

MAKING A CHANGE

By Jennifer Brien



Changing behaviour can be the key to tackling many of the challenges we face in today's society, but anyone who has ever made a New Year's resolution knows all too well how difficult it can be to follow through. Use less plastic, drive less, eat healthier, exercise more—it all sounds so

simple. (That is, until someone brings a cake into the office!) Forming new habits requires time, commitment and effort and recognizing that it's a process can be the first step to success. One of the most popular models of behaviour change is the transtheoretical (TTM) model developed

in the 1980s. TTM is based around the idea that there are five stages of change (see below for a brief snapshot of each). The next time you want to make a change, consider where you're at in the process and if at first you don't succeed, don't be too hard on yourself, just try try again!

PRE-CONTEMPLATION

- Nah, that's not for me
- Denial

CONTEMPLATION

- Well, maybe I do need to do something.
- Let's just think about that.
- Am I ready to make a change?

PREPARATION

- Ok, what do I need to do now?
- Let's do some research.
- Set some goals and think about small steps you can make to change.

ACTION

- Let's do this!

MAINTENANCE (SIX MONTHS IN)

- I'm doing it!
- Just keep going.
- Resist temptation to revert back into old habits.

Source: Why behavior change is hard - and why you should keep trying; health.harvard.edu

HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU CAN TRY TO MAKE A CHANGE STICK

1. Make the change itself **fun** and something you can get excited about.
2. Try taking **small, tiny achievable steps**. The small wins create momentum to keep you moving towards your goal.
3. **Remove obstacles** that might get in your way. Make things as easy as possible. Tap and pay...need we say more?!

Speaking of behaviour change, did you know Smart Commute Central York is affecting real change in our community? Turn to page 9 to discover some of its impacts in the community.