

## How ready are you to practice effective stress management?

Read the five descriptions below and circle the one that fits you best.

- 1. Precontemplation.**  
You are not intending to effectively practice stress management in the next 6 months.
- 2. Contemplation.**  
You are intending to effectively practice stress management in the next 6 months.
- 3. Preparation.**  
You are intending to effectively practice stress management in the next 30 days.
- 4. Action.**  
You have been effectively practicing stress management for less than 6 months.
- 5. Maintenance.**  
You have been effectively practicing stress management for more than 6 months.

What is your stage of change?

## Five Stages of Change for Practicing Effective Stress Management

This program will be most helpful if you start in the section of this manual designed for your stage of change. When you are ready, you can move on to the next section(s).



- 1. If you are not intending to practice effective stress management in the next 6 months,** we recommend that you start in the **Precontemplation** section on **page 5**.
- 2. If you are intending to practice effective stress management in the next 6 months,** we recommend that you start in the **Contemplation** section on **page 15**.
- 3. If you are intending to practice effective stress management in the next 30 days,** we recommend that you start in the **Preparation** section on **page 35**.
- 4. If you have been practicing effective stress management for less than 6 months,** we recommend that you start in the **Action** section on **page 53**.
- 5. If you have been practicing effective stress management for more than 6 months,** we recommend that you start in the **Maintenance** section on **page 73**.

# Precontemplation

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If you're in **Precontemplation**, you're not ready to use healthy stress management activities. That's OK. Congratulations for taking the first step by starting this program. You've come to just the right place. This program has helped many other people who also weren't ready, and we can help you, too.

The majority of people with stress want to manage it effectively, but many just aren't ready. Does this sound like you?

Do you feel:

- Trying to manage your stress could be overwhelming?
- You don't have time to deal with stress?
- You're not sure how to start managing stress effectively?

In this section, you'll find exercises that have been scientifically proven to help people like you. These exercises don't require you to do anything; they'll just give you new things to think about.

You can start with just one exercise, and come back later to do the rest, or do all the exercises now.

## Build Up the Benefits

People who don't feel ready to use healthy stress management activities often haven't focused enough on the good reasons to effectively manage stress.

The more good reasons, or Pros, you have to practice stress management, the easier it will be to take the next step—when you are ready.

On the next few pages, we've compiled a list of 50 benefits, or Pros, of effective stress management. While some of these may sound familiar, this list is bound to include some surprises!

