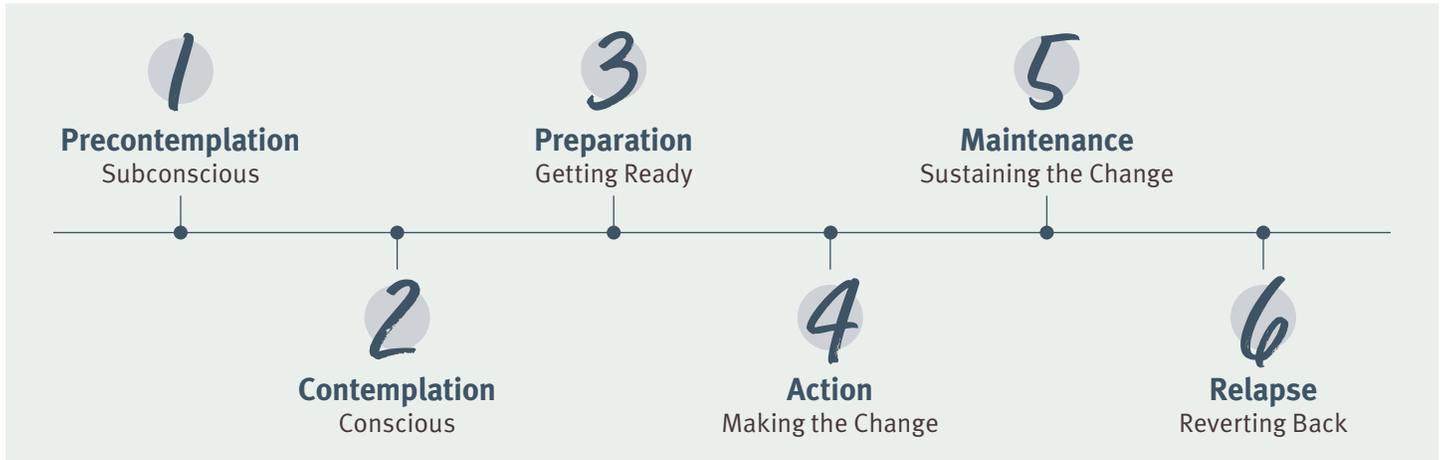


One Strategy for Successful Change

Making changes in your life can be challenging both personally and professionally. One of the most helpful frameworks regarding making a change is the six-stage change model developed by Dr. Prochaska and DiClemente.¹



1. Precontemplation = Subconscious

You are considering a change and may not recognize there is a problem. At this point you might feel resistant to change or have no intention of changing behavior soon.

2. Contemplation = Conscious

Now you are thinking about the possibility of change but have not made a commitment yet. At this stage you are aware that something needs to change but could be ambivalent about acting. Often people at this stage are weighing the pros and cons of the change and getting ready to change their mindset.

3. Preparation = Getting Ready

You are now officially going to make the change and need to plan how you are going to do it! Maybe you are taking small steps towards change (e.g., gathering resources or setting a quit date).

4. Action = Making the Change

You are now taking actions to make the change; there are visible efforts and commitments to changing the behavior. This requires time, effort, and energy.

5. Maintenance = Sustaining the Change

Now that you have acted, you need the change stick to avoid backsliding. It is essential to focus on reinforcing positive behavior and managing triggers. The goal would be to incorporate the new habits into your daily lifestyle.

6. Relapse = Reverting Back

You might slip back into previous behavior after a period of change. This is normal and very common. You might feel a bit discouraged but can learn from the setback and go back to precontemplation.

It is essential to give yourself grace when making lifestyle changes, understand that change is a process as described by Dr. Prochaska and DiClemente's Stages of Change model, and set realistic goals for yourself.

¹ Prochaska, J. O., Norcross, J. C., & DiClemente, C. C. (1994). *Changing for good: A revolutionary six-stage program for overcoming bad habits and moving your life positively forward*. Quill. ISBN: 9780380725724.

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