Leading Systems Change

* Systems change requires an understanding of management and content organizational knowledge.
* Leaders must be systems thinkers and promote systems change for continuous improvement.
* Systems change transforms underlying structures and support mechanisms (e.g., policies, routines, relationships, resources, power structures, and values).

Seven Lessons for Leaders of Systems Change

1. Foster community and cultivate networks.
2. Work at multiple levels of scale.
3. Make space for self-organization.
4. Seize breakthrough opportunities when they arise.
5. Facilitate, but give up the illusion that you can direct change.
6. Assume that change is going to take time.
7. Be prepared to be surprised.

Source: *Seven Lessons for Leaders in Systems Change.* Available at:
http://www.ecoliteracy.org/article/seven-lessons-leaders-systems-change

Leaders as Systems Coaches

* Systems coaches guide sustainable organizational change to support the implementation of evidence-based practices with fidelity.
* Systems coaching can occur at all levels of the system, including the state, district, program, and individual.
* Systems coaching is generally provided by multiple individuals, including leaders.
* Systems coaching is based on the needs identified by the organization.

System Change Cycle

* Six stages that build on each other.
* Begins with pre-contemplation.
* Moves toward maintenance of sustained change.
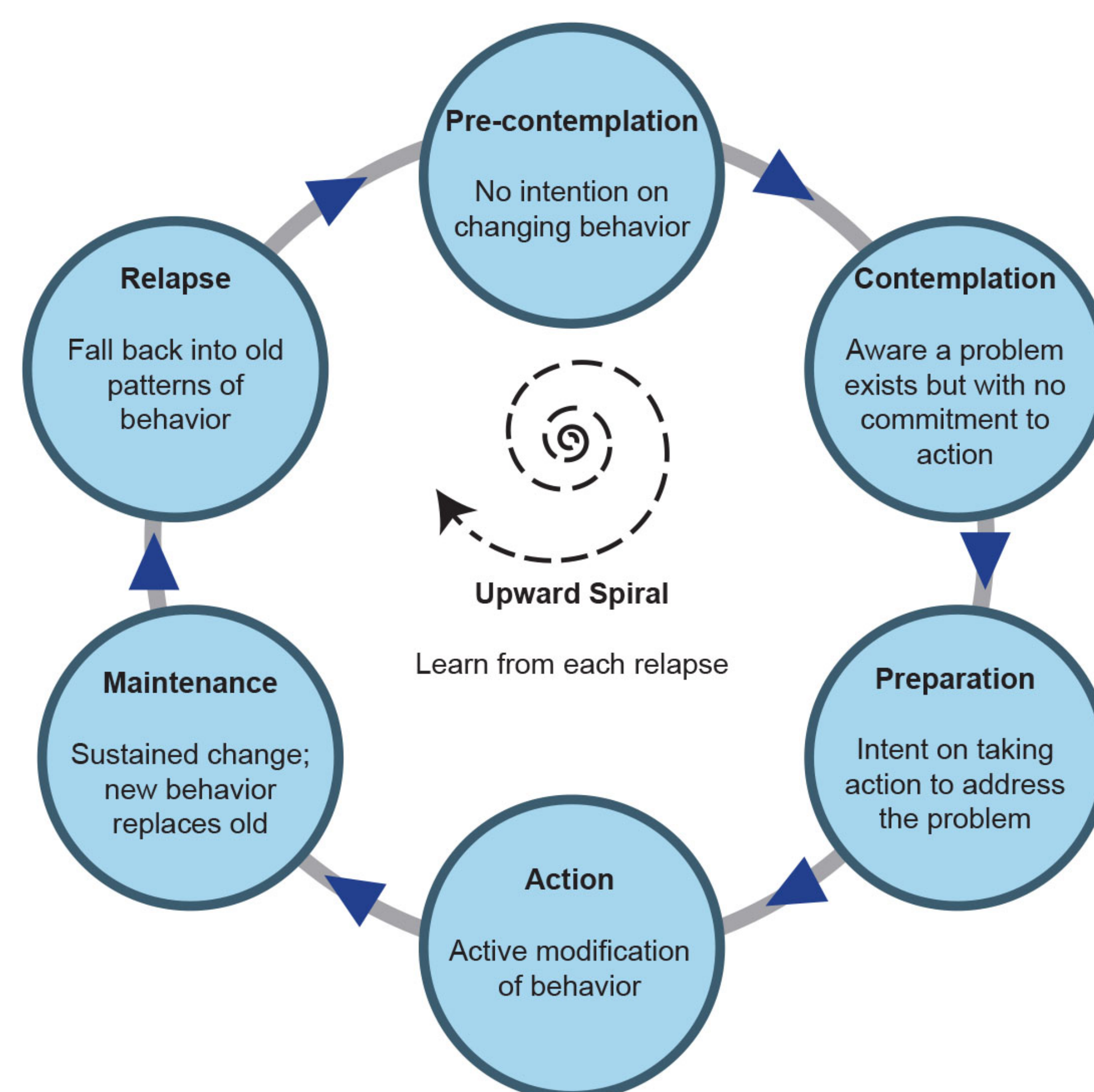
ECTA/DaSy System Framework

* Quality standards, governance, finance, personnel/workforce, a data system, and accountability and quality improvement are components of a high-quality state system.
* These components are needed for a state to implement evidence-based practices (EBPs).
* Well-implemented EBPs should result in positive outcomes for children with disabilities and their families.

Common Leadership Challenges

* Changes in leadership occur at the state or local levels.
* Newly introduced practices are too loosely or not clearly defined.
* Results data are poor or not yet known.
* A shift has occurred in priorities based on the state's administrative climate.
* Implementation is not managed well or has lost momentum after a period of initial enthusiasm.

These are all common challenges in the change process. Often, as obstacles arise new strategies, tools, standards, or initiatives are abandoned.

What can be done to address these challenges?

You can

* maintain the vision or an urgent sense of moral purpose
* continue to measure success in terms of results
* identify why the implementation dip occurred
* take steps to get the organization going and keep it going
* seek technical assistance or resources to address the adaptive and technical issues.

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