Motivational Interviewing

II

Worksheets
Responding to Resistance

Simple Reflection

Simply acknowledging the feelings, beliefs, perceptions, or attitudes of the other just as they are reported:

Clt: I’m not the one with the problem. If I drink, it’s because my husband is always nagging me.
Ther: It seems to you that the real reason you drink so much has to do with the problems in your marriage.

Amplified Reflection

Empathically reflect back in an amplified form an aspect of the other’s statement without the use of sarcasm:

Clt: I couldn’t quit. What would my friends think?
Ther: In fact, it might be hard for you to change at all.

Double-Sided Reflection

Reflect back what the person has said and the other side of his or her ambivalence:

Clt: I’m not an alcoholic. It’s just that Pat used to be married to an alcoholic, and thinks anyone who overdoes it now and then has a problem.
Ther: You can see that sometimes you have trouble with drinking too much, but it seems to you that Pat is making too much of it.

Shifting Focus

Acknowledge the other person’s stated concerns and then redirect the dialogue away from the obstacles and barriers:

Clt: OK, maybe I’ve got some problems with drinking, but I’m not an alcoholic.
Ther: I don’t think that’s the issue at all, and I don’t want you worrying about it. It’s not important to me whether or not you want to think of yourself as an alcoholic. I am worried, though, as you are, about some of the things that seem to be happening in your life. Tell me a little more about….

Agreement With A Twist

Empathically reflect and then follow up with a reframe or slight change in direction:

Clt: Why are you and my wife stuck on my drinking? What about all her problems? You’d drink too if your family were nagging you all the time.
Ther: You’ve got a good point there, and that’s important. There is a bigger picture here, and maybe I haven’t been paying enough attention to that. It’s not as simple as one person’s drinking. Drinking problems like these do involve the whole family. I think you’re absolutely right.

Emphasizing Personal Choice and Control

Diminish defensiveness by asserting the other’s power over his or her change process:

Clt: Why are you and my wife stuck on my drinking? What about all her problems? You’d drink too if your family were nagging you all the time.
Ther: What you decide to do with this information is completely up to you. Nobody can change your drinking for you. It’s really up to you.

Reframing

Acknowledge the validity of the other’s perspective but present it in a different light:

Clt: I can drink almost anyone under the table and not even feel it, then get up in the morning and go to work. It’s not a problem.
Ther: So something else you’ve noticed about your drinking is that you can really hold your liquor, so to speak. You can drink a lot more than most people without feeling or looking drunk. You’ve been able to fool people, so that they can’t tell how much you’ve had to drink.

Coming Alongside

Defend the counter-change side of the other’s ambivalence to elicit change talk:

Ther: We’ve talked about the difficulties you’ve been having, and we’ve discussed quite a few different options that you have for changing. What strikes me is that none of the options appeal to you. You actually seem very happy with your old pattern, at least when you compare it with any alternative. It seems to me then, that what you ought to do is to keep on exactly as before. There is no point in going to all of the trouble of trying to change if what you really want to do is stay the same.
Reflections in Response to Resistance and Status Quo Talk (6.2)

Write 2 types of reflections in response to the statements below.

1. “I know it would be good for me, but it’s just too hard to get to group regularly. I’m just too busy.”

2. “I think everyone is blowing this out of proportion. So I drank a little too much at the party.”

3. “Ok, so there’s been some negative things that have resulted. I’m not someone who wants to spend the rest of my life coloring inside the lines. I want to have a little fun and spend a little money.

4. “I don’t think the meds help me all that much and I really don’t like the way they make me feel.”
Payoff Matrix

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<tr>
<th>Advantages of</th>
<th>Advantages of Not</th>
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Ten Strategies for Evoking Change Talk

1. Ask Evocative Questions
   Ask open questions, the answer to which is change talk.

2. Explore Decisional Balance
   Ask first for the good things about status quo, then ask for the not-so-good things.

3. Ask for Elaboration
   When a change talk theme emerges, ask for more detail. In what ways?

4. Ask for Examples
   When a change talk theme emerges, ask for specific examples. When was the last time that happened? Give me an example. What else?

5. Look Back
   Ask about a time before the current concern emerged. How were things better, different?

6. Look Forward
   Ask what may happen if things continue as they are (status quo). Try the miracle question: If you were 100% successful in making the changes you want, what would be different? How would you like your life to be five years from now?

7. Query Extremes
   What are the worst things that might happen if you don’t make this change? What are the best things that might happen if you do make this change?

8. Use Change Rulers
   Ask, “On a scale from zero to ten, how important is it to you to [target change] – where zero is not at all important, and ten is extremely important? Follow up: And why are you at ___ and not zero? What might happen that could move you from ___ to [higher score]? Instead of “how important” (need), you could also ask how much you want (desire), or how confident you are that you could (ability), or how committed are you to ___ (commitment). Asking “how ready are you?” tends to be confusing because it combines competing components of desire, ability, reasons and need.

9. Explore Goals and Values
   Ask what the person’s guiding values are. What do they want in life? Using a values card sort can be helpful here. If there is a “problem” behavior, ask how that behavior fits in with the person’s goals or values. Does it help realize a goal or value, interfere with it, or is it irrelevant?

10. Come Alongside
    Explicitly side with the negative (status quo) side of ambivalence. Perhaps _________ is so important to you that you won’t give it up, no matter what the cost.
Discussion Topic Suggestions
(Personal Change – Real-Plays)

Instructions: Utilize these personal change suggestions as needed to complete training exercises which require real-play scenarios.

Something I Feel Two Ways About

- Changing jobs
- Pursuing a degree
- Giving money to charity
- Rationing health care
- Helmet laws
- Security screening at airports
- Family medical leave act
- Being at this training,
- A driver’s license for my teenager

Something I know I Should Change

- Making a budget and sticking to it
- Reading books to my children
- Lose weight
- Stop smoking
- Get more exercise
- Eat five fruits and vegetables daily
- Walk to work
- Give money (or more money) to charity
- Keep better communication with my child’s teacher
- Go to church
- Get more education
- Stop shopping to relieve stress
Sample
This is not what I expected. I thought you would be more in my face about the bruise. It’s been more like a conversation. It’s made me really think about some things and I wasn’t expecting to do that.

Does this signal possible readiness to shift phases? _____ No __X___ Yes
If yes, what kind?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Decreased resistance.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
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Reasoning for your choice?
The client is clearly talking about how expectations were not met and how this caused a shift. Whether or not he is ready to shift is not clear, but the response indicates it is possible.

Statement 1
So, what do your other clients say about this?

Does this signal possible readiness to shift phases? _____ No _____ Yes
If yes, what kind?

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Reasoning for your choice?
Statement 2
I agree it would be good to make some choices other lashing out when I’m angry, but I can’t control it and I can’t control the people who make me angry. I just don’t know what else I can do.

Does this signal possible readiness to shift phases? _____ No _____ Yes
If yes, what kind?

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Reasoning for your choice?

Statement 3
You don’t understand. My friends don’t take “No” for an answer. They’re going to hound me. I’ve got to come back with something stronger.

Does this signal possible readiness to shift phases? _____ No _____ Yes
If yes, what kind?

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Reasoning for your choice?

Statement 4
I won’t be in this situation again. It sucks. I am so embarrassed.

Does this signal possible readiness to shift phases? _____ No _____ Yes
If yes, what kind?

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Reasoning for your choice?
**Statement 5**  
*You know I am not very social, but I have been trying to speak up for myself in these sessions here.*

Does this signal possible readiness to shift phases? _____ No _____ Yes  
If yes, what kind?

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Reasoning for your choice?

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**Statement 6**  
*I don’t see any point in talking about it.*

Does this signal possible readiness to shift phases? _____ No _____ Yes  
If yes, what kind?

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Reasoning for your choice?

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**Statement 7**  
*I feel like we are going over it and over it. I get it. I just need to figure out how.*

Does this signal possible readiness to shift phases? _____ No _____ Yes  
If yes, what kind?

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Reasoning for your choice?
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<tr>
<th>Importance and Confidence Rulers: Determining Your Approach</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Group A: Low Importance</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Low Confidence</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>These people neither see change as important nor believe</td>
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<td>that they could succeed in making a change if they tried.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Group C: High Importance</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Low Confidence</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Here the problem is not in willingness to change. These</td>
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<td>people express desire to do so. Their issue is low</td>
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<td>confidence that they could succeed if they attempted to</td>
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<td>make a change.</td>
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<td><strong>Group D: High Importance</strong></td>
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<td><strong>High Confidence</strong></td>
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<td>These people see it is important to change and also</td>
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Remembering My Successes

It is easy to become discouraged when we forget the times when we were successful at making some change in our lives, or at least achieving something we wanted to achieve. Everyone has made a successful change at some time in his or her life. Let’s remember your successes.

1. List some positive changes you have made in your life.

2. Pick one of the changes you listed above, perhaps the one that was hardest to achieve, and list the following:

   - When did you first start thinking about making a change? What was going on in your life at the time?

   - Did you achieve the change all at once, or take small steps?

   - What were some of the steps?

   - How do you feel about the change today?

A Change Plan Worksheet
(Adapted from Miller and Rollnick, 2002)

My intended change: ________________________________________________________________

The most important reasons why I want to make this change are:
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

My main goals for myself in making this change are:
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

I plan to do these things in order to accomplish my goals:
I will... I will accomplish this by (date)...
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Other people could help me with change in these ways:
Person Ways s/he can help
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

These are some possible obstacles to change, and how I could handle them:
Things that might get in the way of change How to respond
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

I will know that my plan is working when I see these results:
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________


Some Recommendations for a Motivational Interviewing Peer Support Group

Bill Miller

Developing proficiency in motivational interviewing (MI) is rather like learning to play a sport or a musical instrument. Some initial instruction is helpful, but real skill develops over time with practice, ideally with feedback and consultation from knowledgeable others. One way to do this is to form a local group to support and encourage each other in continuing to develop proficiency in MI. When a group like this is well-done, participants enjoy coming and sometimes say that it is one of the most interesting and rewarding aspects of their job. Here are some ideas for such a group.

1. Schedule regular meetings for the sole purpose of working together to strengthen MI skills. Don’t let administrative details or other agenda fill the time. An hour meeting twice a month would be one possibility.

2. In early meetings, it may be helpful to discuss specific readings. There is a rapidly growing list of books and articles at www.motivationalinterview.org. Periodically the group may also wish to watch “expert” tapes, coding and discussing the skills being demonstrated in them. For those particularly interested in new research on MI, a “journal club” of 20 minutes or so might be added. Take it easy with any reading assignments, though. People learn a lot, and fast, just from bringing in and discussing tapes (see 3).

3. A key learning tool to be included in regular meetings is to listen together and discuss tapes of participants’ MI sessions. Some groups have experienced that the energy and engagement level of the group picked up when they began to listen to each other’s tapes. We recommend listening to and discussing one tape peer session. A 20-minute segment of tape is probably about right. We recommend using a recording device with external microphone(s) to improve the quality of sound and facilitate listening.

4. Written permission should be obtained from clients for this use of recording, explaining how the tapes will be used, who will hear them, and how and when the tape will be destroyed.

5. Be sure to thank and support those who bring in a tape to share. They are taking a risk and being vulnerable, which can be difficult, particularly early in the life of a group. Beware of having high “expert” expectations when someone is just beginning.

6. Rather than simply listening to a tape, make use of some structured coding tools. Some examples are:
   i. Counting questions and reflections
   ii. More generally coding OARS
   iii. Coding depth of reflections (simple vs. complex)
   iv. Counting client change talk, and noting what preceded it
   v. Tracking client readiness for change during the session, and key moments of shift
   vi. Coding forms can be found on www.motivationalinterview.org. Participants may use the same coding form and compare their findings, or participants may use different coding forms to attend to different aspects of the session.

7. In introducing a session to be heard by the group, it is appropriate to indicate what target(s) for behavior change were being pursued. Without this, it is not possible to identify change talk, which is goal-specific.

8. In discussing a participant’s tape, it is appropriate for the person who did the interview to comment first on its strengths and areas for improvement.
9. In discussing any tape, focus discussion on the ways in which the session is and is not consistent with the spirit and method of MI. Again, it is useful for the person who did the interview to lead off this discussion. Participants can ask each other, “In what ways was this session MI consistent?” and “What might one do to make this session even more MI consistent?” When providing feedback to each other, adhere to the supportive spirit of MI. Always emphasize what you heard or saw that seemed particularly effective and consistent with the style of MI. One other approach is a “feedback sandwich” in which any suggestion for further strengthening practice is sandwiched between ample slices of positive feedback. The group atmosphere should be fun and supportive, not pressured or competitive. Group participants report that they often learn more from helping others than from receiving feedback on their own tapes.

10. Focus on what is important within MI. There is always temptation to wander off into more general clinical discussion of cases. Focus learning on the spirit, principles, and practice of MI.

11. The group may focus on practicing and strengthening specific component skills of MI. One such sequence of skills to be learned is described in: Miller, W. R., & Moyers, T. B. (2006). Eight stages in learning motivational interviewing. Journal of Teaching in the Addictions 5, 3-17.

12. Some groups begin with a “check-in” period in which anyone can bring up an issue for discussion.

13. Bringing coffee and refreshments can add to the relaxed atmosphere of a group.

14. Consider whether there is a prerequisite for participating in the group. Some groups have required, for example, that participants complete an initial training in MI before beginning to attend. Others have left the group open for any who wish to learn MI skills.

15. Consider whether you want to contract for a specific length of time or number of meetings together. If so, at the end of this time each member can consider whether to continue for another period.

16. An “MI expert” in the group might resist taking on an expert role, because doing so can stifle participation and learning. Don’t withhold your expertise, particularly if invited, but avoid a pattern of interaction in which the group always looks to the expert for the “right” answers.

17. Most of all enjoy this privileged learning time together. As with other complex skills like chess, golf, or piano, gaining proficiency in MI is a lifelong process. A real source of fun and learning in these groups is admiration for the many artful ways that people find to apply MI within their own clinical style and population.

With thanks for contributions from colleagues include Carl Ake Farbring, Kathleen Jackson, Theresa Moyers, Mary O’Leary, Steve Schack, and Carolina Yahne.

February 2008
Recommended Reading


