

# CREATING LASTING *Change*



Your **perception of change** can be frightening because it can take you into the 'unknown.' However, **positive behavioural changes can bring healthy lifestyle benefits to you.** Find out how you can take a **transformative approach towards increasing your well-being.**

**C**hange is required for personal growth. However, it's not always easy to identify and to make the necessary changes needed for you to grow. Many people struggle to overcome their barriers because their level of awareness doesn't indicate that they need to create any sort of change for themselves and they get comfortable with their lifestyle, yet many times their health and happiness get compromised.

At lot of people at a certain point in their lives begin to feel dissatisfaction and unfulfilled with their day-to-day routine. They feel stuck, but they don't know how to make the appropriate changes to live a more happier lifestyle.

#### **4 OBSTACLES TO CHANGE**

Common obstacles to change that most people experience have to do with feeling accepted, competent and in control which are associated with our basic survival needs. •

- **Cognitive** - growing up developing low self-esteem, perfectionist qualities and people pleasing traits.
- **Behavioural** - creating self limiting habits that become engrained into your mind.
- **Emotional** - resorting to feelings such as anger, frustration, guilt and shame when you fear change or have failed at something.
- **Environmental** - surrounding yourself with people that are negative or unsupportive, being in environments that keep your in your comfort zone.

Often, people are unaware about their various limiting behaviours, and many types of influences can either strengthen or weaken one's ability to change.

#### **SELF-EFFICACY**

To be able to identify a need for change and to effectively progress through changes, you need to develop self-efficacy which is the belief in your ability to succeed in any particular situation.

Motivation and self-regulation are intertwined with having high self-efficacy. When you develop high self-efficacy you become motivated to overcome your obstacles and you're persistent in making the required changes in order to be more satisfied with your life's endeavours. Self-efficacy also increases your self confidence, and renews your optimism.

# SELF-EFFICACY STRENGTHENS YOUR ABILITY TO MAKE POSITIVE CHANGES BY ALLOWING YOU TO OVERCOME YOUR OBSTACLES AND ACCEPT CHALLENGES

## **THE 6 STAGES OF CHANGE**

Studies indicate that when people begin to modify their behaviours, they go through a series of stages. Researchers, Prochaska & DiClemente (1983) constructed the Transtheoretical Model (TTM) which is based on 35 years of research and empirical studies. The TTM reveals the series of stages that individuals go through when they make a conscious effort to change a limiting behaviour or habit of theirs.

1. **Pre-contemplation** - no intention of taking action to change a certain behaviour over the next 6 months.  
*Self work: increase your awareness of why it's needed and the risks associated with your current behaviour.*
2. **Contemplation** - intending to take action in the next 6 months. Recognizing the pros of changing, but spending time procrastinating.  
*Self work: list pros and cons of existing limiting behaviour and consider pros and cons of new behaviour. Identify barriers to change.*
3. **Preparation** - ready to take action in the next 30 days. Developing an action plan.  
*Self work: create goals and develop an action plan.*

4. **Action** - making lifestyle changes over the past 6 months.

*Self work: implement the plan, revise goals as needed and celebrate your successes.*

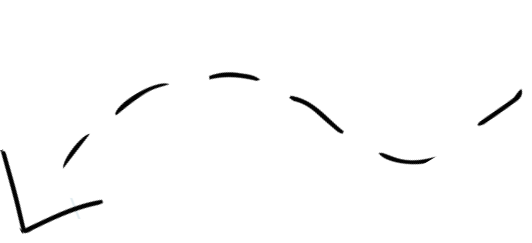
5. **Maintenance** - exhibiting a new and more positive behaviour for over 6 months.

*Self work: continue with transformation, reaffirm positive behaviours and develop coping and self-regulation strategies.*

6. **Termination** - the end state. Not returning to limiting behaviours and bad habits even when feelings of anxiety or depression arise.

*Self work: continue exercising with new habits and behaviours.*

One's behaviours in the earlier stages may not be linear due to relapse. In this case, triggers should be identified and worked through. An individual may cycle through through the first couple of stages in the beginning before they gain motivation to progress through each of the stages effortlessly. It's also important to note that during the action stage, behaviours such as grieving and frustration may be exhibited followed by covert behaviours in the form of self-rewards and recognitions during the maintenance and termination stages of the TTM.



**ARE YOU CONTEMPLATING CHANGING A LIMITING BEHAVIOUR OF YOURS? (IF YOU AGREE WITH MOST OF THESE, YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE)**

- You recognize the risks of your current behaviour
- Stress may be taking over your health and happiness
- You are not living a fulfilling life according to your own satisfaction levels
- Busyness is overrunning your life
- You are always in thought and barely in action
- You are often getting into toxic types of relationships
- You may be functioning out of a fixed mindset rather than a growth mindset

**HERE ARE 10 WAYS TO MOTIVATE YOURSELF TO CREATING LASTING CHANGE IN YOUR LIFE**

**#1 Identify your big life goals.** Yes, dream big! Create a vision board. When you begin to see your dreams you become motivated to take action and make the necessary changes to get rid of your limiting behaviours and you take steps to create positive habits.

**#2 Create an if/then plan.** Identify all the possible barriers and limiting situations that you may encounter as you take action to create change, and then develop 'then' strategies to use if you encounter such experiences.

**#3 Make small goals.** Write down daily goals for yourself. Small, manageable goals will help you be focused and more motivated to complete a task on time and effortlessly.

**#4 Engage with positive and supportive people.** Make a list of five people in your circle that you can approach for support and encouragement. Avoid consulting with people who may question your need for change.

**#5 Celebrate your successes.** Each time you accomplish a small task or smash a goal, reward yourself with a treat, special outing or a day of relaxation.

**#6 Flip your thinking.** If you encounter a potential setback, rather than thinking of having failed, think of the lessons that you have learned and then revise your plan accordingly and keep going.

**#7 Self-regulate your emotions.** Identify your triggers and get to the source of the underlying issues. Learn to manage your emotions by accepting your past experiences and committing to your transformative actions.

**#8 Build a routine.** Organize your day by better managing your time. Take breaks to clear your mind and reset your thoughts.

**#9 Read books and listen to podcasts.** Pick one source of inspiration for yourself each day and spend time reading/listening to get the boost in motivation.

**#10 Remind yourself of your 'why'.** Write down your purpose in a place you look at often or create a message for yourself on your smartphone. When you're frequently reminded about your 'why' you are more likely to stay motivated.