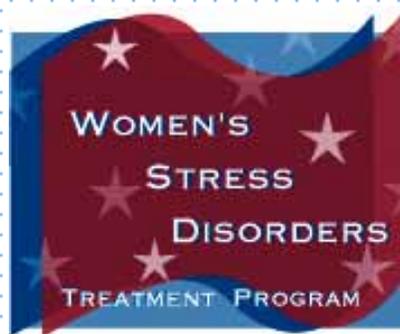


***Are you ready to  
make a change?***



**Stages in making changes**

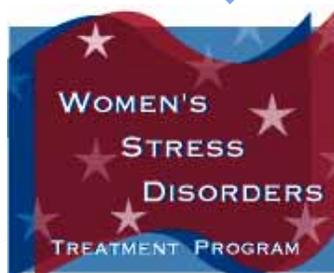


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## ***Making change***

- ◆ Most of us say we're ready to make a change before we actually are.
- ◆ Sometimes that leaves us feeling confused and demoralized when the change doesn't come about quickly, or at all.
- ◆ It is helpful to realize that deciding to change actually happens in stages.

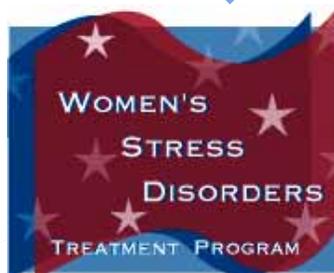


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## ***Stage 1: Precontemplation***

- ◆ You are either unaware of the need for change, denying the need for change, or feel so worn down by obstacles that you feel helpless to change.
- ◆ People tend to stay at this stage a long time because it feels safe and familiar.

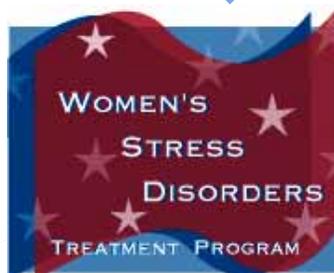


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## ***Stage 2: Contemplation***

- ◆ You realize you need to make a change.
- ◆ At this stage you are gathering information about possible solutions from every reliable source.

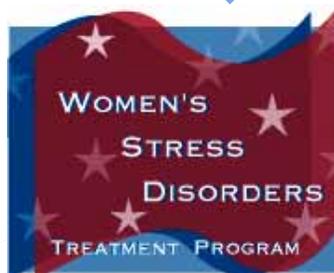


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## *More about Stage 2*

- ◆ Sometimes people try to skip this stage and jump right into action. Unless you are very lucky, this often leads to failure because your plan is not well thought out. You are likely to get stuck when an obstacle arises.
- ◆ It is also possible to get stuck in this stage by collecting every single piece of information available. This is only one stage, not the goal.

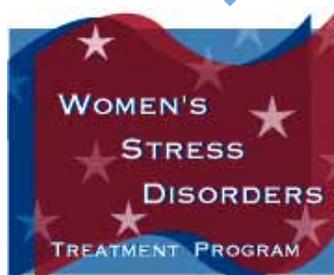


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## *Stage 3: Preparation*

- ◆ Plan the approach you will take.
- ◆ It is helpful to be honest about your motivations and to be honest with yourself about excuses for not achieving goals (“I’m too busy to fit in therapy homework”) and the real reasons (“I’m scared people won’t like me if I express anger”).

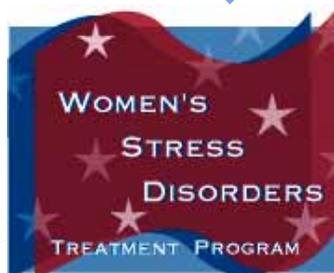


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## *Prepare for outside obstacles*

- ◆ Plan strategies for dealing with expected obstacles.
- ◆ For example, near anniversary dates of trauma you may want to build in additional social support or lighten your load in other ways.

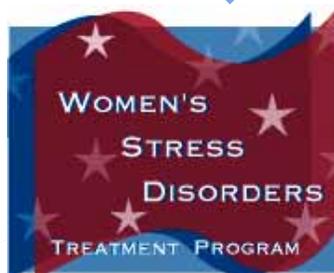


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***Notice the current ideas  
and behaviors that  
keep you stuck***

- ◆ Avoid telling yourself things like “I’ve always been that way”. Focus on how you want to be.
- ◆ Avoid beating the past to death.
- ◆ Try to set small, specific goals rather than waiting for “the one magic answer”.
- ◆ Try to focus on what you can change (your own thoughts and behaviors) rather than what you can’t (others, society, the past).

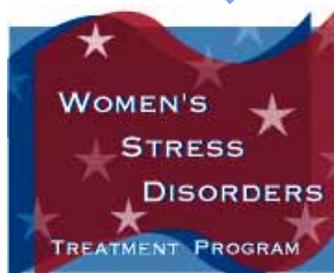


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## ***Stage 4: Action***

- ◆ Action requires daily commitment.
- ◆ Structure your days so it is easier to do things the new way than the old way.
- ◆ Focus on the benefits you get from this change.
- ◆ Make adjustments along the way as you learn what helps most.
- ◆ Give yourself time to see some change. Keep your eye on a long-term goal and what you need to do daily to get there.

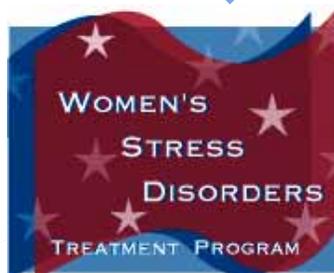


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## ***Stage 5: Maintenance***

- ◆ You've got it down now.
- ◆ When obstacles arise (e.g., feeling bored, angry, lonely) use them as a way to strengthen your learning about what tends to throw you and how to stay on track.
- ◆ Understand that you will have setbacks, but that doesn't mean you are back to square one or that you are worthless.



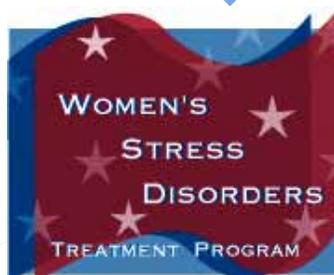
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## ***Stage 6: Termination***

**Your change is second nature.**

**Congratulations!**

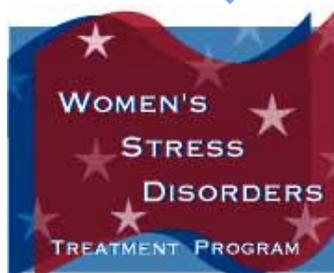


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***What stage did you seem to be in?***

- ◆ Think about what stage you are in with any of the problems you may have in your life.
- ◆ Take the quiz if you aren't sure.
- ◆ Allow yourself time to move through these stages, but *keep moving*.



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