

STAGES OF CHANGE*

▶ ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

🕒 **Time:** 40 minutes

➔ **Objectives:** By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the Stages of Change model
- Discuss the importance of identifying which stage a client is in;
- Describe factors that help move clients through stages.

★ **Training Methods:** Large Group Activity, Small Group Activity, Large Group Discussion

✓ **In This Activity You Will...**

- Lead the group in a brief icebreaker (5 minutes).
- Discuss the stages of change process (5 minutes).
- Break the group into six small groups and facilitate an activity (20 minutes).
- Debrief (10 minutes).

✂ **Materials:**

- Flipchart and markers
- Handout - Stages of Change Model of Peer Advocacy
- Handout - Meeting Your Client Where They Are

(continued next page)

Instructions

1. Icebreaker activity
 - a. Have participants clasp their hand together with right thumb on top of left thumb.
 - b. Then have them re-clasp their hands again but this time with left thumb on top of right thumb.
2. Ask the group how it felt to do that?
3. Point out that change is weird as we saw in this activity. Ask: So what do we need to make changes?
4. In your own words tell the group the following:

The ultimate goal of peer advocacy is to be this tool box for individuals who are struggling to deal with difficult situations, diseases, stressors so they change behaviors which will help them in improving their quality of life.

5. Draw a “tool box” on flipchart and write in responses of what we need to make changes. Responses should include: information on options, motivation, support, feedback.
6. Researchers have come up with a model known as the stages of change model to help us understand how people make changes in their lives.
7. This model suggests that individuals or groups pass through six stages when changing behavior: pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance, and relapse.
8. Ask participants to turn to their handout, Stages of Change Model of Peer Advocacy and utilize the handout as they do the next activity.

* This module comes from the Lotus Women’s Peer Education Training Manual, Center for Health Training and Women Organized to Respond to Life Threatening Diseases (WORLD), 2008.

STAGES OF CHANGE

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY (CONT.)

Preparation:

- Prepare six signs, one with each stage of change (Pre-contemplation, Contemplation, Preparation, Action, Maintenance, Relapse), and post them around the room
- Print handouts

9. Have the participants imagine that they are peer advocates with HIV positive, sexually active clients all at different stages. Conduct a brief discussion of risky or protective behaviors the client may engage in at each stage.
10. Break participants into 6 groups and assign one stage to each group.
11. Ask them to go to an assigned area where their stage of change is posted.
12. After each group is at their assigned stage, have them discuss with their group the questions written earlier on the flipchart:
 - a. What feelings, thoughts or anxiety may your client experience at this particular stage?
 - b. What can peers say or do to be supportive of this client at this stage?
13. Have the groups report back.
14. After all have gone, ask: Is there anything that all stages have in common? Ask: What are some of the differences between stages?
15. Point out that some stages are ready for more encouragement than others. Some stages, especially pre-contemplation, contemplation, and relapse really need gentle treatment and support, because people in those stages are likely to be hard on themselves and/or not really ready to make changes. The important thing in those stages is to keep the door open so the person will come back to us when they're ready for advice or suggestions.

Summary

End by saying that making change is difficult but each step that someone makes towards that change is SUCCESS!

* This module is part of the online toolkit Building Blocks to Peer Success. For more information, visit http://www.hdwg.org/peer_center/training_toolkit. This module comes from the Lotus Women's Peer Education Training Manual, Center for Health Training and Women Organized to Respond to Life Threatening Diseases (WORLD), 2008.v

STAGES OF CHANGE

SESSION HANDOUT #1 of 2

STAGES OF CHANGE MODEL OF PEER ADVOCACY

One model we can use to understand better how we deal with change is the Stages of Change model. This theory proposes that we typically progress through six stages as we incorporate a new behavior, attitude, or skill into our lives. We can learn to identify at what stage a client, family member or friends is in, and offer support to help them move forward.

STAGE	BEHAVIOR	WHAT YOU CAN SAY/ DO TO HELP
Precontemplation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doesn't intend to change, feels no need to change. May feel hopeless, defensive, ashamed or angry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support feelings: You seem sad/scared/nervous. Ask non-threatening questions: What do you think about . . .? How would you handle this? Listen. Provide limited information, increase awareness of risks.
Contemplation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing awareness of need to change. More open to feedback. Thinking about change, not taking action. Indecisive, not ready to commit to change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support feelings: This seems scary to you. Ask open questions: What would happen if...? How would it be to...? Weigh pros/cons of change: On the one hand..., but on the other...
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intent to take action in near future. May have already begun taking some steps toward change. 0-3 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show understanding and support: Other women feel the way you do. This is a really tough decision. You're making a great start. I like what you've already done. Examine alternatives: Some women have tried...
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In process of changing. Practices new behavior consistently. 3-6 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask supportive questions: Who can help you stick with this? Support small steps: I'm so impressed you've tried this.
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feels confident and comfortable with new behavior. 6 months or more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show support: What an accomplishment! Look how far we've come. Identify strategies: What's one thing that will keep you going?
Relapse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Falls back to any former stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support feelings: You seem frustrated/sad. Ask non-threatening questions: What helped you...? What do you think about...? Provide reassurance: Most people go through this.

STAGES OF CHANGE

SESSION HANDOUT # 2 of 2

MEETING YOUR CLIENT WHERE THEY ARE

Pre-contemplation	Contemplation	Determination/Preparation	Action	Maintenance	Relapse/Recycle
	 Fence	 0-3 Months	 3-6 Months	 Over 6 months	
No; Denial	Maybe; Ambivalence	Yes, Let's Go; Motivated	Doing It; Go	Living It	Start Over; Ugh!!

This model suggests that individuals or groups pass through six stages when changing behavior:

For example, when people change their behavior by using condoms to protect themselves from infection, the stages they pass through could be described as:

1. Pre-contemplation: Have not considered that they are at risk and need to use condoms
2. Contemplation: Become aware of their risk and subsequent need to use condoms
3. Preparation: Begin to think about using condoms in the next months
4. Action: Use condoms consistently for fewer than six months
5. Maintenance: Use condoms consistently for six months or more
6. Relapse: May begin to use condoms less consistently or discontinue use

People tend to move back and forth between stages, and relapse to a prior stage is always possible. In fact, people can relapse to any stage, but a return to pre-contemplation is least likely.

It is important to remember that changing behaviors, especially intimate and private behaviors, is a complex process.