Stages of Change

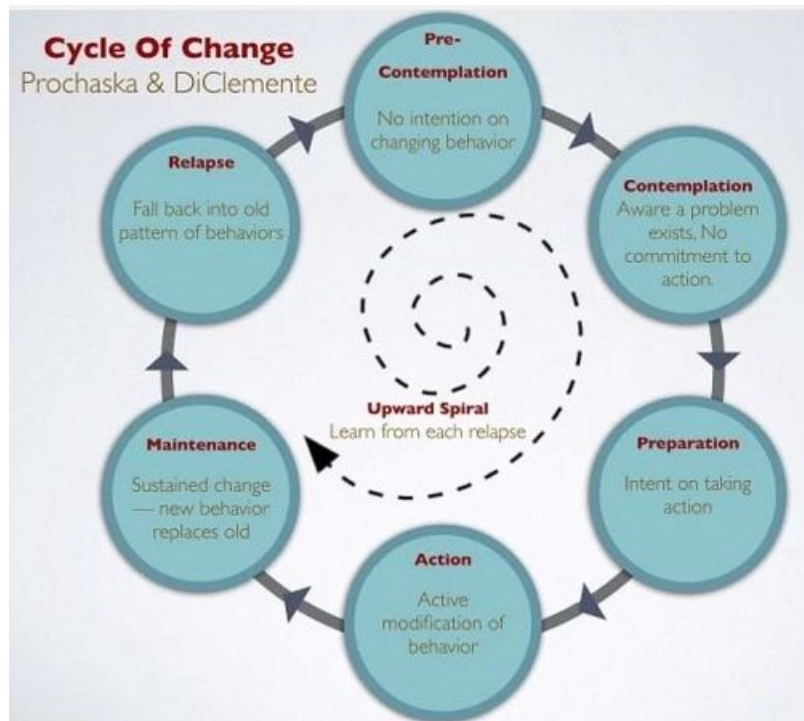**Understanding the Stages of Change**

From *Changing for Good* by James Prochaska

Stage #1
Pre-Contemplation
Unaware of problems associated with behavior. Certain that the positives of the behavior out- weigh the negative. Not interested in change. Unwilling to change. No intention to change.
Unaware, Resistant

Stage#2
Contemplation
Becomes aware of problems associated withbehavior. Ambivalent regarding positives and negatives. Explores the potential to change. Desires to change behavior but lacks confidence and commitment. Intends to change before 6 months.
Awareness, Openness, Decision
This is an event, not a stage. Concludes that the negatives of the behavior out-weigh the positives and chooses to change behavior. Commitment

Stage #3
Preparation
Accepts responsibility to change behavior. Evaluates and selects techniques for behavior. Develops a plan. Builds confidence and commitment. Intends to change within one month.
Anticipation, Willingness

Stage #4
Action
Engages in self-directed behavior change effort. Gains new insights and develops new skills. Consciously chooses new behavior. Learns to overcome the tendencies for unwanted behavior. Active in action stage for less than six months.
Enthusiasm, Momentum

Stage #5
Maintenance
Masters the ability to sustain new behavior with minimum effort. Establishes desired new behavior patterns and self-control. Remains alert to high- risk situations. Focus is on lapse prevention. Has changed behavior for six months.
Perseverance, Consolidation

Stage #6
Termination
Adopts new self-image consistent with desired behavior and lifestyle. Does not react to temptation in any situation. Expresses confidence and enjoys self-control. Appreciates healthier and happier life.

Lapse or Relapse
This is an event, not a stage. May occur at any time. Personal distress or social pressures are allowed to interrupt the behavior change process. Temporary loss of progress which resumes at an earlier stage. Experience is educational to help prevent further recurrence.
Danger, Opportunity