



Motivational Interviewing

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a collaborative, goal-oriented method of communication or approach that helps people with mental health and substance use disorders and other chronic conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and asthma make positive behavioral changes to support better health.

The approach upholds four principles — expressing empathy and avoiding arguing, developing discrepancy, rolling with resistance and supporting self-efficacy (client’s belief they can successfully make a change). The MI skills presented are flexible and can be used by the clinician as needed.

Motivational Interviewing

The goal is to avoid creating resistance — no arguments, shaming, persuasion, warnings or unsolicited advice giving. It is important to get the person to **elicit their own self-motivating statements** as to why this change is important to them.

EXAMPLE: “I don’t feel as well as I used to since I gained weight.”

Create a discrepancy between current behavior and the person’s goals and values.

EXAMPLE: “Smoking keeps me from being as involved with my grandkids as I would like.”

Elicit change talk

EXAMPLES:

- “Tell me what you know about _____.”
- “What concerns do you have about your _____?”
- “What would be the best thing that could happen if you changed _____?”

Listen and Reflect. Restate the person’s change talk from above, helping them feel understood and heard.

Four Principle Approach to Motivational Interviewing



Elicit **self-motivating** statements



Create a **discrepancy** between current behavior and goals/values.



Elicit **change talk**



Listen and reflect to feel understood and heard.

What to do when using MI

Express empathy. Listen and reflect on what the person said.

Develop discrepancies. EXAMPLE: On the one hand, you have trouble breathing when you smoke. On the other hand, you want to go to the park with your kids.

Avoid arguments. You never want to be arguing for change while the person is arguing against the change.

Roll with person's resistance to the plan of care, treatment or behavior change.

Support the person's self-efficacy to change.

What to avoid when using MI

- Telling the person they OUGHT and/or WANT to change.
- Assuming the person's health is the primary motivating factor for him or her.
- Believing if the person does not decide to change, the provider has failed.
- Thinking "tough love" approach is always best.
- Conveying "I'm the expert — the person MUST follow my advice".
- Feeling negotiation is always the best.

Set up a Plan

Consider options. Present different options. Try to match the person with the best option for their case, but recognize they may not choose the "right" strategy and prepare the person for this possibility.

Establish a goal. Summarize the plan with the person and assess their readiness to commit to the plan.

Motivational Interviewing Using the OARS+ Model

- O:** Ask **Open Questions** to encourage exploration of thoughts and feelings.
- A:** Use **Affirmations** to acknowledge and build confidence in the person's innate capabilities.
- R:** Apply **Reflective Listening** to clarify our understanding and allow the person to hear their own words, thoughts and feelings reflected to them.
- S:** **Summarize** to let the person know they are being heard and to keep the discussion active and moving forward.
- +**: Offering information and/or advice **with permission**.

Specific MI Tools

- List the pros and cons of behavior change
- Assess how important a change is to the person and how confident they are they can succeed.
- Looking back at what worked in the past.
EXAMPLE: Have you ever quit smoking in the past? How did you do it?
- Looking forward. Ask these questions:
 - What do you hope would happen in the future if you made this change?
 - What could you do now?
 - What are the best results you could imagine if you made this change?
- Exploring goals. Assess the match between the person's current behavior and future goals. Explore how realistic their goals are. Look for discrepancies between current behavior and their future goals.
EXAMPLE: It's important for me to be here for my family, but being sick gets in the way of that.

Motivational Interviewing 4-Part Course

A person's ability and/or willingness to change their behavior has a direct impact on how effective a treatment may be. During this four-part course participants are provided an overview of using motivational interviewing. The lessons outline key concepts and techniques of motivational interviewing, how to recognize ambivalence, roll with resistance and elicit change talk. | View it online: <https://bit.ly/3x1jkUG>

