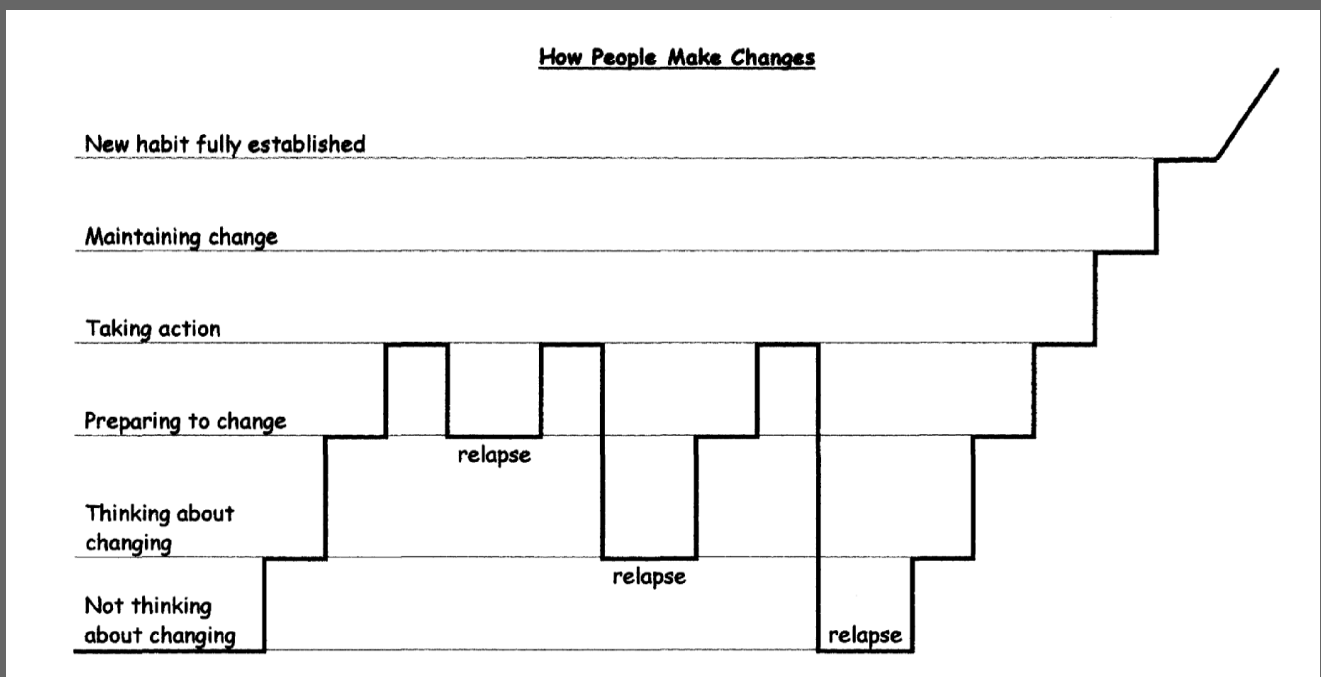


## Chapter 9

# PREPARING TO MAKE CHANGES



## PREPARING FOR CHANGE

Habits are things we do without having to think about them. They are automatic - like driving a car or making a cup of tea.

Examples of habits that are unhelpful  
if you are learning to manage your situation:-

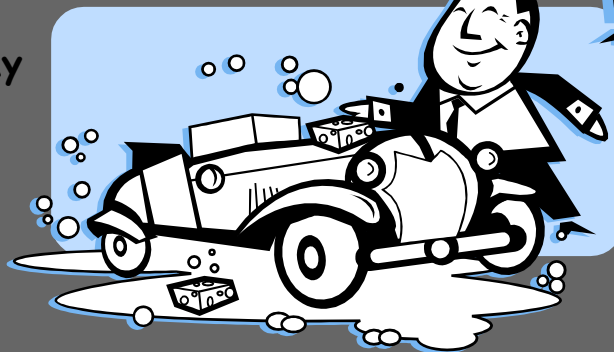
Doing all your housework in one day



Routinely staying up late



Doing jobs all in one day  
and feeling exhausted  
the next day



Getting frustrated with people  
and getting stressed

**Lifestyle Management is about making changes  
and developing new habits which help your situation.**

For example:-

Learning to relax

Managing your energy by pacing

Organising your time

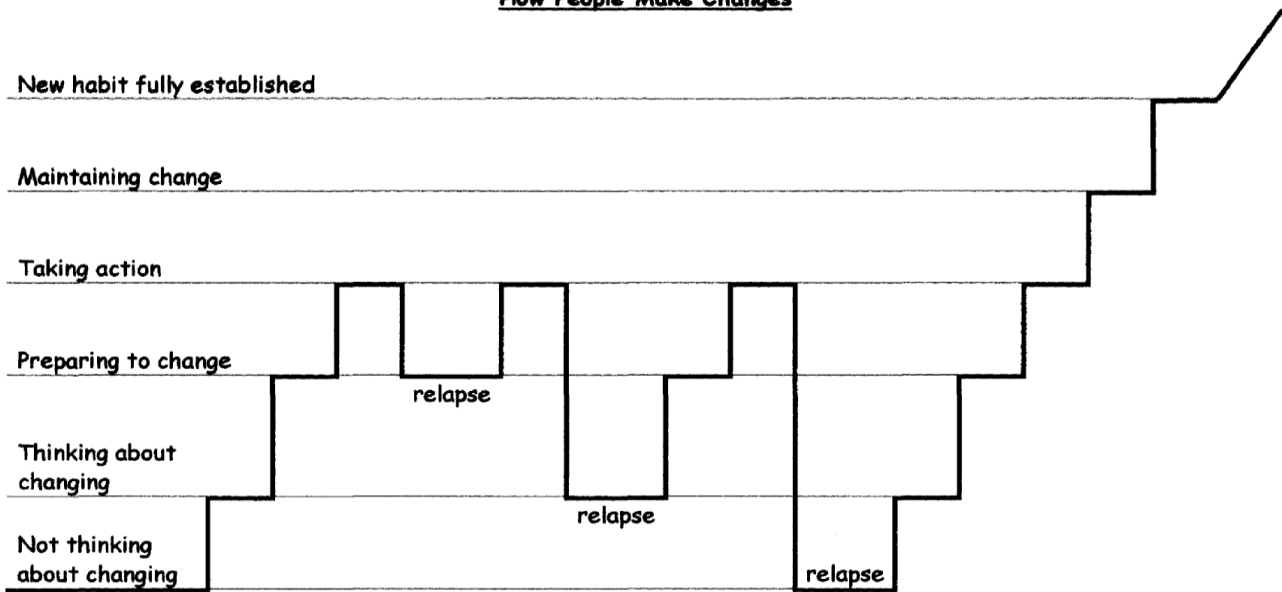
Enjoying regular exercise



**When these habits become automatic  
you won't have to think about them.**

People go through different stages when they make a change.

#### How People Make Changes



#### 1. Not thinking about change

#### 2. Thinking about change

- People usually weigh up the pros and cons of making changes or staying as they are.
- What stops people moving forward at this stage is usually a combination of lack of confidence and not thinking the change is important enough.

You could carry around a list of reasons why you want to change.

#### 3. Preparing to change

- At this stage, people are usually deciding what they want to do and how to go about it. They begin to make plans.

You could write a list of your plans and stick it on the fridge.

#### 4. Taking Action

- The decision on what to change or how to make changes has been taken and embarked upon.

Explain to others why you are changing and ask them to encourage you or even change with you!

Reward yourself with a treat!

## 5. Relapse

- People do relapse from time to time. It could be after a holiday, illness or any change in routine. Be aware that this happens and don't beat yourself up over it.

Don't worry if you fall back into old ways - everyone does from time to time.

Have a look at your plan and start afresh.

## 6. Maintaining change

- This is when you feel good about the changes you have made and notice the differences they are making to your life. You have created a new habit and fully intend to keep it going.

## 7. New habit fully established

- Relapse may happen occasionally (like forgetting to brush your teeth).
- It becomes less likely to happen and easier to get back on track.

Be aware of the possibility of relapse and be ready to get going again!

**Remember, changing habits takes time but**

**IT CAN BE DONE!**

**Before making any changes  
it is important to be sure that  
you are ready,  
so that you can be sure of  
a useful outcome.**

You are ready for the change when:-

1. You know it will be helpful.
2. You know it is important enough to you.
3. You are confident you can do it.

### **A TOOLBOX FOR CHANGE**

The exercises on the following pages are designed to help you decide if you are ready to make changes.

1. Creating a vision of the future will help you decide if making a change will be worthwhile to you. (see 1 next page)
2. Using a scale to gauge how important this change is, and going over the pros and cons of making the change, will help you decide how important it is for you. (See 2(a) and 2(b) overleaf.)
3. Using a scale to gauge your confidence that you can change, and exploring ways of finding solutions to barriers. (See 3(a) and 3(b) overleaf.)

# 1

## CREATING A VISION OF THE FUTURE

Imagine how your life could be different  
six months from now if you make this change.

**What will you be doing, seeing, or hearing?**

Who will notice?

What will they notice?

What will they say?

**How will the change affect  
other parts of your life?**

What difference will that make?

What else, what else, what else .....?

## 2 (a)

### IMPORTANCE

How important is it for you to make this change?

On a scale of 0 to 10

– with 10 being extremely important  
and 0 being not important at all –

where are you?



Write down what has taken you up to that level of importance  
or stopped you being lower.

What would have to happen for it to become more important –  
maybe moving an extra point or two up the scale?

Writing down the pros and cons will be helpful  
when exploring if you want to make a change.



## 2 (b)

### PROS AND CONS OF MAKING A CHANGE

|                        | PROS<br>What might be helpful | CONS<br>What might be unhelpful |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Making this change     |                               |                                 |
| Not making this change |                               |                                 |

Going over the pros and cons of making or not making this change may help you to decide how important it is to you.

### 3 (a)

## CONFIDENCE

How confident are you about making this change?

On a scale of 0 to 10

– with 10 being extremely confident  
and 0 being not confident at all –

where are you ?



Write down what has taken you up to that level of confidence or  
stopped you being lower?

What would have to happen for you to become more confident –  
maybe moving an extra point or two up the scale?

## 3 (b)

Building confidence by finding solutions

We can learn by exploring past efforts, learning from previous attempts or the successful attempts of others.

### LEARNING FROM FAILURES

What do you focus on?

What went wrong?

or

What you actually did achieve?

What barriers or even solutions can you discover?



In previous attempts to change what did you find helpful  
(in this, or in other aspects of your life)?

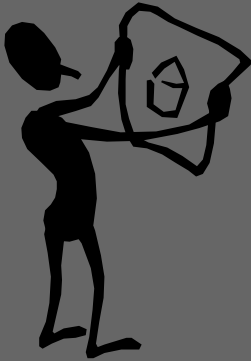
What else?

Are there any ways you know that have worked for other people?

What else?

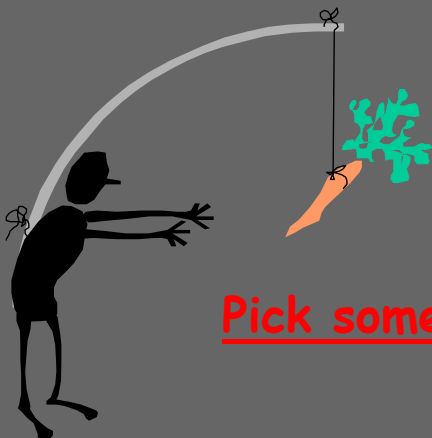
## Things that might help when changing habits

Make sure your new habit is something that you really want and be clear about how it is going to be helpful.

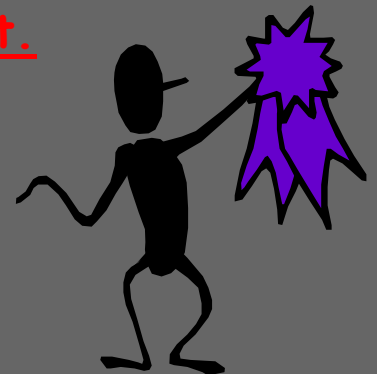


Have a written plan of action.

Involve others to help or support you.



Pick something achievable at first.



Notice your progress and reward yourself frequently!

Remember that your new habit will  
**become easier and easier with time and practice!**