

Transforming Habits

Wellness Workshops
Student Wellness Services

Fall 2023



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes

the **Blackfoot Confederacy** (the **Siksika**, **Piikani**, and **Kainai First Nations**), the **Tsuut'ina First Nation**, the **Stoney Nakoda** (the **Chiniki**, **Bearspaw**, and **Goodstoney First Nations**), and **Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III**.

The University of Calgary is situated on land adjacent to where the Bow River meets the Elbow River. The traditional Blackfoot name of this place is “**Moh'kins'tsis.**”

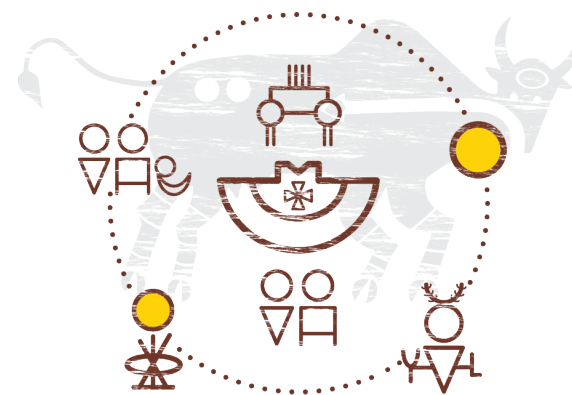


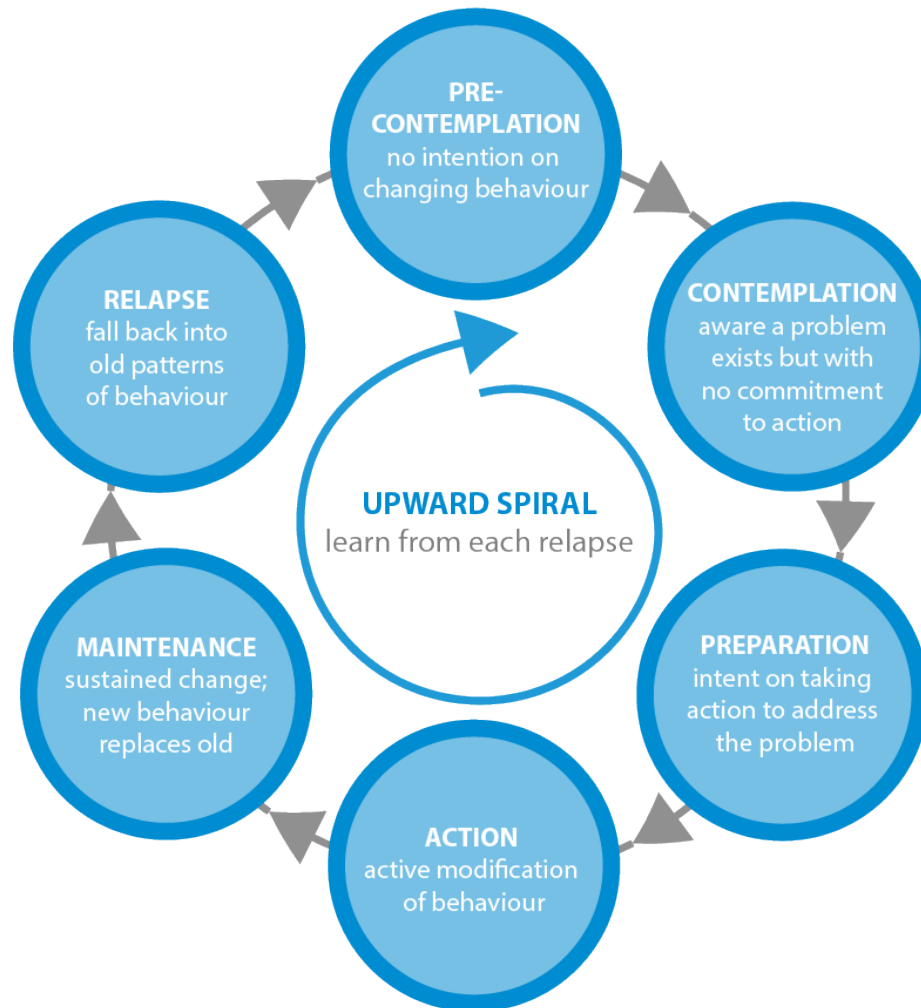
Image: The Cultural Model for the University of Calgary's Indigenous Strategy, *ii' taa'poh'to'p*

Objectives

- Learn and apply the Stages of Change model, habit cycle
- Learn strategies for how to apply change
- Explore the role of self-compassion in changing habits

Stages of Change Model

STAGES OF CHANGE



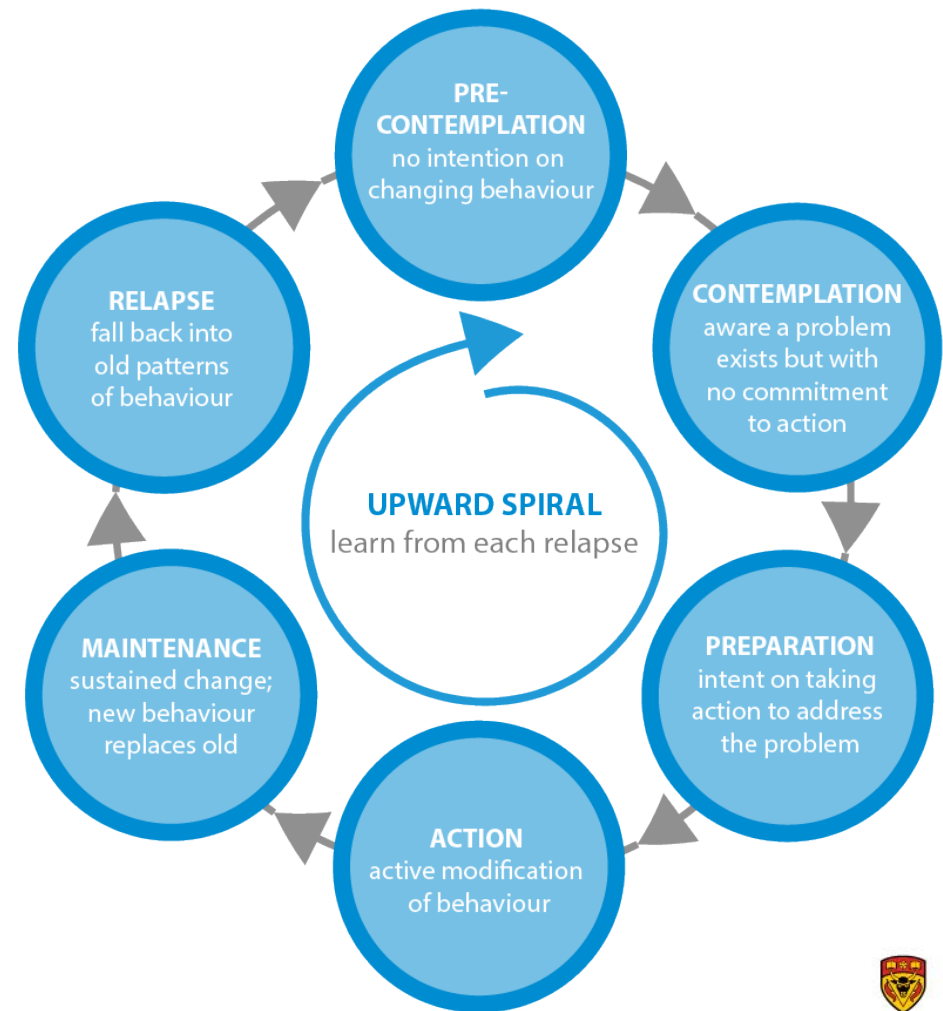
Stages of Change Model

Reflection Prompt

You've **identified a habit or behaviour** that you'd like to change...

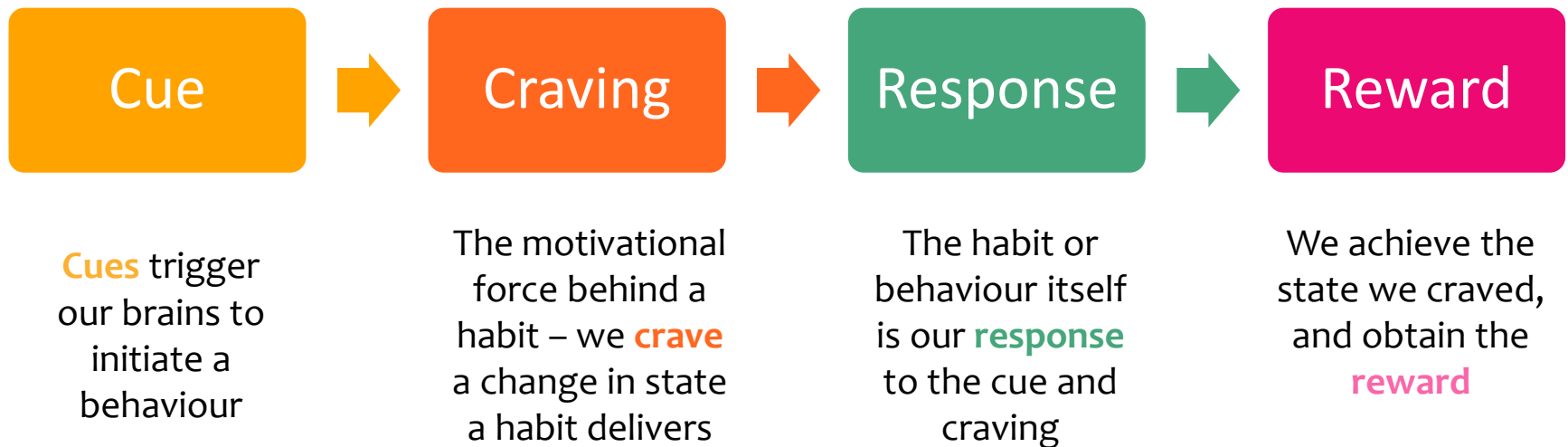
What **stage of change** do you think you are at?

STAGES OF CHANGE



The Habit Cycle

- We can use the habit cycle to **develop helpful habits** and **change unhelpful habits**



Pros and Cons Analysis

	COSTS / CONS	BENEFITS / PROS
STAY THE SAME	How does this behaviour/habit negatively impact your life?	What need does this habit meet for you?
WORK TOWARD CHANGE	Is there anything scary or uncomfortable about changing this habit?	What might improve for you if you change or reduce this habit?

Strategies for Change

- Identifying your **behavioural triggers** is a good place to start
- How can you reduce (or remove) triggers that may be reinforcing a habit you'd like to change?
- How can you increase your exposure to triggers that inspire helpful behaviours?



Behavioural Tracking

Example: This person has identified they would like to reduce cigarette smoking.

Date	Behaviour	What was I doing?	What was I feeling?	What was I thinking?	What were others around me doing?	Time of day, location, environment
<i>July 14</i>	<i>Bought and smoked cigarettes</i>	<i>Trying to write a paper</i>	<i>Anxiety, frustration</i>	<i>That I should not have left it to the last minute, that I would fail and mess up my GPA</i>	<i>I was alone, roommates were not home</i>	<i>Early afternoon, I was alone, very end of the semester</i>

Potential triggers: academic stressors (paper writing), procrastination, feeling anxious/frustrated, being alone

Strategies: writing support, trying new time management tools, studying with friends, exploring alternative behaviours when anxious or frustrated

Strategies for Change

- **Alternative Behaviours**

- Is there a different activity you can try?
- Remember – delaying engagement in a habit is still building toward change!

Strategies for Change

- **Implementation Intention**

- Make a plan beforehand about when, where and how you would like to implement a particular habit.
- Be specific!
- **Good:** *“I want to be better at playing the piano.”*
- **Better:** *“I will practice piano for 30 minutes, three times a week when I come home from school.”*

- **Habit Stacking**

- Identify a habit you are already currently doing and pair it with your desired changed behaviour!
- **Example:** *I’d like to drink more water. I already brush my teeth every morning, I’ll put a glass of water next to my toothbrush before bed.*

Strategies for Change



Reward



This is hard work! How will you reward yourself?



Remember the importance of self-compassion!

Self Compassion in Changing Habits

- We often experience **self-critical thoughts** related to our behaviour and habits we may be engaging in.
- Negative thoughts can create feelings of shame, guilt, and anxiety that actually **fuel** the habit cycle and can reinforce unhelpful behaviours
- **Try:** Making a shift toward **compassionate self-talk**.
 - ~~“Ugh, I caved and bought cigarettes again. I’m so ashamed. I couldn’t even make it a week. I’ll never be able to quit.”~~
 - “That was clearly a really hard day, and I reached for something quick and easy that would help calm me down. I’ve still reduced my smoking overall. I’ll keep working at it.”

Reminders:

- Changing our habits is hard work, and takes time.
- We develop habits as a way of coping. Even unhelpful behaviours bring us relief in some small way.
- Celebrating the wins helps keep you motivated and leads to more positive outcomes overall
- “Healthy” habits look different for everyone. The most effective approach is to engage in habits that are enjoyable, realistic, and help **you** achieve **your** personal goals.

Thank you! Questions?

Check out our other wellness workshops:

- Healthy Thinking
- Motivation & Time Management
- Boosting Self-Compassion
- Managing Stress and Anxiety

For the most up-to-date information on our resources and services, visit our website!

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services>