

Stage 5: Maintenance

Characteristics

- Maintenance of the new behavior
- Avoiding temptation

Strategies

- Develop coping strategies for temptation
- Remember to reward yourself

The maintenance phase of the stages of change model involves successfully avoiding former behaviors and keeping up new behaviors.³ If you are trying to maintain a new behavior, look for ways to avoid temptation. Try replacing old habits with more positive actions. Reward yourself when you are able to successfully avoid a relapse.

If you do falter, don't be too hard on yourself or give up. Instead, remind yourself that it was just a minor setback. As you will learn in the next stage, relapses are common and are a part of the process of making a lifelong change.

During this stage, people become more assured that they will be able to continue their change.