

The Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

P

Partnership



Your relationship with the other person is collaborative and based on mutuality. You work with and for the individual toward the shared goal while using a guiding style of communication. You share power and you recognize that both you and the other person have expertise to contribute.

A

Acceptance



You believe that everyone has inherent worth and the potential to grow from where they are. You have a nonjudgmental interest in understanding the other person's own experience and perspective, even when you don't agree or approve. You honor the other person's autonomy and self-determination to make choices and you accept and acknowledge their strengths.

C

Compassion



You are committed to the well-being of the other person, and it is their well-being and not the well-being and interest of your own, that's the primary guide. Your compassion is rooted from having the heart to help without judgment, shame and blame and you are able to demonstrate that the other person's needs are important.

E

Evocation



Rooted in the belief that people are inherently worthy and equipped with wisdom, strengths and resources, you take the approach of calling forth their expertise and abilities instead of trying to install in them what you believe they are missing. You express an unspoken message of "You have what you need, and together we will find it" instead of "I have what you lack, and I will give it to you."

The Core Skills of Motivational Interviewing

O

Open Questions



Open questions engage the other person by providing an opportunity for them to reflect, elaborate and answer questions more honestly. The opposite are closed questions, which only elicit "yes/no", one word, and simple responses. When talking about change, it's important to gain rich information around the change goal. Skillfully asking questions that are open, which open the door for the other person to give thoughtful consideration of what is on their mind, helps to do this.

A

Affirming



Rooted in the belief that people are inherently worthy and are equipped with wisdom, strengths and resources - affirmations are a way to recognize the other person's worth, intentions, behaviors and potential, by searching for these positives and commenting on them. When affirmations are accurate and expressed in a genuine way, they support self-efficacy and enhance rapport.

R

Reflecting



Reflecting begins with deeply listening to the other person. It involves making meaning out of what the other person is saying and not saying and communicating back what you heard. Reflective statements are often a guess at your understanding of what you heard and takes courage to communicate. Even when your guess is wrong, a good reflective statement encourages deep exploration. The aim is to have twice as many reflections than questions.

S

Summarizing



Summaries are a series of reflections used at different points of the conversation. They highlight the main points of what the other person expressed including highlights of the productive elements of the conversation, such as the person's intentions and efforts. Summaries are used when transitioning the conversation and can also be used when you feel stuck in the conversation.

Preparatory Change Talk

Desire

Listen for what they say they *want*, *like*, and *wish* to happen.

You can ask:

- What do you hope will come out of our work together?
- How would you feel differently if you made this change?
- What don't you like about your current situation?

Ability

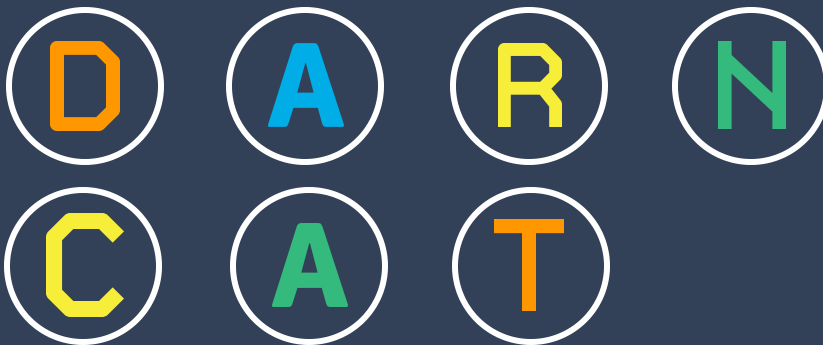
Listen for what they say they *can* do, are *able* to do, or *could* possibly do. You can ask:

- On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you that you are able to make this change if you decided to do it?
- How could you go about doing that?

Reason

Listen for the reasons why they are considering the change ("*if I...*", "*then I...*"). You can ask:

- If you were to make this change, what's the first thing you would notice?
- What could be some advantages of making this change?



Eliciting Change Talk

Motivational interviewing

Need

Listen for their own urgency in changing ("*It's important to...*", "*I need to*"). You can ask:

- On a scale of 1-10, how important is it to you, to make this change?
- What could happen if you don't stop _____?
- What must you do to change things around?

Mobilizing Change Talk

Commitment

Listen for what they say they are *going* to do and *intend* on doing.

You can ask:

- On a scale of 1-10, how committed are you to do this?
- What do you intend to try first?
- Which of these resource are you going to seek out to support this change?

Activation

Listen for what they say they are *willing*, *ready*, and *prepared* to do.

You can ask:

- On a scale of 1-10, how ready are you to take the first step?
- What actions are you willing to take before we meet again?
- What are you prepared to do first?

Taking Steps

Listen for what they say they have *already done* in support of the change goal. You can ask:

- What specific actions have you taken since we last met?
- What have you already started to do toward making the change?
- What have you done already?



DO's & DON'Ts



of Motivational Interviewing

Motivational interviewing is an evidence-based guiding style of communication that awakens an individual's own motivation for change when they are experiencing ambivalence. It is an effective communication tool to help the other person in their growth and development and is centered on the other person's well-being. It's a way of talking with them about their change goal, in a collaborative and supportive way.

+ Do's



Be a guide, not a director

Skillfully guide the conversation toward the change goal while only offering expertise where needed. Actively listen while exploring their ambivalence, evoking motivation, and seeking their wisdom.



Resist the righting reflex

Resist the urge and automatic response to tell the other person what you see wrong in what they are doing and how to fix it in an attempt to promptly set them on a better course. Not resisting the righting reflex is counterproductive and you become the opposite of a guide. You become a director.



Elicit change talk

Guide the other person in talking about their argument for changing. This calls forth their own internal motivators. The more people say aloud why it's important for them to change, the more likely they are to change.



Affirm the individual's own expertise and worth

Affirmations are a way to recognize the other person's worth, intentions, behaviors, and potential by searching for these positives and commenting on them. When they are accurate and expressed genuinely, they support self-efficacy and enhance rapport.

✗ Don'ts



Rush into problem solving

Take time to listen for understanding at the beginning of the engagement. Before exploring solutions, you want to build rapport, explain your role and understand their values, dilemma, and perspective.



Use threats or coercion

Using threats or coercion can backfire. It can lead to defensiveness or the individual simply saying what they think you want to hear. These conditions don't create the psychological safety for the individual to reflect on their own behaviors, attitudes, values, and internal motivators for change.



Elicit sustain talk

Sustain talk is an individual's argument against changing. While it's important not to ignore their argument/reason to stay the same, it's also important not to elicit this type of talk. Doing so will only strengthen it.



Give advice without getting permission

Ask permission before giving advice, and before doing so, first inquire into and understand what they already know. They too are the expert. After providing advice with permission, invite them to share their thoughts about the advice you provided.

The Process

of Motivational
Interviewing

“ MI is a goal-directed activity in which you help someone unravel whether, why, how, and when they might change. ”

- William Miller and Stephen Rollnick

1

Engage

Hi!

The process of establishing a mutually trusting and respectful helping relationship.

- Provide a warm greeting and establish rapport
- Explain goals for meeting and invite the individual to share what's important for them to discuss
- Begin to explore the individual's perspective and concerns, including the potential targets for change
- Avoid the chit-chat trap, problem solving and advice

2

Focus

What?

The process of clarifying and focusing on the specific achievable change goal and establishing a clear direction toward change.

- Clarify the specific goal for change
- Explore the individual's ambivalence and barriers
- Deepen the conversation by using more complex reflections that take guesses about what the individual is expressing and experiencing

3

Evoke

Why?

The process of recognizing and responding to the individual's own argument/motivation for change.

- Listen for, respond to, and reinforce talk around why the individual wants to change - their own internal motivators
- Explore the individual's confidence and importance levels around the change
- Be careful of steering too far and too fast

4

Plan

How?

The process of developing a specific change plan that the individual is willing to implement.

- Confirm the change goal again
- Elicit individual's input as to the best way forward
- Develop an implementation plan and strengthen commitment
- Troubleshoot potential barriers