

Stages of Change

Pre-Contemplation –

What it sounds like: “I don’t have a problem”, “I’m only here because my husband made me come”, “The court told me to be here”, “My grandpa is 90 years old and he smokes two packs a day and he doesn’t have cancer”.

Counselor response: Educate and state facts of continuing behavior or maintaining status quo, emphasize that the choice is theirs, use statements to elicit change

Contemplation-

What it sounds like: “I am tired of waking up with a hangover every morning”, “I’ve got to figure out a way to start saving money”, “I’m tired of not fitting into my clothes

Counselor response: Emphasize change is theirs, do pros and cons of behavior change, continue to give facts, use statements to elicit change

Preparation –

What it sounds like: “I really want to stop smoking before my birthday next month”, “Do you know where a 12-step meeting is around here?”, “I’m going to give money to my mother to save for me so I won’t spend it all”

Counselor response: Help create a plan. Brainstorm a list of supports and places to go for services. PLAN PLAN PLAN. Ask client how friends and family can support them.

Action-

What it sounds like: “I smoked my last cigarette today”, “I torn up my ATM card so I wouldn’t be tempted to spend money”, “I started my new way of eating today”

Counselor response: Fine tune plan, continue to encourage client, encourage self-efficacy