



# Healthy People Review

## Sally Crosiar Reviews Helpful Books, April/May, 2003

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Praise hallelujah for the things we can learn from books. I continue to rely on them to help me get more juice from my personal life, and I also turn to them when I need to learn something for my work.

This month's book has a little for both work and personal life because change affects us in both arenas.

Change can happen to us - and we can make change happen in our lives. Choosing to set goals is choosing change - and even when we choose it ourselves, it's not always easy to make it work.

This month's book helps predict the stages we'll go through - and it identifies helpful support for each stage. So whether you're the changer or the helper - and we all get to play both roles - this book has a helpful framework to understand and work through positive change.

### **April's Book**

*Changing for Good: A Revolutionary Six-Stage Program for Overcoming Bad Habits and Moving Your Life Positively Forward*, by James O. Prochaska, John Norcross, and Carlo DiClemente.

Learning the processes of self-change helps give us a leg up when we try to kick a bad habit and when we choose to build a positive habit into our daily routine.

Prochaska, Norcross, and DiClemente have identified six stages that people go through as they create changes in their lives. They are:

**Pre-Contemplation** - before we accept a need for change

**Contemplation** - when we decide to change

**Preparation** - when we lay our plans, gather our resources, and get ready for a new way of doing things

**Action** - when we make our plans happen, and sometimes when we fall short of our goal

**Maintenance** - when we've achieved our goal and often need to find new rewards for our continued behavior change, and

**Termination** - when our behavior is so ingrained it no longer requires our attention.

### **Just one idea**

What struck me most in this book was the need to *really prepare* before embarking on a big change.

I saw the importance of preparation when I taught smoking cessation classes. The program was four sessions over a four week period. We intended that people would actually set a quit date between the second and third session. That way they'd have time to build their commitment, learn some helpful strategies, perhaps taper down before they actually quit smoking. But some people set





their quit date to coincide with the beginning of the program. I think they saw it as signalling a full commitment. I respected that, and in the early months of the program, I wondered if a better design might be to suggest that people quit the minute they entered the first session.

But it became clearer and clearer that the participants who took the time to carefully prepare were the ones who were able to successfully quit. They used the time to get stuff cleaned - their houses, their offices, their cars, their teeth. They bought a supply of gum and hard candy. (They told me that cinnamon flavor worked best to cut the craving for a cigarette.) They asked people to support their efforts and to be forgiving. They planned what they'd do instead of having a cup of coffee and a cigarette or when they got angry.

And when it came time for them to quit, their preparation helped them follow through on their commitment. Six months after they left the program, more people who quit at the first session were smoking again, and more people who took the time to really get ready were former smokers.

I was surprised, but *Changing for Good* bears out this experience. Preparation is an important stage. When we're preparing to make a change, we need help. The authors recommend helpful strategies for this stage as:

- ★ emotional arousal - dealing with whatever loss a change involves
- ★ self-re-evaluation - learning what worked for others who made this change and selecting the techniques that best fit our needs and temperament, and
- ★ commitment - which may be increased by the consciousness-raising strategy that's most useful during the contemplation stage.

## And on the Subject of Change and Books...

Order my book, *Find the Love of Your Life!* There's no bigger change than entering in or losing a love relationship, and *Find the Love of Your Life!* deals with both. And it's worth it!

You can find both my books on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or order them by contacting me at [sally@healthypeoplelearn.com](mailto:sally@healthypeoplelearn.com).



Here are the vitals.

*My Uncle Dave* \$9.35

*Find the Love of Your Life!* \$15.95

Add \$4.00 shipping and handling for each book. New York residents pay 7% sales tax.

## A Healthy Person Gets Around

- ★ April 7, my buddy Jim Rice and I train Kentucky 4-H Staff to use our nearly-off-the-presses *Youth Development Foundations for 4-H Camp Staff*.
- ★ April 28, 7PM, participate in the Values Realization Institute chat on Building Peace. Go to [www.valuesrealization.org](http://www.valuesrealization.org) for details.
- ★ April 29-30, I train Endorsers for the New York State School-Age Care Credential in Syracuse, NY.
- ★ May 2, 3, and 4, catch me onstage as I perform with in "Alphabet Soup", our YMCA variety show. (My 16th year!)
- ★ May 8, see my mentor Sid Simon in Rochester, NY!
- ★ May 20, I speak on Character Education at the Promise of Assets Conference, Batavia, NY.
- ★ May 22, I speak on Character Education again - a hot topic - at the NYS School-Age Conference, Holiday Inn, Rochester, NY.
- ★ May 30 - June 1, I teach the New York State Grange Institute for Leadership Development, Cortland, NY.