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## **Your Greatest Risk**

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## The Behaviour Change Model

The following was based on a website article “A User-Friendly Model of Change” by Robert Westermeyer, Ph.D. and makes reference to the James Prochaska and Carlo Diclemente (1982) studies. (<http://www.habitsmart.com/motivate.htm>)

### **Introduction**

James Prochaska and Carlo Diclemente (1982) developed a model of change which is unique in many ways. First, it is empirically driven. In other words, it is based on the researchers’ scientific investigation of change in humans. Second, the model conceptualizes change as entailing a number of stages which all require alterations in attitude in order to progress. Third, the model depicts change as a cycle – as opposed to an all or nothing step. This may involve several trips through the stages to make lasting change.

#### **Pre-contemplation Stage** (“raise awareness”)

- Habit problem is not recognized
- Unconcerned about the problem
- Denial
- Uninformed – no personally convincing reason for change has been presented as of yet

#### **Contemplative Stage** (“assess”)

- Convincing, personal and timely information is presented (not coercion or advice)
- Being afforded data which is very relevant and convincing
- Information that is specifically catered to you
- Gain an accurate, unbiased picture of your behaviour problem – assessment.

#### **Determination Stage** (“ownership”)

- Modify expectations; establish a goal that is reasonable
- Harm Reduction Model (Netherlands, Australia, and UK): any movement toward bettering yourself, toward self-improvement, whether drastic or minor modification is positive. (Does not have to be all or nothing; reduce the harm).

#### **Action Stage** (“action”)

- Barriers removed, tap into existing strengths
- Discovery, revived interests, new activities, new behaviour
- Removal of the addictive auto-pilot

#### **Maintenance Stage** (“maintain”)

- Practice living less harmful lifestyle until it becomes automatic.

#### **Notes:**

- Relapse: slips and setbacks are part of learning.
- Integral part mistakes teach us, we learn more from our mistakes.

## Behaviour Change Model

*[Based on Stages of Change Model studies by James Prochaska and Carlo DeClemente, 1983]*

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Precontemplation</b> | Precontemplation is the stage of change at which there is no intention to change behaviour in the foreseeable future. Many individuals in this stage are unaware or under aware of their problems.               |
| <b>Contemplation</b>    | Contemplation is the stage in which people are aware that a problem exists and are seriously thinking about overcoming it but have not yet made a commitment to take action.                                     |
| <b>Preparation</b>      | Preparation is a stage that focuses on intention to change behaviour. Individuals in this stage are intending to take action in the next month and have unsuccessfully taken action in the past year.            |
| <b>Action</b>           | Action is the stage in which individuals change their behaviour in order to overcome their problems. Action involves the most overt behavioural changes and requires considerable commitment of time and energy. |
| <b>Maintenance</b>      | Maintenance is the stage in which people work to prevent relapse and strengthen the gains attained during action.  |

### **Note:**

Once maintenance is achieved, behaviour change is thought to be complete. Recently, two additional stages have been added to the transtheoretical model by various researchers (Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 1996). These stages are as follows:

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Relapse | The stage in which people have abandoned change and reverted back to the old, undesirable behaviour but still intend to continue with the desirable behaviour at a later time. |
| Dropout | The stage in which people have completely abandoned change and have reverted to the old, undesirable behaviour. There is no intention to change behaviour in the future.       |

