

[Stages of Change Model](#) [1]

Description: The Stages of Change Model illustrates how people move through various stages in a nonlinear, often cyclical, fashion. Depending on the stage a person is in, he or she will respond differently to different types of information and motivation. The model illustrates how an individual's perceptions and interest in changing a behavior may alter over time, and it provides a framework for determining an appropriate intervention (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1982).

Samet et al. (1996) suggest using one of the following questions to begin assessing the patient's readiness to change:

- "OR you think that your alcohol use is a problem?"
- "How much of a problem is your alcohol use?"

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- **Pre-Contemplation:** The person has no awareness of a problem and/or no intention of taking any action. He or she may have unsuccessfully attempted change in the past and is demoralized. The individual may appear unmotivated or resistant to change.
- **Contemplation:** The person perceives a problem but is ambivalent about attempting change. Generally, he or she is aware of the pros of change but also is closely aware of the cons.
- **Preparation:** The person is definitely aware of the problem and admits that it must be addressed. He or she has a strong interest in changing and is determined to do so. The individual may begin investigating treatment options.
- **Action:** The person is ready to change and is actively involved in addressing the problem.
- **Maintenance:** This is the stage in which a person works to prevent relapse, although he or she is less tempted than someone in the **action** stage. Behavior changes are being established in daily life.

Relapse is often a part of the cycle (following **maintenance**) and can signal a return to the **pre-contemplation** or **contemplation** stage of the model.

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