

Do You Really Want to Change? Jan 2006 Newsletter

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Do You Really Want to Change? We've all heard the statistics about the likelihood of keeping New Year's resolutions. Instead of talking about the failure of the New Year's promise, here is some information about how to make those changes stick.

According to Change Theory, there are six steps to making a change. The first is Precontemplation, when you first notice some discomfort with an aspect in your life. The second is Contemplation. In this stage, the problem becomes something that takes up some mental space. Many people are in the contemplation stage for weight loss after the holidays. The ads on TV and extra pounds begin to focus our attention on this topic. Those who are serious about changing, might move into the Preparation and Planning stage where they would come up with a plan, like joining Weight Watchers or setting a goal. They might also tell someone so that they had some accountability. Now it is time for Action. This involves really taking the plan and doing it. Setting goals is helpful, so that there is a target to work toward. Make sure that goals are specific, measurable and attainable, like 10 lbs by April 1. An unrealistic target can contribute to failure. Once a goal is reached, the next phase is Maintenance, where the change becomes more than an exercise but rather incorporated into the daily lifestyle. Finally, once this goal is achieved, proceed to the Termination phase to celebrate your victory. Weight was used as today's example but this process can be useful in changing lifestyle habits as well. Think about what you would like to change in your life and set goals.