

# Stages of change

- **PRECONTMEPATION** – The *Precontemplation* Stage is one in which individuals are either unconvinced that they have a problem or unwilling to consider change. They lack interest, concern, or hope about change.
- **Contemplation** – The *contemplation* stage is one in which a person is actively considering the possibility of change. People in this stage are ambivalent; they are evaluating options, but are not ready to take action. They may still have reasons for their current behaviour that are not yet counterbalanced by compelling reasons for change.
- **Preparation** – in the *preparation* stage, individuals make a commitment as well as an initial plan to change the behaviour. They need to create an effective and acceptable plan and have the dedication to implement it.
- **Action** – once people take effective action to make the change, they are considered to be in the *action* Stage. In action, a person is implementing the plan, revising it as needed, dealing with any slips, and using strategies to prevent a relapse and return to the problem behaviour.
- **Maintenance** – the *maintenance* stage of change is one in which the individual consolidates the change and integrates it into his or her lifestyle. Not using becomes the norm, and life becomes filled with other types of pleasurable activities and rewards.