

# Stages of Change

Stage	Description
Pre-contemplation	<p><i>Sees no need to change.</i></p> <p>At this stage, the person has not even contemplated having a problem or needing to make a change. This is the stage where denial, minimization, blaming, and resistance are most commonly present.</p>
Contemplation	<p><i>Considers change, but also rejects it.</i></p> <p>At this stage, there is some awareness that a problem exists. This stage is characterized by ambivalence; the person wants to change, but also does not want to. They will go back and forth between reasons for concern and justification for unconcern. This is the stage where persons feel stuck.</p>
Determination	<p><i>Wants to do something about the problem.</i></p> <p>At this stage, there is a window of opportunity for change: the person has decided to change and needs realistic and achievable steps to change.</p>
Action	<p><i>Takes steps to change.</i></p> <p>At this stage, the person engages in specific actions to bring about change. The goal during this stage is to produce change in a particular area or areas.</p>
Maintenance	<p><i>Maintains goal achievement.</i></p> <p>Making the change does not guarantee that the change will be maintained. The challenge during this stage is to sustain change accomplished by previous action and to prevent relapse. Maintaining change often may require a different set of skills than making the change.</p>
Relapse	<p><i>Person slips or returns to the pre-change state.</i></p> <p>At times, the person might “slip” and not regard the setback as serious enough to be concerned, yet someone may be at risk. Relapse is a normal and expected part of the change cycle.</p>

(Prochaska, J.O., and DiClemente, C.C., 1984)