

How to Make Personal Changes – Activity

Kurt Lewin was a social psychologist in the 1930s. He was very interested in how change affected people. He wanted to know what things helped people to change successfully.

Lewin's theory of change has three steps:

1. Unfreeze
2. Change
3. Refreeze



Stage 1: Unfreezing

Lewin thought the first step was the most important one. It's about getting ready to change and understand that we need to get ready to move out of our **comfort zone**. When we feel ready to change we will be motivated to make it happen.

When we feel change is important it becomes urgent that we get started to make it happen. If there is no urgent deadline then we usually take more time to change. If there is no need to change then most of us will do nothing!

Stage 2: Change

Kurt Lewin thinks of change as a process of moving from one thing to another. This means you are now 'unfrozen' and can move in a new direction. This can be very scary for us.

Imagine going parachuting. You may be excited about it but when you stand on the edge of the plane to jump you get scared. You might even change your mind!

It is not easy to change and you will need to be kind to yourself and others during the transition. Having support from people you trust is important and remember that you will make mistakes. This is normal and that's OK.

Stage 3: Freezing

When you have made the change and they feel normal you will freeze again. You will have new friends and routines. Remember that this can take time to happen.

Change

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress." - Frederick Douglass

Change Model

You can use this process to see if you need to change by writing down the good and bad things about the change. When you think about the things involved in change it means you can choose the best path to take.

If you have a lot more positives (pros) listed it is easier for us to change. If the opposite happens and there is many negatives (cons) listed we are less motivation to change. If we feel pushed to change we're likely to get grumpy and dig in our heels.

Example: Amanda's story

Amanda has used this model to try to focus on losing weight by analysing helping forces and hindering forces in the table below.

Task 1: In pairs or small groups discuss what you might suggest to Amanda to help her to make and sustain change?

<u>Helping changes (pros)</u>	Life change I want to make:	<u>Stopping changes (cons)</u>
Amanda's feet are always very sore and doctor has said she needs to lose weight to stop the pain.	Weight loss of at least 10 kilos within 6 months.	Amanda loves cupcakes, lollies, potato chips, pizzas, hamburgers and fried food. She also loves a few beers on the weekend.
Many clothes do not fit. Amanda does not want to throw out her clothes and buy new ones.		Amanda has a busy lifestyle and doesn't always make time to do daily exercises.
Amanda's husband is very fit and eats healthily. He supports Amanda's wish to lose weight.		Amanda's mother is a great cook and is always sending cakes, biscuits, jam and other sweet foods over as gifts for the family.
Amanda's has a new job where she is standing on her feet for a long time. She really needs to lose this weight now.		Amanda often starts a new diet and then stops when she has lost a few kilograms.
Amanda has a lot of books with healthy recipes in the. She can borrow books from the library and buy cheap vegetables from the farmers market.		Amanda loves to socialise. She is often invited to dinner or a party where she is tempted to eat unhealthy food.

This short video clip explains the Change Model.

While it relates to a work setting, it may be useful to watch – especially if you want to think positive (helping) and stopping (hindering) force: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_06.htm

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Model for Change

Task 2: Think about how this model might be useful for you.

In pairs or small groups, discuss a life change that you want to make and work through the helping and stopping forces.

<u>Helping changes (pros)</u>	Life change I want to make:	<u>Stopping changes (cons)</u>