

# Autobiography in Five Short Chapters

## Chapter One

I walk down the street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I fall in.  
I am lost..... I am helpless.  
It isn't my fault.  
It takes forever to find a way out.

## Chapter Two

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I pretend I don't see it.  
I fall in again.  
I can't believe I am in the same place.  
But it isn't my fault.  
It still takes a long time to get out.

## Chapter Three

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I see it is there.  
I still fall in.... it's a habit.  
My eyes are open.  
I know where I am.  
It is my fault.  
I get out immediately.

## Chapter Four

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I walk around it.

## Chapter 5

I walk down another street.

# Looking at the Good Things, and the Not-So- Good Things

Check any or all of these short-term benefits of substance use that apply to you:

- Helps me deal with pain
- Helps me get to sleep
- Instant gratification (feeling good right away)
- Helps me deal with stress
- Puts off having to deal with something that I don't want to think about
- Makes me numb (helps me to stop having feelings)
- Gives me something to do when I feel lonely
- Helps me to socialize
- Helps me to relax
- Gives me a sense of courage
- Helps me to have fun and lifts my spirits
- Helps me feel normal, like one of the group
- Gives me something to do when I feel bored
- Helps me feel less depressed
- Makes the future seem brighter
- Helps me loosen up and be more exciting
- Makes it easier to tell someone off

Other short-term benefits:

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# Looking at the Good Things, and the Not-So- Good Things

Check any or all of these short-term consequences of substance use that apply to you:

- Costs a lot of money
- My family is disappointed in me
- Tolerance (I need more to get an effect)
- Creates stress
- My friends don't want to spend time with me
- Isolation and Loneliness
- Withdrawal
- Creates anxiety when I'm not using
- Legal problems
- Problems at work
- Premature aging
- Feeling hopeless
- More arguments with others
- Can't afford to do fun things
- Make decisions I regret later
- I put myself in dangerous situations
- Health consequences (write any that you have experienced below)

Other short-term consequences:

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# Carolyn's Pros and Cons for Substance Use



## Part One: Identifying the Pros and Cons

Pros (Good Things about my Substance Use)	Rating (1-4)	Cons (Not-so good things about my substance use)	Rating (1-4)
It relaxes me	2	I feel bad the next day	1
It helps me avoid thinking about my problems	4	I don't take good care of my children when I'm drunk	4
It's a way to socialize with friends	1	Its expensive	3
It's a way to reduce boredom	1	I could hurt someone if I drive while I'm drinking	4
	<b>Total:</b> 8		<b>Total:</b> 12

## Part Two: Assigning Importance to the Pros and Cons

How important is each of the above items to you in making a decision about your substance use? Write a number next to each item using the following choices:

- 1 = Slightly Important
- 2 = Moderately Important
- 3 = Very Important
- 4 = Extremely Important

Add up the totals for each column and compare.



## Reasons for Change

Making changes in your life is a real challenge and it helps to have a clear idea of why you want to make a change and what might help keep you motivated during the rough times.

### Some reasons for making a change might include:

- Relationships that are important to you
- Goals you want to reach
- Ways your health might improve
- Activities you want to pursue.

Top 5 Reasons for Change	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

**There are a lot of ways that you can put your list to use. Check any of these ideas that you think might work for you:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Write your list on a card and keep it with you

\_\_\_\_\_ Share your list with a supportive person so that they encourage you

\_\_\_\_\_ Write a poem or a jingle you can say or sing to yourself

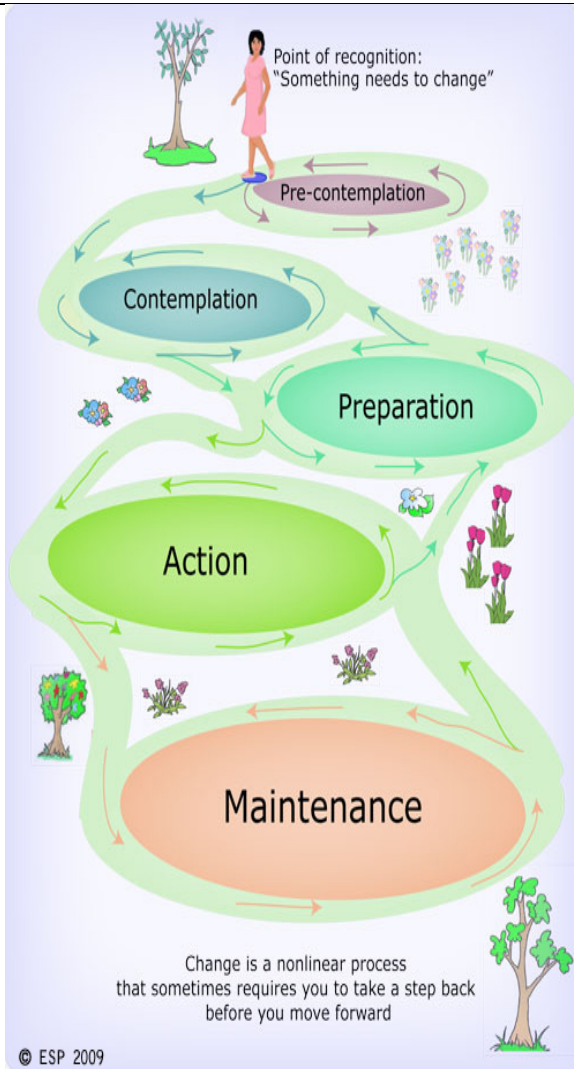
\_\_\_\_\_ Keep a journal with pictures to keep you inspired

\_\_\_\_\_ Make a poster and hang it in a place that you will see each day

\_\_\_\_\_ If your list involves people who are important to you, use their pictures or something they have given you to remind yourself of what you are working for

\_\_\_\_\_ Plan to call or talk to five people to tell them about your reasons for making a change

# Stages of Change



## **Pre-contemplation:**

- People are not considering change
- People are in denial or ignorant that they have a problem in the first place
- Sometimes a person will feel as though they have no control over their own behaviour

## **Contemplation:**

- People have conflicting emotions
- People see the benefits and costs to staying the same and changing
- People may feel as though they are giving something up.
- People can become ambivalent (unsure)

## **Preparation:**

- Experimenting with small changes
- Collecting information about changing
- Writing down goals, and writing down motivating statements
- A good foundation is important  
(Example of a poor foundation - New Year's Resolution)

## **Action:**

- Taking direct action toward achieving goal, making that change happen
- Important to reward yourself

## **Maintenance:**

- The change is no longer new, you are now living the change.
- Develop coping strategies to deal with temptations / old behaviours
- Important to reward yourself
- Setbacks/Relapses are common. Rebound and make life long changes.

<http://www.thepursuitofsassiness.com/2012/02/06/stages-of-change>



# Your Guide to the Stages of Change

