

Readiness for Change Assessment

Research has shown that self-change is a staged process. We move from not thinking about changing a behavior to thinking about it, to planning to change, and then to testing out ways to do it before we actually start. When thinking about changing or adopting a behavior, ask yourself the following:

1. Why do I really want to change the behavior; what makes the change important to me (the benefits or pros)?
2. Why shouldn't I try to change the behavior; what is in my way (the obstacles or cons)?
3. Do my pros outweigh my cons?
4. What would it take for me to change the behavior and overcome my cons? What's my strategy?
5. Can I really do it?

To move forward, it is best if you believe in your ability to change; the pros outweigh the cons and you have realistic strategies to overcome the cons. Behavioral scientists recognize five stages of readiness to change a behavior:

1. Precontemplation ("I won't or I can't in the next six months.")
2. Contemplation ("I may in the next six months.")
3. Preparation ("I will in the next month.")
4. Action ("I'm doing it now.")
5. Maintenance ("I've been doing it for at least six months.")

A number of techniques can help you move from not thinking to thinking, to planning, to doing, and to continue doing. Determining how ready you are to change a behavior can assist your coach in helping you make that change. The following questions can assist you and your coach with making that determination. Your answers will help your coach guide the conversation so that you can move through the stages of change and reach your goals.

1. The goal or behavior I want to work on first is:
2. My reasons for wanting to accomplish this goal or change this behavior are:
3. The strengths, aptitudes, values, and resources that I can draw upon include:
4. The main challenges I will face while changing this behavior are:
5. My strategies to move forward and meet those challenges are:
6. The efforts I made toward changing this behavior in the last week are:
7. My goal for next week with respect to this behavior is:
8. My readiness to change the behavior is (circle the level that best describes where you are):
 - I won't do it.
 - I can't do it.
 - I may do it.
 - I will do it.
 - I am doing it.
 - I am still doing it.

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