

LESSON SEVEN: MAINTENANCE

Key Verse: *“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”*

Romans 12:2 NLT

Our thinking must be changed (transformed) from old, ungodly ways of thinking into new, godly ways of thinking. We must first renew our minds. (NKJV – *Be transformed by the renewing of your mind*)

Carlo DiClemente and James Prochaska's Stages of Change Model, introduce five official stages of change: pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance. An unofficial 6th stage, relapse, is popularly included because occasional slips are inevitable in the change process.

STAGE ONE: PRE-CONTEMPLATION

In the pre-contemplation stage, people do not see the need to change. They do not recognize the consequences of their actions. Themes: ignorance or denial.

STAGE TWO: CONTEMPLATION

People acknowledge their problems in the contemplation stage but may not have the confidence to change. Themes: uncertainty, conflicted emotions, ambivalence.

STAGE THREE: PREPARATION

In the preparation stage, people are willing to take small steps forward. They learn to identify resources and lean on their support systems. Themes: Small tasks.

STAGE FOUR: ACTION

People in the action stage have developed clear plans for change and are implementing them. They are making concrete steps to accomplish their goals.

Isn't it the best feeling when you not only know what you have to do, but you are motivated to do it? You have the energy to do it! Two keys to the action stage:

1. Recognizing your “help”
2. Recognizing your “why”

Make the change Live the change – lifestyle Be the change - who you are

[2Co 5:17 NKJV] 17 Therefore, if anyone [is] in Christ, [he is] a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

STAGE FIVE: MAINTENANCE

After adopting their new change for at least six months, people enter the maintenance stage. They display an unwavering commitment to their change and conscious actions to avoid temptation. They are prepared for potential pitfalls, with well-developed coping skills and support systems. 1,3,4

UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO CHANGE

- Mindset shifts. Think/view yourself differently. Act differently.
- I-Think-I-Can mentality. Replace, “I Can’t”:
- With God’s help, I can. / I want to. / I am still working on it.

CONSCIOUS ACTIONS TO AVOID TEMPTATION.

- Make it a matter of prayer. “Lead us not into temptation”
- Need to erect and implement personal boundaries.
- Without boundaries, we return to the same mindsets and people that hinder us.
- *What are the safeguards and guard rails in your life to help you avoid temptation?*

PREPARED FOR POTENTIAL PITFALLS

Know your triggers. Heed warnings from your support system.

WELL-DEVELOPED COPING AND SUPPORT

- New Normal. Navigate changing relationships
- You may have changed and others may not have.
- You may need new people. A new support system.

TIPS FOR HELPERS – HELPING PEOPLE WHO ARE IN THE MAINTENANCE STAGE.

- **Continue more as a consultant.** Provide advice, guidance, and support, only as needed.
- **Play the “Long Game.”** Discipleship is a process that takes years.
- **Overconfidence sometimes leads to relapse.** We cannot let our guard down.
- **Promote a “relapse is only a setback” mindset.** A potential relapse is only a minor setback, not a devastating failure. 1