

Merging TTM Stages and Processes

Stage of Change	Traits	Goals	Strategies
Precontemplation (not ready for change) 	The client is unaware of a problem or believes it cannot be solved.	Increase awareness of risks and benefits to change. Make change relevant to the client. Encourage the client to think about change.	Validate the client's lack of readiness to change. Clarify the client's choice to change. Encourage re-evaluation and self-exploration. Explain and personalize the risks. Use general sources to increase awareness.
Contemplation (getting ready for change)	The client is aware of the problem and is weighing the pros and cons of changing. The client lacks the skills or knowledge to bring about change.	Inform the client of available options. Provide cues to action and give basic instruction. 	Validate the client's lack of readiness to change, and be clear that the decision is the client's choice. Encourage evaluation of the pros and cons of making a change. Identify and promote new, positive outcome expectations. Offer invitations to become more active (i.e., free trials or sessions).
Preparation (ready to make changes) 	The client is seeking opportunities to change (i.e., to participate in activity).	Implement regular structured programming with frequent positive feedback. Celebrate the client's progress.	Verify that the client has skills for behavior change. Encourage small steps toward building self-efficacy. Identify and help with problem-solving. Help the client identify social support and set goals.
Action 	The client desires to maintain change (i.e., an active lifestyle). The client's beliefs and attitudes change. The client is at high risk for a return to previous behaviors.	Establish healthy habits through motivation and adherence to the desired behaviors.	Use behavior modification strategies. Focus on restructuring cues and social support. Increase awareness about lapses. Reiterate the long-term benefits of adherence. Gather feedback on progress.
Maintenance 	The client is empowered to maintain change. The client can more confidently confront lapses.	Maintain support systems and interest. Avoid boredom.	Re-evaluate strategies currently in effect. Plan for contingencies with support systems. Reinforce the need for a transition from external to internal rewards. Plan for relapse prevention. Encourage variety in programs.
Lapse	The client returns to previous behaviors.	Return the client to action. 	Identify reasons for lapse. Identify the current stage of change to progress toward action. Maintain existing systems and relationships. Offer support.

Source: Adapted with permission from the *American Council on Exercise Health Coach Manual* (2013).