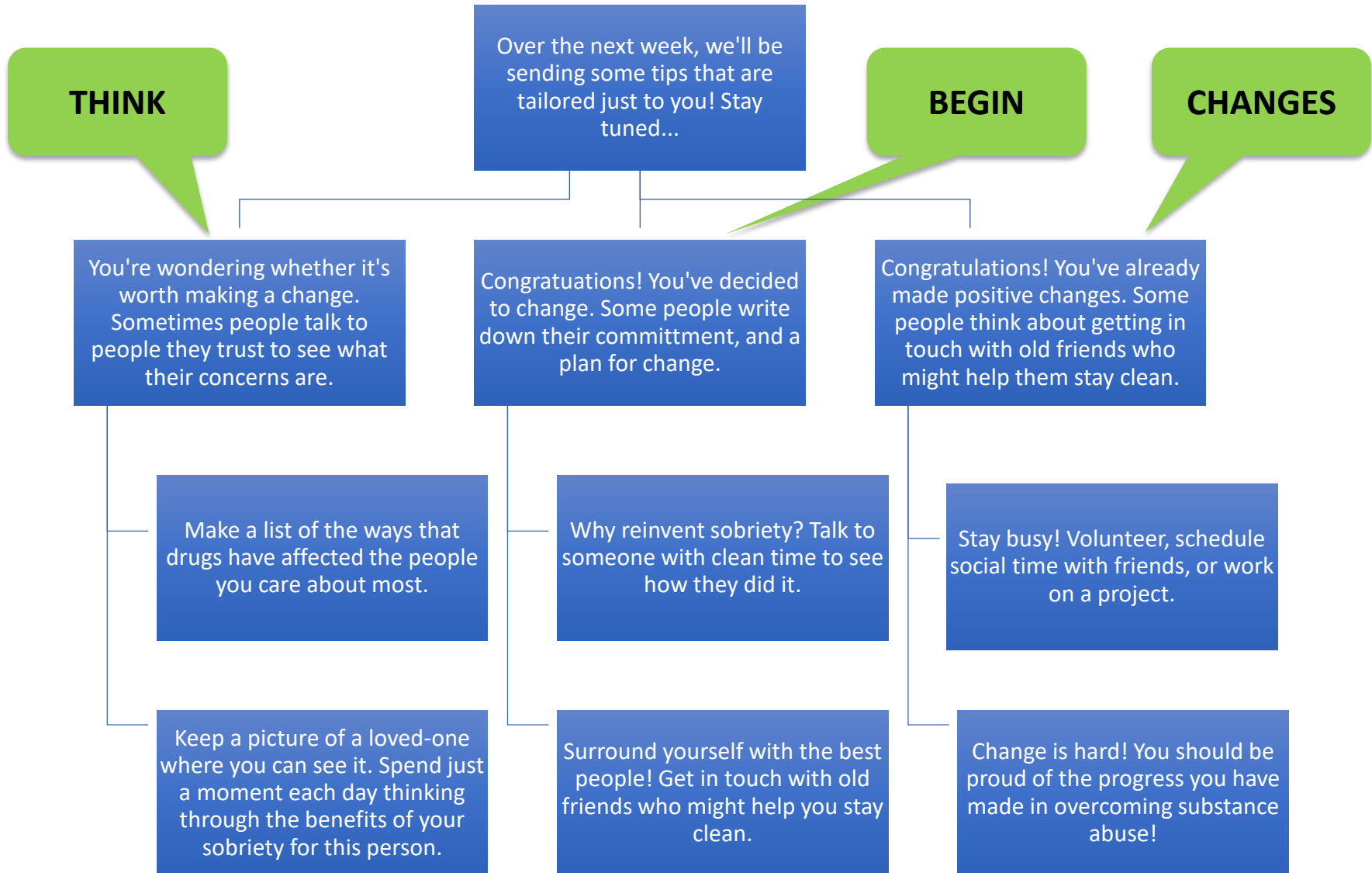
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# Example 3:

## Tailored tracks using keywords



## In the next week...

- Jot down a few messages that could build motivation, help with planning, or remind clients to do something.
- Make sure messages are direct, positively framed and sound like they are coming from a person.

### Extra Credit!

- Sign up for a free trial with Textedly or another program.
- Pick one keyword and develop a simple text sequence.
- Come prepared to share ideas and frustrations on August 12 @12pm central!

Thank you for attending!  
See you next time!

**August 12, 2019**

11:00am Mountain Time

12:00pm Central Time

[mpattc.org](http://mpattc.org)



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