

Stages of change

VIGNETTES

Juan has been thinking about getting off the streets. He feels two ways about this. He is tired of not knowing where his next meal is coming from, and he's getting more and more worried about the dangers of street life. At the same time, he doesn't want to give up his independence and have to deal with the rules at the shelter.

Karen has just completed her first year of getting alcohol out of her life. She worked hard to accomplish this and, in the process, changed a lot of habits that weren't working for her. She decided to take a different route home from work so she wouldn't drive by her regular hangout, and she also began making some new friends who didn't drink. These changes have become a regular part of her life, and she likes that she can look at herself in the mirror each morning without feeling guilty.

James was recently fired from his job after results from a drug test indicated that he had been using cocaine. He is angry and resentful because he feels that he shows up at work each day and does his job well. He thinks that he is managing his life just fine, if people would just stay out of his business. James and his girlfriend have had some arguments lately about his drug use, but he's sure she'll get over it and things will get back to normal.

Tony Has smoke cigarettes since he was 15, but he began getting short of breath and then decided to quit for good mainly because he didn't want to be a bad role model for his kids. He bought some chewing gum and hard candies to have on hand whenever he wanted a smoke. He also decided to put the money he would have used each day to buy cigarettes into a jar so he could later use it to buy school supplies and clothes for his two sons. Even though it hasn't been easy, it's been 2 weeks since he's had a cigarette, and he's proud that he is doing the "hard work" for himself and his kids.

Anita wants to begin exercising more regularly. She is concerned about her high blood pressure and about her family history of diabetes. She has talked with friends about walking after work each day, but she is still trying to arrange her schedule so that they can do this regularly. She also intends to start taking the stairs to her apartment instead of the lift. She's pleased that she has done this once or twice, but knows she wants to make it part of her regular routine.