

HEALTHY HABITS

STAGES OF CHANGE

“I’m thinking about change.”

At this stage you might be thinking about changing your habits and you become motivated to get started.

1

Stage 1 - CONTEMPLATION

You might be in this stage if:

- You are considering change but not yet ready to start
- You believe that your health and well-being will improve with new, healthy habits
- You are not sure how you will deal with roadblocks



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“I have made up my mind.”

You are creating a plan and thinking about specific tactics that will work for you.

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Stage 2 – PREPARATION

You might be at this stage if:

- You have decided about the change you want to make, and you are ready to take action
- You have set specific goals
- You are preparing yourself to take action



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“I have started to make changes.”

You are following the plan you set out to achieve your goals.

3

Stage 3 – ACTION

You might be at this stage if:

- You have been making changes to your eating and activity habits in the past 6 months or so.
- You are adjusting to how it feels to eat healthier and move more
- You have been working towards overcoming the things that hold you back



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“I have a new routine.”

You have become used to your new changes and been consistent with them for more than 6 months.

4

Stage 4 – MAINTENANCE

You might be at this stage if:

- The change has become a habit
- You have discovered different ways to stick with your new routine
- You have had setback, but you have been able to get past them



HEALTHY HABITS

COMMON BARRIERS & SOLUTIONS

BARRIER

“I don’t have time.”

SOLUTION

Make your new healthy habit a priority. Try to exercise whenever you can. Take the stairs or get off the bus a stop early. Plan one grocery shopping day a week and prepare healthy meals that you can freeze and eat later when you do not have time to cook.

BARRIER

“I’m not motivated.”

SOLUTION

Think about your most important reasons for being fit and healthy. What did you start in the first place? For example, would you like to be able to do the things you love without feeling tired or out of breath? Would you like to stop worrying about your health? Think about these things when you feel you want to quit.

HEALTHY HABITS

COMMON BARRIERS & SOLUTIONS

BARRIER

“I don’t like eating healthy foods”

SOLUTION

Try making your favorite recipes in a healthier way. For example, you can reduce the amount of oil, sugar, and salt you cook with. Add a cup or two of broccoli, carrots, or spinach to your meals. Find sources where you can get inspired with new recipes.

BARRIER

“I don’t like physical activity.”

SOLUTION

You don’t need to spend time in the gym to stay active. You can be active in many ways, including dancing, walking, gardening, or taking fitness classes. Choose an activity that you enjoy and look forward to. Explore new options of physical activity.

HEALTHY HABITS

COMMON BARRIERS & SOLUTIONS

BARRIER

“I can’t do this on my own.”

SOLUTION

Find others to be active with you. That will help you stay interested and motivated. Consider doing fun exercise class, like salsa dancing. Get your family or co-workers involved with the healthy eating concept. Plan healthy meals together with your family, or friends.

BARRIER

“I don’t know enough about healthy habits.”

SOLUTION

Talk to a professional. You do not have to be an expert to change your habits. A few tips and ideas can do wonders. Use the knowledge of experts and let them guide you along the way.

HEALTHY HABITS

IDEAS FOR STAYING ON TRACK

1

TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

- **Review your plan** and keep an activity journal or food diary to track your progress.
- **Write down your progress.** This can be one of your most important tools for staying on track. Recording your progress serves as a good reminder and helps to keep focused.
- **Keep a journal.** It's a great way to measure how close you are to reaching your goals.



HEALTHY HABITS

IDEAS FOR STAYING ON TRACK

2

OVERCOME ROADBLOCKS

- **Problem-solve to “outsmart” your barriers.** Think about the things that are holding you back and put smart steps in place to overcome them.
- **Ask a friend or family member for help** when you need it and always try to plan ahead. For example, if you know that you will not have time to be physically active after work, then start your day with some exercise or go for a walk during your lunch break.



HEALTHY HABITS

IDEAS FOR STAYING ON TRACK

3

REWARD YOURSELF

- **Set rewards right after you complete your healthy habit,** treat yourself to something you enjoy. This can be a relaxing shower, a fruit smoothie, a phone call to a friend, or new workout gear.
- **Choose rewards carefully.** While you should be proud of your progress, keep in mind that a high calorie treat or a day off from your exercise routine are not the best rewards to keep you on track.
- **Pat yourself on the back.** If negative thoughts creep in, remind yourself how much good you are doing for your body with the changes you are doing.

