# Stages of Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of Change</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Techniques</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-contemplation</td>
<td>Not currently considering change: “Ignorance is bliss”</td>
<td>Validate lack of readiness.</td>
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<td>Clarify: decision is theirs</td>
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<td>Encourage re-evaluation of current behavior</td>
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<td>Encourage self-exploration, not action</td>
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<td>Explain and personalize the risk</td>
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<td>Contemplation</td>
<td>Ambivalent about change: “Sitting on the fence”</td>
<td>Validate lack of readiness</td>
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<td>Not considering change within the next month</td>
<td>Clarify: decision is theirs</td>
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<td>Encourage evaluation of pros and cons</td>
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<td>Identify and promote new, positive outcome expectations</td>
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<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Some experience with change and are trying to change: “Testing the waters”</td>
<td>Identify and assist in problem solving re: obstacles</td>
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<td>Planning to act within 1 month</td>
<td>Help patient identify social support</td>
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<td>Verify that patient has underlying skills for behavior change</td>
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<td>Encourage small initial steps</td>
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<td>Action</td>
<td>Practicing new behavior for 3-6 months</td>
<td>Focus on restructuring cues and social support</td>
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<td>Bolster self-efficacy for dealing with obstacles</td>
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<td>Combat feelings of loss and reiterate long-term benefits</td>
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<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Continued commitment to sustaining new behavior</td>
<td>Plan for follow-up support</td>
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<td>Post-6 months to 5 years</td>
<td>Reinforce internal rewards</td>
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<td>Discuss coping with relapse</td>
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<td>Lapse/Relapse</td>
<td>Resumption of old behaviors: “Fall from grace”</td>
<td>Evaluate triggers for relapse</td>
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<td>Reassess motivation and barriers</td>
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<td>Plan stronger coping strategies</td>
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What is Change Talk?

Signs of Readiness:
- Decreased resistance
- Decreased discussion about the problem
- Resolve
- Change talk
  - Talk that is action oriented
- Questions about change
- Seeing the change
- Experimenting with change

Change Talk:
1. Desire: I want to
2. Ability: I can
3. Reason: It’s important
4. Need: I should

Responding to Change Talk:
1. Elaborate: ask questions to get more information; continue with the change talk.
   a. For example, tell me more about what is frustrating you about this change.
2. Affirming: expression or appreciation of the advisors’ efforts.
   a. For example, your implementation of the new advisor training has made a big impact at the college. Your efforts are really paying off.
3. Reflective: accurate expressions of both the content and emotion of what the student said.
   a. For example, you look like you’ve enjoyed being a mentor for the newer advisors.
4. Summarizing: Bringing together several of the students’ thoughts, feelings or concerns.
   a. For example, you really seemed to have embraced the changes in our admissions process, even though you initially didn’t agree. You seemed to have learned quite a bit along the way and been a leader in the office through this tough change, even though it seemed overwhelming at first.
Not Change  

Change  

Advantages  

Disadvantages  

1  

2  

3  

4  

Finishing with the advantages of change takes advantage of the recency effect