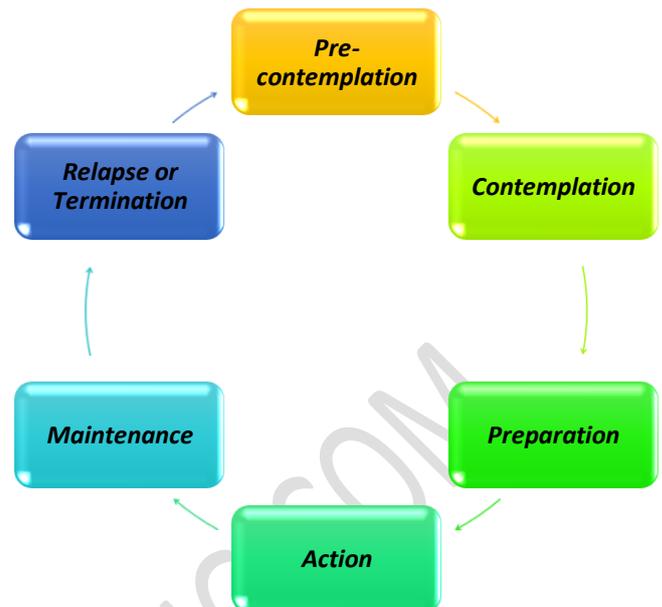




Behaviour Change

Whilst all behaviour is used to satisfy some need, sometimes our behaviour can be harmful for us long-term. Behaviours aren't either "good" or "bad"; rather, they are adaptive or maladaptive—appropriate to fulfil our needs. We all have behaviours that we changed (or tried to). Typically, attempts at behaviour change follow the outline below. Applying such a framework of behaviour change, can harness our success.



1. **Pre-contemplation:** no serious thoughts about behaviour change or acceptance of help to change; perhaps denial, defence, and/or avoidance of discussing maladaptive behaviour which is seen as non-problematic.
2. **Contemplation:** more awareness of the personal consequences of the maladaptive behaviour; considerations of changing the behaviour but ambivalent towards this. Reflects on the pros and cons of maintaining or ceasing the behaviour, which includes long-term and short-term costs and benefits of actions. Increased openness to learn about the maladaptive behaviour and their feelings towards it.
3. **Preparation/Determination:** commitments made to change behaviour; motivation for change is indicated by statements such as: "I need to change" "I've got to do something about this" "What can I do?" Small steps made to change, more information gathering to help the behaviour change and/or engaging in support networks, centres, professionals.
4. **Action/Willpower:** belief in own ability to change behaviour and engagement in many ways of doing so. Requires will power and grit as greatest time for relapse. Evaluates self-commitment and creates plans to manage personal and external pressures that may lead to slips (e.g., short-term rewards for reaching goals and/or making efforts to sustain motivation). Open to getting and seeking help from others.
5. **Maintenance:** able to effectively avoid temptations to return to the maladaptive behaviour and to keep the new adaptive behaviours; able to manage situations with effective coping skills. Self talk of encouragement and recall of progress and attempts made helps, as does reward for short-term behaviours, achievements, and efforts; re-evaluate life goals and behaviours and that their efforts and worthy and meaningful. Compassion, patience, and forgiveness are key as is awareness that old behaviours have become well established and can take a while to let go; as such people often slip back to old behaviours.
6. **Relapse:** Resumption of old behaviours, often accompanied by feelings of shame, low self-worth, and negative self-talk. Need to reassess triggers, coping skills, environment (people, places, activities, etc), motivations, and barriers to maintaining adaptive behaviours.

Or

6. **Termination:** the maladaptive behaviours are no longer easily triggered and not considered as desirable; new adaptive behaviours have become the "go to" pattern of behaviour and has replaced maladaptive behaviour.



DR. IVAN KENNEDY

Counsellor & Psychotherapist

PhD Education, BSc Psychology, DipHE Counselling

Tel 085 147 3040 Email kennedy.ivan@gmail.com

www.kennedycounselling.com

Behaviour Change Plan

The changes I want to make (or continue making) are:

The reasons why I want to make these changes are:

The steps I plan to take in changing are:

The ways other people can help me are:

I will know that my plan is working if:

Some things that could interfere with my plan are:

What I will do if the plan isn't working:

How and when I will reward myself in healthy ways: