

**ERS4 Master Question Database
Background Documentation
MA001 through MA 004**

Prochaska and DiClemente's Transtheoretical Model of the Stages of Change include: 1) precontemplation, (not thinking about the behavior); 2) contemplation (thinking about doing it); 3) preparation (definitely planning to start the behavior within the next month); 4) action (doing the behavior for less than 6 months); and 5) maintenance (doing the behavior for 6 months or more). These stages are cyclic and non-linear, and relapse can occur at any time. Although the stages have been applied to dietary behaviors, most instruments have not been cognitive tested with target audiences, and slight differences in wording can affect results. These four questions were cognitive tested with 18 low-income participants to assess the wording and formats for the questions and answers. We explored the perceptions of 'exercise' versus 'physical activity', the concept of servings, perceptions of fruits and vegetables, and other wording choices such as 'at least 2' versus '2 or more'. We also examined overall comprehension of the instructions and questions, recall strategies, and the decision-making processes of the respondents. Additional wording was added to each question to clarify terms not well understood. The result is a carefully-constructed, validated instrument which was further used in a pilot test of more than 1,000 participants to assure sensitivity to change. Each question showed significant positive movement in staging from pre- to post-test.