Stage of Change: Quick Guide

Assessing for stage of change is important when it comes to developing the Individualized Recovery Plan (IRP), especially around offering stage specific objectives and/or interventions. A common model for describing stage of change is:

**Pre-contemplation:** The person is not considering change
- May not be aware of having an illness or be able to identify barriers
- May not be sure why he or she is in treatment or how treatment might be helpful

**Contemplation:** The person is considering change but has no immediate plan.
- May not know “where to start”
- May be undecided or ambivalent

**Preparation:** The person has made a commitment to change
- May have developed a timeline
- May be taking small steps towards changing behavior

**Action:** The person has identified one or more goals
- Actively working on achieving a goal
- Has begun to make significant changes

**Maintenance:** Behavior change has occurred and has been incorporated into the person’s lifestyle for some time
- Person has attained and is sustaining a life role
  - Barriers are manageable

**Relapse:** Re-emergence of barriers caused by mental illness … part of coping with a chronic illness

People may move back and forth in different stages, and the progression through the stages is not necessarily linear. Refer to the two diagrams on the next page.
Quick Guide/Stage of Change
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- Pre-Contemplation
- Contemplation/Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance

or

- Precontemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance

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