

Motivational Interviewing

CORNELIA IUCHA, PH.D.

Agenda

- ❖ Motivational Interviewing (MI) overview.
- ❖ Spirit of MI.
- ❖ Method of MI.
- ❖ Core skills to engage in collaborative working relationship.
- ❖ Evoking the person's own motivation to change.
- ❖ Responding to discord.
- ❖ Evoking hope and confidence.
- ❖ Wrap-up. Questions and comments.

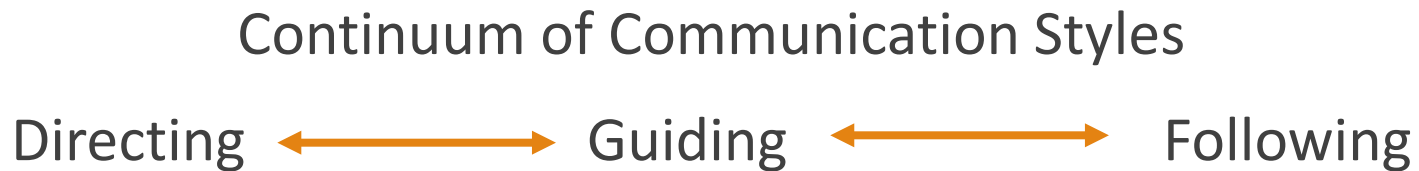
“People are generally better persuaded by the reasons which they have themselves discovered than by those which have come into the mind of others.”

Pascal – *Pensées* (1660)

What MI Is

“Motivational Interviewing is a collaborative conversation style for strengthening a person’s own motivation and commitment to change.”

Miller & Rollnick (2013)



William Miller video re: MI Style

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsNgZ47o2I4>

MI. Core Assumptions.

- ❖ Ambivalence about change is normal
- ❖ Arguments both for and against change reside within the ambivalent person
- ❖ When a helper uses a directing style and argues for change with a person who is ambivalent, it naturally brings out the person's opposite arguments
- ❖ People are more likely to be persuaded by what they hear themselves say
- ❖ We want to guide the client and evoke their own motivation and commitment for change

Ambivalence Poll

Think of an important change you made in the past 10 years.
Were you ambivalent about it?

Yes

No

History of MI

- ❖ Origins in treatment of substance use disorders
- ❖ Intentional alternative to traditional confrontational treatment

William Miller Video re: MI Origins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdDnRw0pPXc>

Note about Language

Non-judgmental language, free of moralistic overtones

- ❖ Avoid labels (substance “abuser” or “addict”), use alternative formulations such as person with an alcohol/drug problem
- ❖ Focus on describing behavior:
You’ve returned to using pills vs. You’ve relapsed

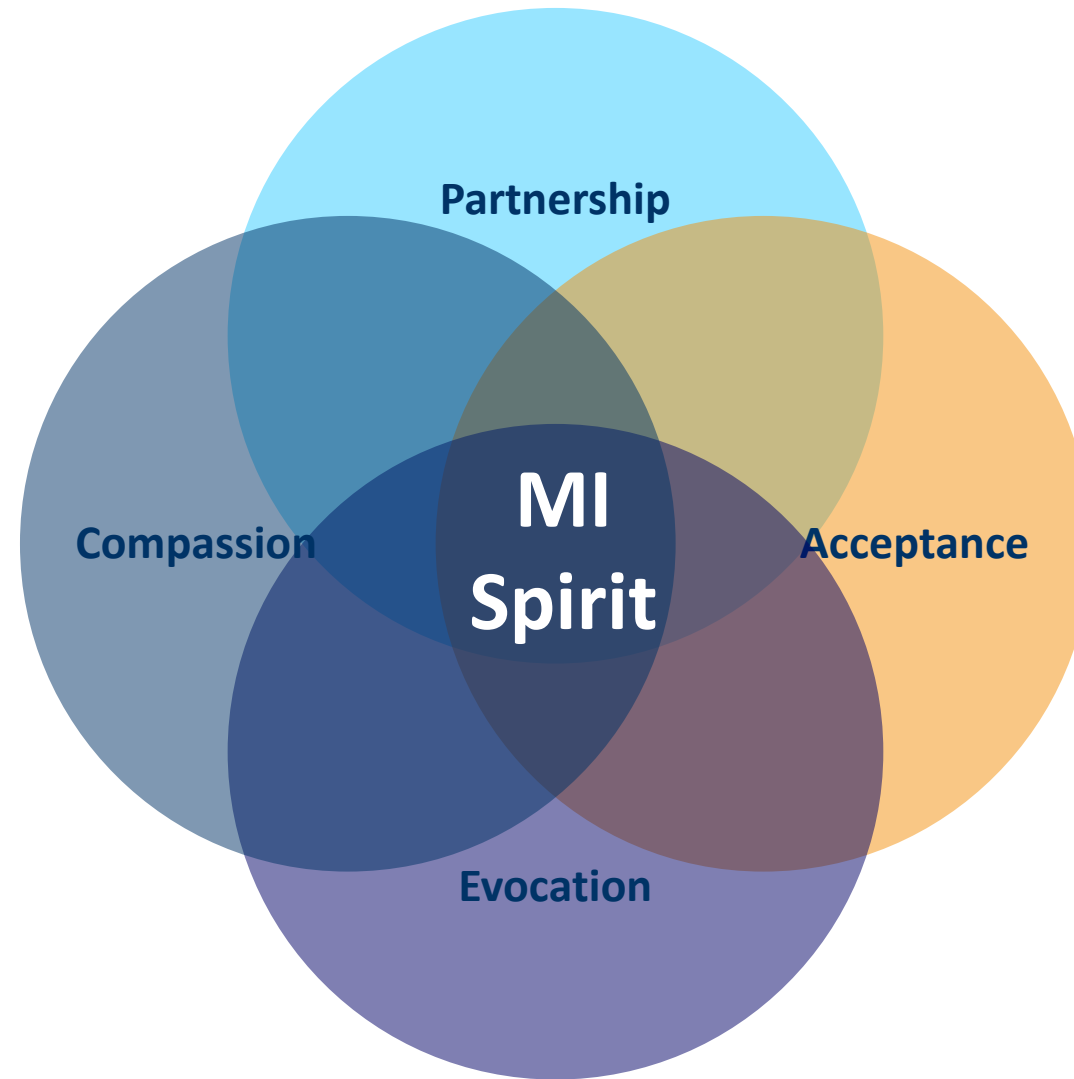
Importance of inclusive language – *I* and *we*.

- ❖ *When we’re under the influence we often make poor decisions.*

MI has been used by practitioners across a variety of intervention and professional spectrums

- ❖ Terms today: *Practitioners/Helpers* and *Clients*

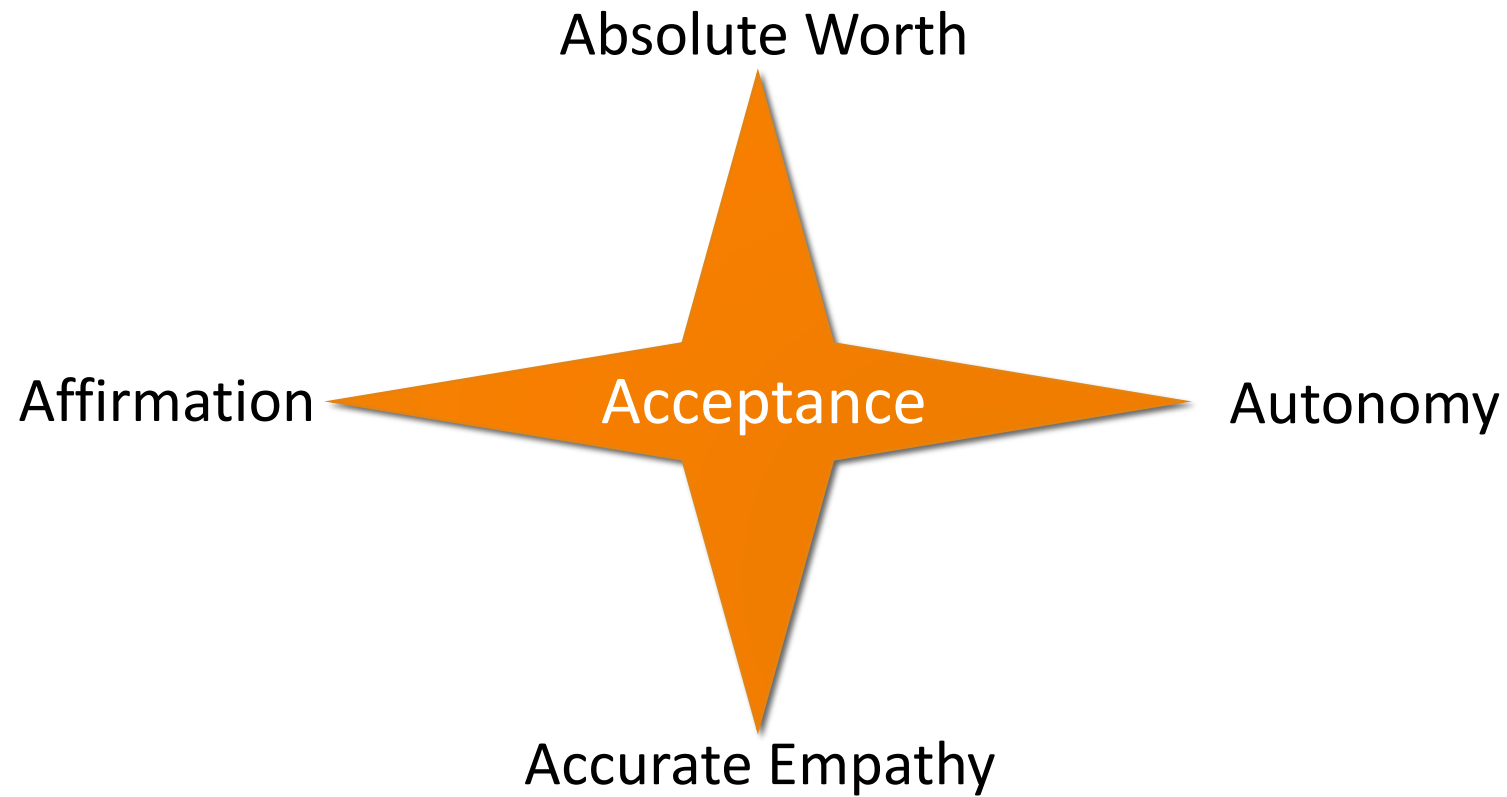
THE SPIRIT OF MI



MI Spirit: Partnership



MI Spirit: Acceptance



MI Spirit: Acceptance (cont.)

Absolute Worth

- ❖ Value the intrinsic worth and potential of every human being
- ❖ Contrast with judgment

Autonomy

- ❖ Explicit recognition of the person's right and capacity for self-direction
- ❖ Contrast with control and coercion
- ❖ Freedom of choice diminishes defensiveness



MI Spirit: Acceptance (cont.)

Accurate Empathy

- ❖ Effort to understand the client's world from their perspective:
 - Client's reality (present and past)
 - Beliefs, feelings, values, hopes
- ❖ Empathy is the ability to understand another person's frame of reference and the conviction it is worthwhile to do so.

Affirmation

- Seeking and acknowledging the person's strengths, efforts and values
- Seeing the glass half-full (sometimes, a quarter- or eighth-full)

MI Spirit: Evocation and Compassion

Evocation

- ❖ Based on a strength-focused premise
- ❖ Message: “*You* have what you need, and together we will find it”.
- ❖ Drawing out ideas and solutions from within clients
- ❖ Principle: “Motivation for change is not installed, but is evoked. It’s already there and just needs to be called forth.”

Compassion

“A deliberate commitment to pursue the welfare and best interests of the other”

(Miller & Rollnick, 2013)

THE UNDERLYING SPIRIT OF MI



Method of MI. The Four Processes of MI.

- 1. Engaging:** Is the process of establishing a helpful connection and working relationship.
- 2. Focusing:** Is the process by which we develop and maintain a specific direction in the conversation about change.
- 3. Evoking:** Involves eliciting the client's own motivations about change and lies at the heart of MI.
- 4. Planning:** Encompasses both developing a commitment to change and formulating a concrete plan of action.

Engagement: Questions

- ❖ How comfortable is this person talking to me?
- ❖ How supportive and helpful am I being?
- ❖ Do I understand the person's perspective and concerns?
- ❖ How comfortable do I feel in this conversation?
- ❖ Is this interaction a collaborative partnership?

OARS: Foundational MI Skills.

Open Questions

Affirmations

Reflections

Summaries



Fundamental Skills: OARS

Open-Ended Questions: Eliciting information, understanding client's perspective

Affirmations: Recognition of efforts; recognition of strengths- tied directly to target behavior.

Reflective Listening. Reflections: Understanding, empathy, eliciting more, reinforcing change talk.

Summaries: Understanding, eliciting more, reinforcing change talk, transition to planning.

Avoid: Common Traps that Disengage.

❖ The Expert Trap

❖ The Labeling Trap

❖ The Premature Focus Trap

OARS: Open-Ended Questions

- ❖ Questions that require more than yes/no, or single word answer
- ❖ Often start with words such as
 - “How...” *How did that make you feel?*
 - “What...” *What are some of the things you enjoy doing?*
 - “Tell me about...” *Tell me about your concerns about smoking.*
- ❖ Usually go from general to specific.



OARS: Open-Ended Questions (cont.)

- ❖ Using open-ended questions
 - Encourages engagement
 - Opens the door for exploration

- ❖ Evocative, collaborative, honors autonomy

- ❖ Explore: Needs, values, expectations, experience, feelings, beliefs, priorities, importance, confidence

- ❖ Opportunity to explore ambivalence

Practice: Open or Closed Questions?

Would you like to cut down or quit altogether?	Closed
What are your reasons for not going to treatment?	Open
Are willing to come and talk to me this week?	Closed
What's an area that feels successful in your life right now?	Open
How many times have you tried to quit smoking?	Closed
How would your life change if you decided to stop using?	Open

Practice: Open Questions. 10 min.

Convert the following closed questions into open questions:

1. Does your drinking concern you?
2. Do you like your job?
3. Are you and your wife getting along OK?
4. How many drinks do you usually have a day?
5. Is your recovery from the surgery going well?
6. Are you still doing drugs because you are too stressed at work to stop?
7. Would your life be better if you gave up the drugs?
8. Do you feel depressed or worried?

OARS: Affirmations

- ❖ Are statements of appreciation for the client and his/her strengths.
- ❖ Build self-efficacy, orient people to their resources
- ❖ Emphasize clients capacities, effort and perseverance
- ❖ Affirmations are distinct from general praise
- ❖ Affirmations need to be genuine and personal, not generic or forced.
- ❖ Nurture a competent instead of a deficit worldview of clients

OARS. Affirmations ≠ Cheerleading.

Sometimes I hate when people give me encouragement. I feel like saying "Shut up I know I can do it, I just don't want to."



OARS: Affirmations. Examples.

Demonstrate support, hope, or caring:

- ❖ *This is hard, and you keep bringing your best effort each week.*

Recognize effort and positive intentions:

- ❖ *You really tried hard this week.*
- ❖ *Your intention was good even though it didn't turn out as you would like.*

Recognize strengths. Can reframe difficulties as a personal strength:

- ❖ *Once you make up your mind, you really stick with it.*
- ❖ *You're not a quitter; you're determined to succeed.*
- ❖ *It was very hard to keep going. Yet, you somehow had the internal strength to keep moving forward.*

Show appreciation for values:

- ❖ *Being honest is important to you, and you were honest when...*

Reflective Listening

“Reflective listening is a way of checking rather than assuming that you know what is meant.”

(Miller and Rollnick, 2002)

Reflective Listening

- ❖ Good listening is fundamental to MI.
- ❖ Guiding principle: It is valuable to give client the opportunity to follow and reflect on his/her own experience.
- ❖ It involves undivided attention.
- ❖ Shows that you have accurately heard and understood the client
- ❖ Strengthens the relationship
- ❖ Allows for exploration of uncomfortable material
- ❖ Can be used strategically to facilitate change

Reflective Listening

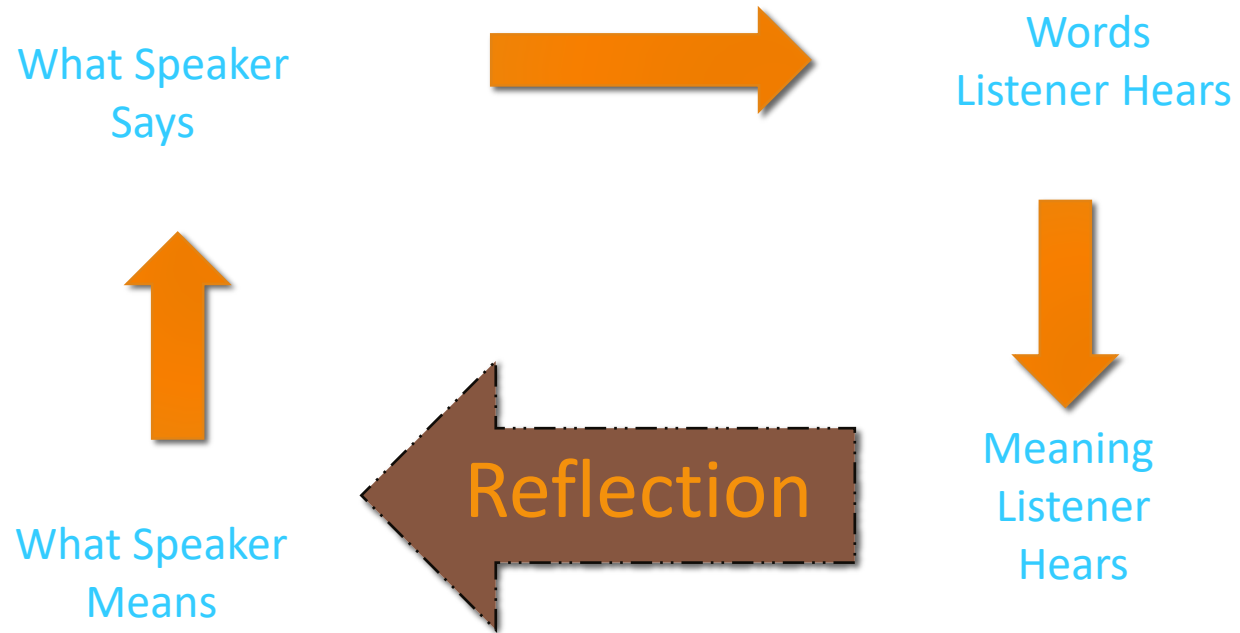
To think reflectively, recall that:

- ❖ What we assume people mean is not necessarily what they mean
- ❖ Most statements can have multiple meanings

I wish I were more sociable. Possible meanings:

- ❖ I feel lonely and I want to have more friends.
- ❖ I get very nervous when I have to talk to strangers.
- ❖ I should spend more time getting to know people.
- ❖ I would like to be popular.
- ❖ I can't think of anything to say when I'm with people.
- ❖ People don't invite me to their parties.

Process of Communication



OARS: Reflections.

- ❖ Statements intended to mirror the content (explicit or implicit) of the client's speech
- ❖ Seek to understand the person's subjective experience, offering reflections as guesses about the person's meaning
- ❖ Reflections focus on the client's own narrative rather than asserting the helper's understanding of it
- ❖ Reflective listening involves making statements, not asking questions.
 - *You don't think this is a problem. VS. You don't think this is a problem?*

OARS: Levels of Reflections

Simple (or Surface)

- Close to what client has said
 - Repeating, rephrasing
- Does not add an additional point or direction

Complex (or Below the surface)

- Adds meaning or emphasis to what the person has said
- Guesses at the unspoken
- Reflects how the person is feeling
- Used when you want to guide the conversation towards change



OARS: Levels of Reflections. Examples.

Client: *I'm feeling pretty depressed today.*

Practitioner: *You're feeling kind of down.*

Practitioner: *Something has happened since we last talked.*

Simple

Complex

Client: *I'm not sure I buy this therapy crap.*

Practitioner: *You're not sure you buy this.*

Practitioner: *The idea of therapy makes you uncomfortable.*

Simple

Complex

Client: *I think I'm probably being too careful. My last test results were good. It just scares me when I feel pain like that.*

Practitioner: *That pain makes you afraid.*

Practitioner: *It reminds you of your heart attack.*

Simple

Complex

OARS: Double-Sided Reflections

- ❖ A double-sided reflection acknowledges both sides of the person's ambivalence
- ❖ Can be formulated with phrases such as "*On the one hand you feel... and on the other...*"
- ❖ Start with the side that favors the status quo and end with the side that favors change.
 - Link the two sides of the ambivalence with AND not BUT

Client: *It's been fun, but something has got to give. I just can't go on like this anymore.*

Practitioner: *On the one hand, you've had a good run, and on the other, you can see that it's coming to an end.*

OARS: Amplified Reflections

- ❖ Overstate what the client has said
- ❖ The intent behind it is to make space for the client to consider alternatives – evoke reasons for change

Client: *My husband doesn't like it when he sees me drinking but I don't see my drinking as a problem.*

Practitioner: *You don't have any concerns about your drinking at all.*

Client: *Well, I don't like how much I spend on alcohol. I could be doing other things with the money.*

POLL. OARS: Reflections.

Client: *I cough more these days than I used to but I can't quit smoking. I mean, all my friends smoke!*

Helper: *You can't imagine how you could not smoke with your friends, and at the same time you're worried about how it's affecting you.*

What kind of reflection?

- ❖ Surface
- ❖ Below the surface
- ❖ Double-sided reflection
- ❖ Amplified

Ratio of Reflections to Questions.

“We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.”

Epictetus

Practice: OARS: Reflections. 10 min.

Respond to the following client statement:

"I really want to lose weight"

With:

- ❖ Two simple reflections
 - Example: *You really want some weight to come off.*
- ❖ Two complex reflections
 - Example: *Losing weight is a priority for you right now.*

OARS: Summaries

- ❖ Periodically summarize what has been discussed up to that point
 - Consists of selective, concise reflections
- ❖ Summary can be used to
 - Begin or end a discussion
 - Transition
- ❖ Double-sided reflections are often highly effective as summaries to illustrate ambivalence.
- ❖ Strategic summary – select what information should be included and what can be minimized or left out.

OARS: Summaries

❖ Begin with:

- *“Let me make sure I’m understanding exactly what you’ve been trying to tell me...”*
- *“This is what I’ve heard so far...”*

This is what I’ve heard so far: You’ve been drinking since you were 17, alcohol is a part of your life, you can’t imagine watching sports or getting together with your friends without alcohol. At the same time, your drinking has increased in recent years, you spend less time with your family and friends and your doctor is concerned about your liver.

❖ Follow a summary with:

- *OK, how did I do?*
- *What have I missed?*



Summaries

Making this...



...into this



Humorous video re: Reflective Listening

Everybody Loves Raymond

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VOubVB4CTU>

Evoking the Person's Own Motivation

“MI helps people to keep moving forward through the natural process of resolving ambivalence”.

(Miller and Rollnick, 2002)



Change Talk



- ❖ Client speech that favors movement in the direction of change.
- ❖ Opposite is *sustain talk*—speech that favors things staying the same (status quo).
- ❖ Expresses client’s desire, ability, reasons, & need to change.
- ❖ Conveys optimism about making change & the benefits of succeeding.
- ❖ States willingness and intention to change.

Evoking Change Talk

Recognizing change talk: training our minds to identify it and responding to it in a way that builds the momentum of change talk

Eliciting change talk: Asking evocative questions, building on the change talk that the client provides.

Change Talk or Sustain Talk?

- 1. I have a lot going on in my life right on, I don't want to give up the weed, is the one thing that helps with stress.* **Sustain**
- 2. This is a bad spot for me to be in, but I've done it before, I was sober for a whole year.* **Change**
- 3. Even if I wanted to quit, I wouldn't even know where to start.* **Sustain**
- 4. I've accomplished many things in my life, getting my blood sugar control shouldn't be this hard.* **Change**
- 5. My doctor says I drink too much, but I say where's the harm? I never missed a day at work and I'm still in good shape.* **Sustain**
- 6. I've been drinking for 30 years but all good things need to come to an end.* **Change**

Evocative Questions

DARN

- ❖ Desire
- ❖ Ability
- ❖ Reasons
- ❖ Need



Asking Evocative Questions

Desire

- ❖ How do you *want* your life to be different a year from now?
- ❖ How would you *like* for things to change?
- ❖ What are *looking for* from this program?

Ability

- ❖ What ideas do you have about how you *could* cut back on the drinking?
- ❖ How likely are you to be *able to* quit the pills?
- ❖ If you did decide to stop smoking, how *could* you do it?

Asking Evocative Questions

Reasons

- ❖ What's the downside of how things are right now?
- ❖ What would make it worth your while to reduce your drinking?
- ❖ Why would you want to get more exercise?
- ❖ What could be some advantages for quitting using?

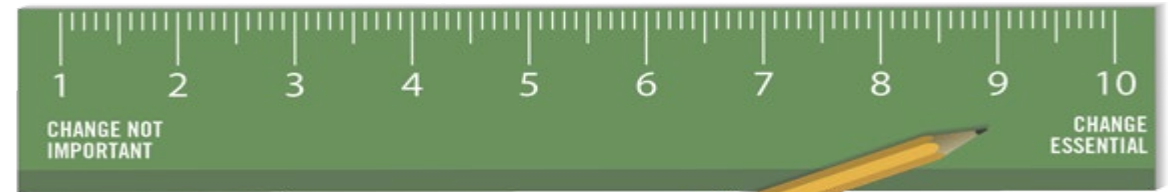
Need

- ❖ How *important* is it for you to _____ ?
- ❖ How *serious* or *urgent* does this feel for you?
- ❖ What do you think *has* to change?

Evoking Motivation. The Wrong Questions.

- ❖ Why do you have to smoke/drink/use?
- ❖ Why aren't you trying harder?
- ❖ Why can't you just quit?
- ❖ What were you thinking when you ____ ?
- ❖ What's the matter with you?

Evoking Motivation. Importance Ruler.



1. *On a scale of 0-10, how important is it to you to quit smoking?*
2. *Why are you at ____ and not (a lower number)?*

My wife doesn't like the smell and I want to be a good role model for my kids. And this Covid thing doesn't help either.

3. Reflect.
4. Ask key question: *Where does this leave you?*

Practice: Evoking Motivation. Importance Ruler.

Practitioner: *On a scale of 0 to 10, how important is it to you cut back on the drinking?*

Client: ____ .

Practitioner : *Why are you at ____ and not (a lower number)?*

Client: ____ .

Practitioner: Reflect.

Client: ____ .

Practitioner: *Where does this leave you?*

Client: ____ .



Exchanging Information

“Unsolicited advice is the junk mail of life.”

Bern Williams

“Advice is what we ask for when we already know the answer but wish we didn’t.”

Erica Jong

“The purpose is not to deliver the advice, but rather to foster change.”

Miller & Rollnick

Informing the MI Way

- ❖ Obtain permission prior to providing information.
- ❖ Do not deliver comprehensive education. Limit what you offer & tailor it to the client.
- ❖ Create opportunity for the client to process and respond to the information you provide.
- ❖ Acknowledge client as the expert on their own lives.
- ❖ Encourage the client to use the information as it suits them.

A Simple Strategy



Responding to Sustain Talk and Discord

- ❖ Sustain Talk – client language that is a reflection of the benefits, or an acceptance, of status quo.
 - One side of the ambivalence
 - About the target behavior.
- ❖ Discord – active pushing back against the practitioner.
 - About the working alliance with the client.
- ❖ Sustain talk and/or discord -> change unlikely to occur
- ❖ Goal: limit discord.
- ❖ Dancing with discord.

Responding to Sustain Talk

- ❖ Reflections: Simple, Complex, Amplified reflections, Double-sided reflections.
 - *You think it's going to be a real challenge to change the way you cook and eat, and you also know how important it is to keep your blood sugar regulated.*

Strategic Responses

- ❖ Emphasizing autonomy.
 - *It's certainly your choice. It's really up to you. You're in the driver's seat. What you choose to do is your decision.*
 - Client: *I really don't want to make any big changes in how I eat.*
 - Practitioner: *You like the freedom of eating whatever you want.*

Responding to Sustain Talk (cont.)

❖ Reframing

- Client: *My wife is always nagging me about this.*
- Helper: *She must be really care about you.*

- Client: *I've been through so much lately. I don't know if I want to take on this on, too.*
- Helper: *You're quite a survivor.*

❖ Agreeing with a twist

- Client: *I can't imaging myself not smoking. It's part of who I am, part of everything I do.*
- Practitioner: *You just wouldn't be you without it! It's so important that you may just have to keep on smoking no matter what the cost.*

Video. Shifting Focus in Practice.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJYruT30gZI>

Signs of Discord

- Defending
- Oppositional stance, arguing
- Interrupting
- Disengaging (ignoring, discounting)



Dancing with Discord

- Reflect, reflect, reflect

Client: You've never been through what I've been through. How can you possibly understand me?

Practitioner: You're looking for some help, and you're not sure if I'm the right person to provide it.

- Apologize
- Affirm
- Emphasize autonomy
- Agree with a twist
- Shift focus/Reframe



Dancing with Discord

Agreeing with a twist:

- ❖ Client: *I hate being told I can't eat whatever I want.*
- ❖ Practitioner: *It's tough having to make food choices all the time.*

Apologizing:

- ❖ *I didn't mean to lecture you. Oh, sorry, I must have misunderstood you.*

Affirming:

- ❖ Client: *I can do this on my own without your help.*
- ❖ Practitioner: *Once you make your mind up about something you can get it done.*

- ❖ Client: *You don't know what you're talking about.*
- ❖ Practitioner: *You've really thought this through.*

The Drama of Change

- ❖ Sustain talk is a normal part of ambivalence and should not be interpreted as “resistance”
- ❖ Discord signals dissonance in the working alliance
- ❖ Both sustain talk and discord can be significantly increased or decreased depending on how the practitioner responds

Evoking Hope and Confidence

“You have not done people any favor if you cause them to believe that change is urgent but beyond their reach”

(Miller & Rollnick, 2013)

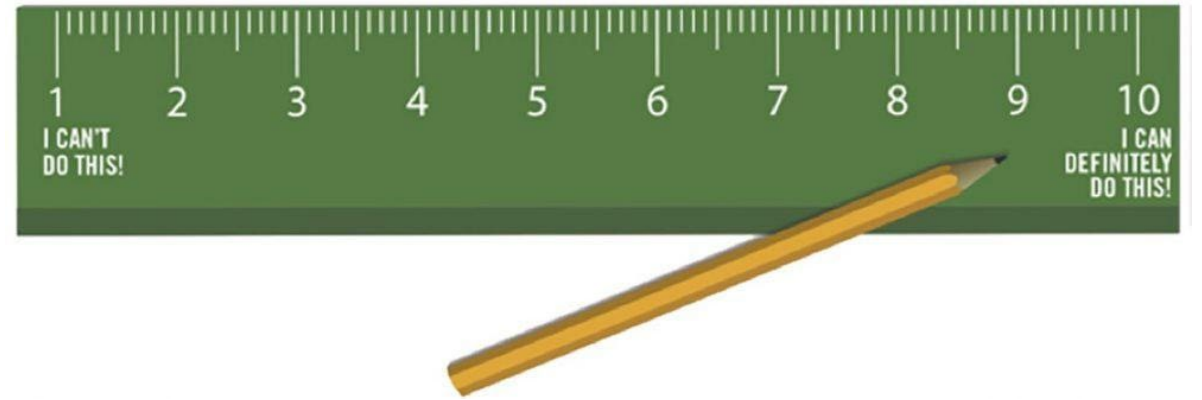
Strengthening Confidence

Recall DARN?

Ask open questions that evoke hope and confidence

- ❖ *How might you go about making this change?*
- ❖ *What might be a good first step?*
- ❖ *Given what you know about yourself, how could you make this change successfully?*
- ❖ *What obstacles do you foresee, and how might you deal with them?*
- ❖ *What gives you some confidence that you can do this?*

Strengthening Confidence (cont.)



Confidence Ruler

- ❖ *How confident are you that you could do this if you decided to? On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all confident and 10 is extremely confident, where would you say you are?*
- ❖ *Follow up with: Why are you at ___ and not (a lower number)?*
- ❖ *Reflect the client's statements about his/her strengths*

Strengthening Confidence (cont.)

Reviewing Past Successes

- ❖ *What changes have you made in your life that were difficult for you?*
- ❖ *What things have you managed to do that you weren't really sure at first you would be able to do?*
- ❖ Reflect, reflect, reflect.
- ❖ Explore with: *Tell me how you did it.*

Brainstorming

- ❖ Encourage client to freely generate ideas on how a change might be accomplished

Summary

- ❖ MI – motivational conversation about change
- ❖ MI assumes ambivalence is a natural part of change
- ❖ MI philosophy rests on four pillars: Partnership, Acceptance, Evocation and Compassion.
- ❖ OARS are key skills for facilitating engagement
- ❖ MI aims to evoke and strengthen a client's own motivation for change
- ❖ The MI practitioner “dances with discord”.
- ❖ The MI practitioner evokes hope and confidence in the client's capabilities

References

Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change* (3rd edition). Guilford Press.

Rosengren, D.B. (2017). *Building Motivational Interviewing Skills: A Practitioner Workbook* (2nd edition). Guilford Press.