





PRECONTEMPLATION

We are not considering changing in the foreseeable future. We may lack awareness of any problems, or we may feel resigned to our problems.

CONTEMPLATION

We are becoming aware of the costs of the problems and of the nature of the problems. We intend to change, but we do not have solutions yet.

PREPARATION

We are aware of solutions and inspired by their benefits. We are planning appropriate and timely action to realize the solutions.

ACTION

We are putting our plan into action and revising it as we go, seeing the solutions take effect over time, while continuing to learn.

MAINTENANCE

We are largely free from our prior problems. We continue to deepen the changes and to strengthen the solutions.

SOURCES

These diagrams of the five paths were rendered by Nathan Strait (nathanstrait.com) on the 18th of June of 2015. They are based on the ancient Mahāyāna teaching of the five paths and the modern “transtheoretical model” of change, popularly known as the “stages of change.” The five paths are presented in innumerable texts, such as Asaṅga’s *Abhidharmasamuccaya: The Compendium of the Higher Teaching (Philosophy)*, translated from Sanskrit into French by Walpola Rahula and from French into English by Sara Boin-Webb, Fremont: Asian Humanities Press, 2001; the first volume of Longchenpa’s trilogy translated from Tibetan into English by Herbert V. Guenther as *Kindly Bent to Ease Us*, Emeryville: Dharma Publishing, 1976; and Reb Anderson’s Zen interpretation in his book *The Third Turning of the Wheel: Wisdom of the Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra*, Berkeley: Rodmell Press, 2012. The transtheoretical model of change has also been examined in many texts: a brief overview can be found in James O. Prochaska’s article “Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change” in the *Encyclopedia of Behavioral Medicine*, New York: Springer, 2013; more detailed treatments are in James O. Prochaska’s and John C. Norcross’s *Systems of Psychotherapy: A Transtheoretical Analysis*, 8th edition, Stamford: Cengage Learning, 2014; and John C. Norcross’s *Changeology: 5 Steps to Realizing Your Goals and Resolutions*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2012. The list of change catalysts is borrowed verbatim from Norcross’s book.