MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING: SUCCESSFULLY ENGAGING IN CHANGE

Alan Forrest, Ed.D.
Radford University
September 2016

aforrest@radford.edu
Garfield

I HATE CHANGE

I DIDN'T USED TO...

BUT I'VE CHANGED
Find a Partner

Discussion Topic

Something about yourself that you:

- Want to change
- Need to change
- Should change
- Have been thinking about changing

...but haven’t changed yet

Something you have ambivalence about
CAN WE IMPROVE THE WAY TEACHERS AND PARENTS TALK TO CHILDREN AND TO ONE ANOTHER?

- MI skills help engage parents
- Training improves teachers in MI
- MI trained teachers better at engaging students
- Engagement associated with better outcomes
Motivational Interviewing Primary Goals

- Reduce or Minimize resistance
- Explore discrepancy between behavior and values/goals... resolve ambivalence
REALITIES OF CHANGE

- Most change does not occur overnight
- People can get stuck in the early stages
- Individuals who are hesitant or reluctant resist being pushed to action/change
- Contextual: all elements of the person are affected (H.A.L.T.)

“He who would learn to fly one day must first learn to stand and walk and run and climb and dance; one cannot fly into flying.”  ~ Friedrich Nietzsche~
**Stage of Change Model**

- Offers framework for understanding resistance and behavior change
- Series of stages through which people progressively pass as they change behavior
Pre-Contemplation...

Preparation

Contemplation

Action

Maintenance

Relapse/Recurrence

Relapses or sliding backwards occasionally is not unusual
STAGES OF CHANGE MODEL

- A person in any later stage can move to any former stage... is often a normal part of change

- Time in any stage may be transient (lasting for moments, minutes, days, weeks)
You don't say much, but I've been told it's the therapeutic relationship that counts.
12 ROADBLOCKS IN COMMUNICATION

1. Ordering, directing
2. Warning, threatening
3. Giving advice, making suggestions, providing solutions
4. Persuading with logic, arguing, lecturing
5. Moralizing, preaching
6. Judging, criticizing, blaming
12 ROADBLOCKS IN COMMUNICATION

7. Agreeing, approving, praising
8. Shaming, ridiculing, name calling
9. Interpreting, analyzing
10. Reasoning, sympathizing
11. Questioning, probing
12. Withdrawing, distracting, humoring, changing the subject
What is MI?
Miller and Rollnick’s Definition of MI

MI is a **collaborative**, goal-oriented **style of communication** with particular attention to the **language of change**. It is designed to **strengthen personal motivation** for **and commitment** to a **specific goal** by eliciting and exploring the **person’s own reasons** for change within an **atmosphere of acceptance and compassion**.
KEY CONCEPTS OF MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

- To understand how the individual sees the problem
- One uses active listening and reflection to facilitate this process
- One asks questions to elicit information
- Central focus is to examine and resolve ambivalence
- One points out discrepancies
- The relationship is a partnership
Key Concepts of Motivational Interviewing

- Motivation to change is elicited from the individual, not imposed by the teacher/parent
- It is the person’s task, not the teacher/parent to state and resolve the ambivalence
- Direct persuasion is not effective
- One’s approach is generally quiet and eliciting one
- You are directive in assisting the individual
- Readiness to change is not static, but fluctuating
KEY CONCEPTS OF MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

- Resistance and denial are seen as a product of environmental factors, not a character trait.
- Motivational level over the course of treatment is more important than initial motivation (or lack thereof).
- Priority is given to resolving ambivalence.
- The MI practitioner is persuasive, but not coercive; at times challenging, but never argumentative.
Motivational Interviewing is...

- An interpersonal style
- A subtle balance of directive and person-centered components
- Affirming the individuals’ s freedom of choice and self-direction
- Self-empowering
STRATEGIES OF MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

- Express empathy
- Promote self-efficacy because the belief that one can change is a powerful motivator
- Encourage the individual to develop their own solutions to the problems that they themselves have identified
- Assist the person in seeing how some of their current ways to doing things may lead them away from their eventual goals
Caveats to Consider in Motivational Interviewing

- Avoid arguing
- Ensure that any resistance to change is not generated by “jumping ahead” of the person
- Stay away from labeling, blaming, being the expert, confrontation
- Pressing one to change may increase resistance
Caveats to Consider in Motivational Interviewing

- Don’t use an authoritarian stance, leaving the client in a passive role
- Don’t offer direct advice without direct permission to do so
- Avoid the question-answer-question (leads to a hierarchical relationship)
Stage Matching Interventions

**Stage**
- Precontemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance
- Relapse

**Intervention**
- Empathy/Understanding
- Explore & Amplify Ambivalence
- Clarify Focus, Plan & Set Goals
- Support Self-Efficacy
- Monitor Relapse Triggers
- Roll with it - Reassess and Revise
WARNING!!!
Mismatching your intervention to the client’s stage of change fosters resistance

When you get attached to an outcome
OR
YOU push a quicker pace, you facilitate “resistance”
CARL ROGER’S PARADOX

“ACCEPTANCE FACILITATES CHANGE, WHILE PERCEIVED EXPECTATION OF CHANGE GENERATES RESISTANCE”
“Listening looks easy, but it’s not simple. Every head is a world.”

Cuban proverb
STRATEGIC REFLECTIONS

Reduces RESISTANCE...

• Seeking to understand their ideas
• Target line of thinking of the one seeking change
• Gets thoughts out of his/her head and more ‘real’... less single-minded
• Helps clarify unspoken feelings
• NOT a matter if we are right or wrong
4 Types of Talk

Resistance Talk
Sustain Talk
Change Talk
Commitment Talk
Focusing attention outside of self
Making it personal towards you
‘Fight’ or ‘Blame’ talk
Any message that someone or something else is the problem
SUSTAIN TALK

• Any rationale for why behavior is not going to change
• Any message of being stuck or planning on staying the same
• One side of the coin of ambivalence
RESISTANCE Vs. SUSTAIN

RESISTANCE Talk
✔ Focusing outside self
✔ Relationally oriented
✔ Fight Talk
✔ Lightning Rod language
✔ Making it personal between you two

RESPONSE:
Empathic Reflection
“You feel…”

SUSTAIN Talk
✔ Focusing internally
✔ Staying the same
✔ Stuck talk
✔ Status quo
✔ About his/her behavior
✔ Natural w/ ambivalence

RESPONSE:
Rescue change talk
“You want…”
If resistance (re)surfaces, **you** are moving too far ahead of the client in the change process (**mismatching stages**).

With resistance, “more” intensity is **not** better.

More intensity increases defensiveness, producing negative outcomes.
Whatever it is that you are doing – pushing, confronting, educating, explaining, etc.

Your agenda

Your righting reflex

...with resistance by reflecting of what you are hearing
A final thought...

- The basic approach to interactions in motivational interviewing is captured by the acronym OARS:

(Miller & Rollnick, 1991)
I cannot change yesterday, but I can change today.
QUESTIONS, MAYBE ANSWERS