

The Cycle of Change

This resource provides an overview of The Cycle of Change/Stages of Change Model.

This model can help clients identify where they stand in this process and what professionals can do to help them and is useful to understand when working with cases of neglect.

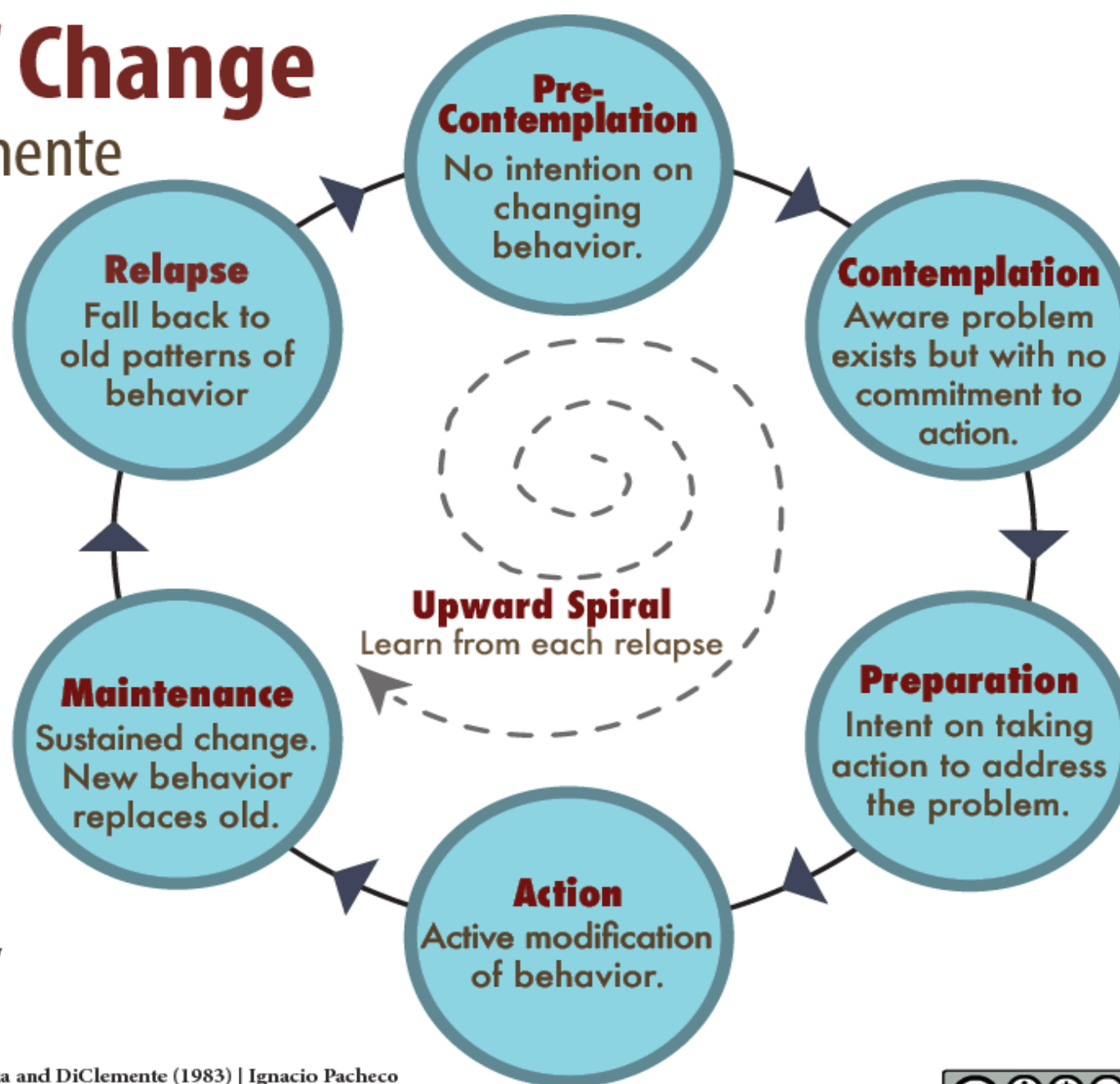
The Cycle of Change/Stages of Change

- Prochaska & DiClemente's model (1983) shows a variety of stages that one can expect to go through when modifying behaviour and highlights where someone may be at any given time during the process.
- This model applies to all types of desired change and individuals in their quest to stop or reduce unhealthy behaviours and adopt newer, healthier behaviours move through a series of five stages:
 - precontemplation,
 - contemplation,
 - preparation,
 - action, and
 - maintenance.
- Everyone needs change in some form or fashion during their lifespan, and sometimes clients get messages from others or within themselves (usually both) of this need.

The Cycle of Change

Prochaska & DiClemente

- **Precontemplation:** A logical starting point for the model, where there is no intention of changing behavior; the person may be unaware that a problem exists
- **Contemplation:** The person becomes aware that there is a problem, but has made no commitment to change
- **Preparation:** The person is intent on taking action to correct the problem; usually requires buy-in from the client (i.e. the client is convinced that the change is good) and increased self-efficacy (i.e. the client believes s/he can make change)
- **Action:** The person is in active modification of behavior
- **Maintenance:** Sustained change occurs and new behavior(s) replaces old ones. Per this model, this stage is also transitional
- **Relapse:** The person falls back into old patterns of behavior
- **Upward Spiral:** Each time a person goes through the cycle, they learn from each relapse and (hopefully) grow stronger so that relapse is shorter or less devastating.



This graphic depicts The Cycle of Change

Source:
[The Stages of Change \(Prochaska & DiClemente\) – Social Work Tech](#)



The Cycle of Change

Adapted from a work by Prochaska and DiClemente (1983) | Ignacio Pacheco

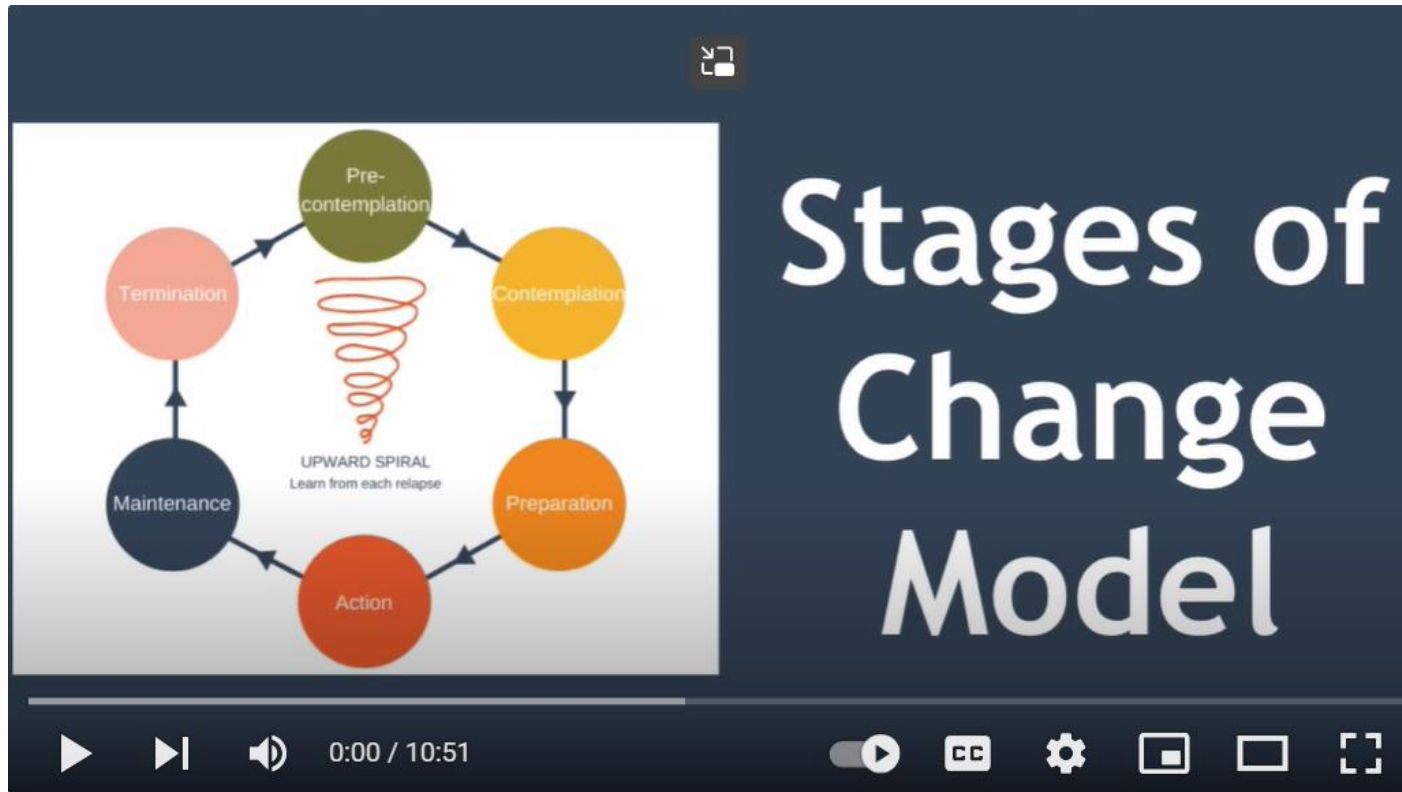
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Watch this clip to find out more



This short clip provides an overview on The Stages of Change Model

Link to access: [The Stages of Change Model - YouTube](#) (2018)

Duration 10:51 minutes

End of change

- The model does not show an end to the process of change and suggests that a person is ever-progressing in the cycle.
- Logically, **Relapse**, or recurrence of previously undesired behaviours, would follow **Maintenance** of the newly acquired behaviours.
- It is possible for someone to stay years at the **Maintenance** stage or to never have a Relapse. When one **Relapse**, they may not be aware of it (i.e. **Precontemplation**) or may go through the Precontemplation phase quickly to being aware of the problem (i.e. **Contemplation**).
- It is hoped that in the stages of **Preparation**, **Action**, and **Maintenance**, that a person has developed resiliency, a support system and other coping mechanisms so that they can avoid the **Relapse** stage or get through it quickly.