How Change Happens

Changing unhealthy behavior is a process, a journey through five stages. You can’t skip a stage, but it’s rarely a straight path to a healthy behavior. Most people move in and out of each stage more than once before achieving a lasting change. Chances are, each time you pass through a stage, you’ll have a deeper understanding of the pitfalls that lie ahead and the many benefits of the change you’re working on. You’ll learn from your setbacks. Then, with renewed effort, you can move ahead. By taking one stage at a time, you’ll succeed in making a lasting change—one you can live with!

What Stage Are You At:

Not ready. You don’t even want to think about changing right now. You might be willing to consider change someday, but not in the next few months.

Thinking about it. You see your current situation as a problem or a risk to your health. You’re ready to consider the possibility of change, and you’re open to learning about the benefits change would bring.

Getting prepared. You’re getting ready to take action soon. You’ve committed to changing, you’re making a plan, and you’re asking others for support.

Taking action. You’re setting your plan in motion. You’re taking steps, tracking your progress, and using your support system.

Staying on track. You started changing your behavior some months ago. Now you’re focused on sticking with your new, healthier habits.