

RESEARCH DIGEST

Drug Desistance & Relapse:

Long-Term Drug Desisters vs Repeat Drug Abusers

Who are considered "Long-Term Drug Desisters"?

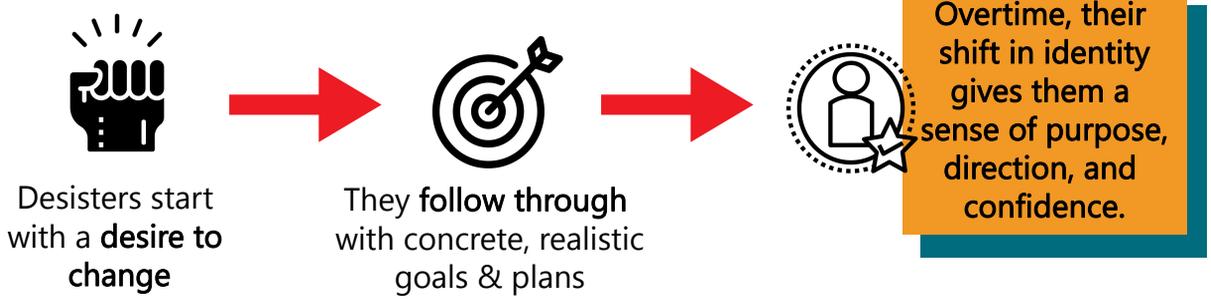
These are individuals who have abstained from a drug lifestyle for 5 years and more.

Why is it important to understand what helps long-term drug abstinence?

We want to know what helps this process to find out how we can reduce their chances of relapse in the first 5 years of their return to society.

What helps desisters stay away from drugs?

1 Long-term desisters have sustained motivation & sense of agency:



2 Long-term desisters show more positive shifts in their thinking:



3 Long-term desisters have greater social capital:



4 Long-term desisters made positive lifestyle changes:



How can we help?

Desistance requires a **many-hands approach** that starts from the **self**, and is supported by **others**.



Increase motivation & changes in thinking

E.g. Engage in purposeful conversations with offenders to motivate & encourage them



Enhance social capital

E.g. Encourage offenders to attend family programmes & keep in contact with family members



Facilitate new lifestyle & confidence

E.g. Notice & encourage positive changes made by offenders, however small they might be; Create opportunities to motivate offenders