

## Resources

### On the Web:

[coping.org/growth/affirm](http://coping.org/growth/affirm)

[psychologymatters.org/diclemente](http://psychologymatters.org/diclemente)

[learningplaceonline.com/change/perspectives-intro](http://learningplaceonline.com/change/perspectives-intro)

[americanheart.org/presenter](http://americanheart.org/presenter)

[cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov) (The Centers For Disease Control and Prevention).  
Click on "Healthy Living".

[womentodaymagazine.com/relationships/coping](http://womentodaymagazine.com/relationships/coping)

### Every Behavior Change Needs 3 Bones:



A wish bone



A back bone



A funny bone

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Articles in this newsletter are not a substitute for the care and advice of medical professionals. When you have a question or need medical advice, diagnosis or treatment, consult your physician.

This newsletter is produced by Inova Health System in conjunction with your faith community. If you prefer not to receive this newsletter, please notify the appropriate personnel in your faith community.

Inova Health System is a not-for-profit health care system based in Northern Virginia that consists of hospitals and other health services including emergency and urgent care centers, home care, nursing homes, mental health, blood donor services, and wellness classes. Governed by a voluntary board of community members, Inova's mission is to improve the health of the diverse community we serve through excellence in patient care, education and research.



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# For Your Health

## How Do People Change?

OK, so you've written your New Years' resolution for living more healthily in 2008, right?! Once written, though, the real question is: how will you ensure that you fulfill your resolution? Will it just be collecting dust by the end of January or will you be on your way to a sustained lifestyle shift?

## The Motivation Factor

### Assess Your Motivation for Change.

#### Ask Yourself?

1. How is the change related to my values? Am I passionate about it?
2. What are the reasons I want to make this change?
3. My main goal in wanting this change is. . . .
4. How serious am I about this change?
  - \* Am I willing to rearrange my schedule?
  - \* Am I willing to spend money to accommodate this change?
  - \* Am I willing to communicate this change to significant others in my life?
5. What are the obstacles that could be in the way of making this change?

## More on Motivation

Are you a pusher or a puller?

Are you motivated more by avoiding something negative or by being drawn forward to something positive?

Fear is usually not as effective as desire.

Other pushes that usually don't work:

- \*Humiliation
- \*Ridicule
- \*Criticism



Be gentle with yourself and others. No shame or blame!

Intention is basic/foundational but not sufficient in itself. Adequate information, tools, and skills are also needed.

Sometimes people change without ever having the intention. Motivation to change may more likely take place during the change than before it. So start pedaling!

## Spiritual Resources for Change

For reflection: "Transformation goes beyond change. Transformation is usually divinely inspired."

Possible prayers / affirmations / meditations:

- \* I am open to transformation today.
- \* I visualize myself transformed.



A tool for change is reflected in the well-known "serenity prayer."

God grant me (or as an affirmation: I affirm that I have) the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

## Stages of Change: Where are You?

1. Pre-contemplation: Not interested! I'm not even thinking about it yet! I may need my awareness raised.
2. Contemplation: Maybe! I'm thinking about it now. I may need assistance to resolve my ambivalence and choose the positive shift.
3. Preparation: Definitely a possibility! I'm beginning to act. I may need to identify appropriate change strategies.
4. Action: Now I'm doing it! I'm really acting. I implement the change strategies. I learn to avoid or limit a relapse to the old behavior.
5. Maintenance: Been there and still doing it! I've been at it for 6 months or longer. I develop new skills to maintain the new behavior.
6. Recurrence: I recover quickly and resume the change process when I revert to the old behavior.

## Some General Pointers

- \* Start wherever you are.
- \* Have a goal and make a plan to accomplish it.
- \* Make the plan for change specific, achievable, with numbered action steps.
- \* Visualize having accomplished your goal.
- \* Celebrate small steps. Reward yourself.
- \* Affirm your strengths. Remember you are effective and resilient.
- \* Acknowledge how difficult change may be.
- \* Name the things that might stop you. Know your risks and vulnerabilities. The old adage says, "Being forewarned is being forearmed."
- \* Get the support of others. A cheerleader can be a big boost. Tell others specifically how they can support you.
- \* Find yourself a role model you respect.
- \* Restructure your environment to support the change.
- \* Plan ahead not to get complacent.
- \* Don't take yourself too seriously! Keep your humor!