

## STAGES OF CHANGE

Stage	Characteristics	Helpful Responses
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pre-Contemplation</b> (No intention on changing behavior.)</p>	<p><b>Denies that there is a problem. Minimizes significance of concern.</b></p> <p><i>“I don’t have a problem with drinking, everyone blacks out now and then. Besides, most of my friends drink way more than I do.”</i></p>	<p><b>Focus on expressing concern about particular behaviors (raising consciousness).</b></p> <p><i>“I worry about what might happen to you when you’re blacked out, or if you start to get behind in your classes.”</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Contemplation</b> (Aware problem exists but with no commitment to action.)</p>	<p><b>Debating (internally) about existence or significance of problem. Behavior may appear very inconsistent.</b></p> <p><i>“I know I should talk to someone in counseling about my panic attacks, it’s just that I don’t have time. Besides I’m sure they’re really busy with people with more important problems.”</i></p>	<p><b>Help them talk through both sides of the concern; careful not to push them, you may increase resistance.</b></p> <p><i>“You seem worried because your panic attacks seem to be occurring much more often. At the same time, you are really busy. It must seem impossible to fit anything else in.”</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Preparation</b> (Intent on taking action to address the problem.)</p>	<p><b>Committed to change and making plans as to how to follow through. Preparing for change.</b></p> <p><i>“I’m going to go and talk to someone at the counseling center about my sleep problems. My schedule is really unpredictable, though, so I wouldn’t be able to make an appointment.”</i></p>	<p><b>Help and support in the planning process.</b></p> <p><i>“I know the Counseling Center has Initial Consultations available most afternoons during the week. Let’s call them or walk over to see when you could get in to see a counselor.”</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Action</b> (Active modification of behavior.)</p>	<p><b>Taking steps to address the problem.</b></p> <p><i>“I’ve been seeing a counselor and she says I should be getting out of my room more instead of avoiding others to control my social anxiety.”</i></p>	<p><b>Support their follow through.</b></p> <p><i>“I know how hard it is for you to go to the cafeteria, how about I meet you there tonight at 6pm?”</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Maintenance</b> (Sustained change. New behavior replaces old.)</p>	<p><b>Maintaining changes until they become more habitual.</b></p> <p><i>“Exercising has really helped improve my mood and energy; it’s just with finals coming up next week I’m not sure I’ll have time to get to the gym.”</i></p>	<p><b>Support changes.</b></p> <p><i>“Yeah, I know how you feel. I’m worried about time too. Let’s make a pact to go together at least on Tuesday and Thursday of next week.”</i></p>