

Using Motivational Interviewing with Families of Children 0-5 Years Old

Bridging Behavioral Health Support for Young Children

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Learning Objectives

- Apply core MI principles when engaging with families
- Use MI techniques to explore family concerns
- Navigate resistance and ambivalence common in working with families



Engaging Families with Children 0-5

Viewing the parent-child relationship as the primary vehicle for healing and growth.



The young children in families are at grave risk and their parents are difficult to engage in effective treatment because of their expectation that they will be blamed, belittled, and misunderstood. They may interpret therapeutic attempts to form a working alliance as phoniness or even trickery.

Lieberman, A. F., & Van Horn, P. (2008).
*Psychotherapy with infants and young children:
Repairing the effects of stress and trauma on early
attachment*. Guilford Press.



One way to use forms to reorganize our thinking as well as our interactions with clients is to shift from a role in which (service providers) as professional experts assess families to a role in which (service providers) and families together draw on their mutual expertise to collaboratively assess the problems that have come into their lives.

Madsen, W. C. (2007). *Collaborative therapy with multi-stressed families: From old problems to new futures* (2nd ed.). The Guilford Press.

Why Motivational Interviewing Matters: building trust, reducing defensiveness





ATTITUDE



SKILLS



STRATEGIES



APPLICATION

- (1) The attitude, or spirit of MI: this is our mind-set as we help others with change
- (2) Skills, meaning specific communication skills that will help us help others.
- (3) Strategies, or how we actually listen to people and choose how to respond to what they say
- (4) Application to our work – how do we incorporate what we've learned into what we do. This includes practicing MI during a workshop, after a workshop, and continually to keep it in the front of our minds as we work.

Defining Motivational Interviewing

A collaborative conversation style to strengthen a person's own motivation and commitment to change.

Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.

Stephen R. Covey
The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People:
Powerful Lessons in Personal Change

- It is a way of talking and being with someone to support them.
- A collaborative conversation, never a lecture or monologue.
- A conversation about change - a person's own motivation and commitment to change.

Activity: Listening in Pairs

Guide	Say "Tell me about a memory."
Person	Respond truthfully and tell your story for 2 minutes
Guide	Listen empathically with the intent to understand. Observe tone, body language, facial expression, cultural aspects, and feeling. You may show the person you are listening and say "uh huh" or "um" but that is all.
SWITCH	When 2 minutes are up, switch.

What is Change Talk?

What is Sustain Talk?

Change talk: speech that favors movement toward positive change.

Sustain talk: speech that favors the status quo or moves away from change.

“I would really like to get in better shape, but it’s very hard to find time to exercise.”

“I can’t face anything more right now.”

“It’s always been like this. It never changes.”

Preparatory Change Talk: DARN

DESIRE to change (want, like, wish)

ABILITY to change (can, could, able, possible)

REASONS to change (if...then)

NEED to change (need, have to, got to, must)

Mobilizing Change Talk: CATS

COMMITMENT to change (intend, decide, promise)

ACTIVATION (willing, planning, ready)

TAKING STEPS to change (started, tried)



Change talk can be...

I really should....

It would be nice if...

I could...

I've already found a/gotten a

I could...

I want....



Learn to listen for the
“whispers” of change talk

Reasons: Statement of dissatisfaction with the status quo

I love smoking, but it really makes my clothes stink.

I don't care if skydiving kills me, I love it. But I do spend a fortune on it.

My kids are worried, but I'm not.

The Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

You have what you need, and
together we will find it.

Miller and Rollnick
Motivational Interviewing: Helping People Change
3rd ed, 2021

MI Is Not About Manipulation

Compassion: Caring about what is important to another person and feeling moved to help.

Acceptance: Respecting another person and their right to change or not to change.

Partnership: Working together with another person and recognizing them as equal.

Evocation: Bringing out another's ideas, strengths, and knowledge about the situation and themselves.
Encouraging another person to explore.



ACTIVITY: Practicing Autonomy Supportive Statements and Partnership Statements

Guide: introduce yourself, your role and begin to establish a partnership with your client or family. Imagine you are meeting a client for the first time. Introduce yourself, your agency and your role to your partner. Feel free to ask an open-ended question as needed. Give a partnership statement and an autonomy supportive statement.

If the first one doesn't feel right, try it again until you find something that fits for you.

Partner: Respond as you think a cooperative client would.

"You know your child better than anyone."

"What have you noticed works best with?"

"You're the expert on your family's needs."

"Help me understand what a typical day looks like for you and your child."

"What feels manageable for your family right now?"

They saw "something"
on her mammogram.



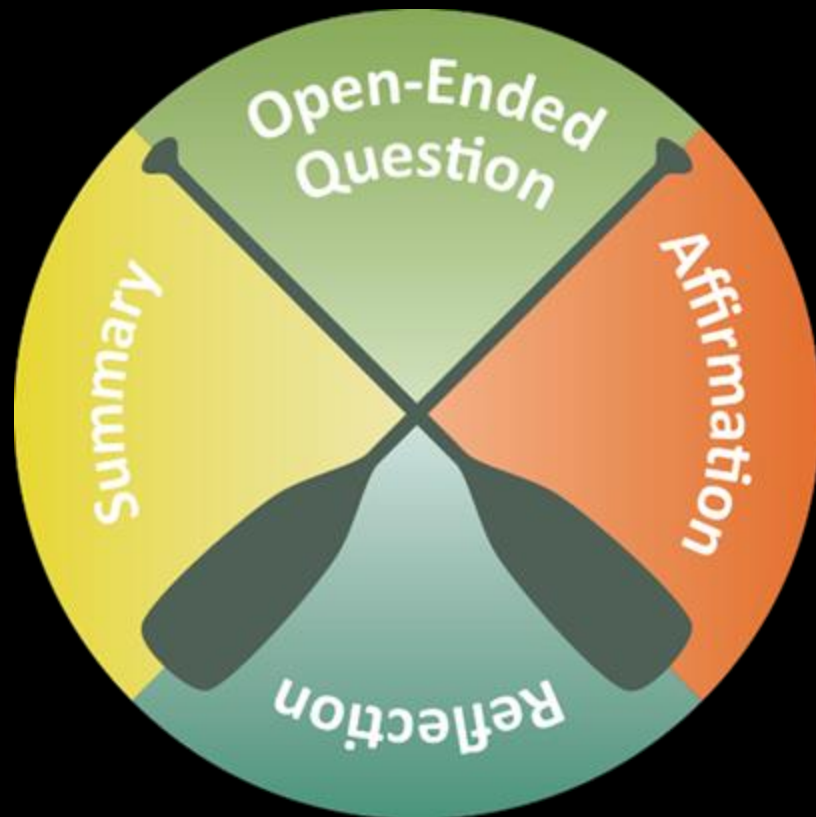
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Open-Ended Questions

Affirmations

Reflections

Summaries



ACTIVITY:

GUIDE: Ask only open-ended questions to discover a non-obvious thing you share with your partner. Refer to your handouts page as needed.

Listen to the response. If it's not something you have in common, ask another open-ended question.

Ask additional open-ended questions as needed until you find something you have in common, then switch partners.

PARTNER: Respond truthfully to the guide



Affirmations:

Statements that recognize and acknowledge strengths, values, or intentions that the person has not said.

Purpose of Affirmation:

To build relationship.

To provide support and increase confidence for change



Affirmation (Acknowledgement)	Praise (Compliment)
Recognizes strengths, values, or intentions that the person has not said.	Expression of approval, commendation or admiration.
Recognizes that which is good, including the person's worth as a fellow human being.	Suggests that you are in a position to give praise or blame
Often starts with "you"	More likely to start with "I"

Reflections:

Statements that communicate back what the listener is hearing.

Purpose of Reflections:

To increase understanding and clarity of communication.

To consider factors influencing change.



Simple



Complex

What the
person says



What I understand
or interpret

Forming Complex Reflections

1. Make a guess about what is underneath

- An emotion
- Meaning of what the person said

2. Reflect the ambivalence

- Both sides of the dilemma so the person

3. Paraphrase and continue the story...

- Guess what is next in the direction of change.
- This may keep the conversation moving forward



ACTIVITY:

Forming Simple and Complex Reflections— Handout

In pairs, take turns practicing simple and complex reflections.





Summaries

Extended reflections that pulls together what has been said and end with a question.

Purpose of Summaries:

Confirm understanding.

Focus conversation.

Transition in the conversation.



"What did I miss?"

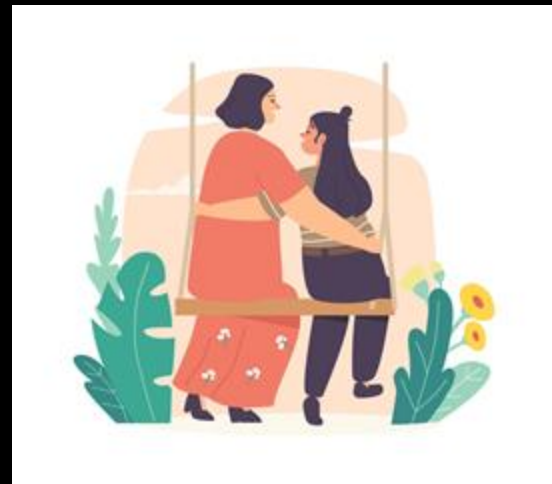
"Does that capture it?"

"What would you add?"

"Is there anything else important?"

Summaries help parents feel heard, organize complex information, and create momentum for positive change while reinforcing their role as the expert on their own child and family.

Example: "So we've talked quite a bit about the feeding challenges with Sophie - how she's very selective about textures and you're concerned about her nutrition. You've mentioned feeling judged by family members about her eating, and how hard it is when mealtimes become battles. You also shared that she does enjoy helping you prepare food and seems more willing to try things when she's involved. I'm wondering if we could shift our focus now to talk about what you'd like feeding time to look like ideally for your family?"



“ It takes a village to raise a child, but it takes a child to raise the village to a higher standard.”

Jesse Jackson



Thank you

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