

# “Not motivated to work:”

Addressing ambivalence  
and aligning  
employment goals  
through

**MOTIVATIONAL  
INTERVIEWING**



Image of hanging lightbulbs, one lit up

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# Objectives

- 1) identify myths and common barriers regarding clients who seem stuck or stagnant
- 2) review the basic aspects of MI and how it can be effective in addressing behavioral changes
- 3) learn how to implement MI principles and strategies to partner with clients on their goals

# What is Motivation?

Motivation = Intention to put forward effort toward a goal

(Wagner, 2019)

- 1. Direction** (consistent aim)
- 1. Effort** (momentum)
- 1. Persistence** (ongoing/steady)\*  
this is sometimes overlooked but so necessary for change



Image of soccer ball being kicked by three player in cleats

# What is Motivational Interviewing (MI)?



A word cloud on a dark blue background. The words are arranged in a roughly vertical stack, with 'change-talk' at the top, followed by 'evocation', 'respect', 'compassion', 'acceptance', 'goal', 'momentum', 'autonomy', and 'partnership' at the bottom. The words are in two colors: yellow and magenta.

Word cloud listing words:  
Change-talk, evocation, respect, compassion,  
acceptance, goal, momentum, autonomy, partnership

- “A person-centered, goal-oriented approach for facilitating change through exploring and resolving ambivalence.” (Miller, 2006)

# Myth 1: “Motivational interviewing is something only substance abuse counselors use.”

- It's effective in addressing many kinds of change
- MI can be used to improve vocational outcomes among people with serious mental health conditions  
(Hampson, Hicks, & Watts, 2015)

## Motivational elements in VR:

- Managing medication issues
- Adjusting to disability
- Adjusting to cognitive changes
- Recovering from addictive behaviors
- Returning to work
- Others?
- All of these can affective motivation toward employment specifically

# Myth 2: “They are not motivated to work”

(or are client & counselor goals not the same?)

## External vs. Internal Motivations

Rights of people are fundamental to VR:  
Self-determination, own decisions, own goals

- **External** ones can help people get started (i.e. paycheck)
- **Internal** ones help people keep going
  - choice, competence, meaningfulness, progress
  - helps people persist
  - We can help client identify internal

(Wagner, 2019)

# “They are not motivated to work” (continued)

## Redefine goals; Address Obstacles

Examples of obstacles in VR:

- Lack of understanding about VR process
- Potential loss of benefits
- Information overload
- Caught up in head (e.g. retreating inside/overwhelmed) (Wagner, 2019)
- Examples of a client's unanswered question or concern related to working...



Image: Man in wheelchair entering conference room



Image: Man standing with arms crossed, smiling, in a warehouse with wooden pallets

## Myth 3: “They are not ready to work”

- ▶ Are there barriers and steps that need to be taken? Most likely, but...
- ▶ Develop discrepancy (Chasek, slide 19)
  - ▶ Where they are vs. where want to be
  - ▶ Point out contradictions without pressuring or giving advice
  - ▶ Separate behavior from the person (personal goals are being undermined by the behavior)
- ▶ VR clients come in all shapes, sizes, statuses, and stages
- ▶ Some service models like Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Supported Employment (SE) can be considered

# Myth 4: “I don’t have time to sit down and do this with an indecisive client”

Unpacking ambivalence in the context of  
Stages of Change or Stages of Readiness

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_EvoY8wMkfE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_EvoY8wMkfE)

- **Pre-contemplation**
- **Contemplation**
- **Preparation**
- **Action**
- **Maintenance**



Image of a baked soufflé

# “I don’t have time to do this with an indecisive client” (cont.)

- ▶ Not every client needs lengthy counseling/guidance sessions to get unstuck or to hint at “change talk”
  - ▶ In VR, can be used for an in depth, longer meeting or techniques just for short periods of time
    - ▶ Few evocative questions, scaling rulers, assessing values, envisioning, and other techniques
- ▶ Resistance will take more time and be more frustrating---so must learn to adjust or **“Roll with Resistance”**
- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgqrusY2MJI>

# Ambivalence is NOT the enemy



Image of blocks with arrows all pointing same direction except one pointing opposite direction

## Types of ambivalence conflicts

- Approach-Approach.....
- Avoid-Avoid.....
- Approach-Avoid.....
- Double Approach-Avoid.....

## Things clients may think

- I want to get back to work now! But I want a job that suits me better
- I don't want to keep doing the same thing! But I don't want to have to start all over
- I want to try something new! But I don't want to fail
- Multiple combinations of above

# Basic Aspects and Spirit of MI

## 3 “Cs...”

### 1.) **Change-focused**

- help pull out THEIR reason for change
- And their solutions

### 2.) **Client-centered**

- It's a partnership

### 3.) **Choice**

- Client responsibility, but can empower
- Create safety by meeting where they are

### Counselor's job:

- 1) Evocation (vs. Education)
- 2) Collaboration (vs. Confrontation)
- 3) Autonomy (vs. Authority)

(Dundon, n.d.)



# Basic Aspects and Spirit of MI :

## What gets in the way of change...?

- Doesn't seem important
- Enjoy current ways
- It's hard
- Takes time to develop new habits
- Reactance (protecting your rights/esteem/decisions, whether correct or incorrect)
- Demoralized or Fear of Failure (lack of confidence, concern of perception of others)
- Ambivalence (“two-directions”)

The FedEx logo is displayed in a bold, sans-serif font. The word "Fed" is rendered in a dark purple color, while "Ex" is rendered in a bright orange color. The letters are closely spaced and centered horizontally on a white background. The overall design is clean and modern, with a clear distinction between the two color-coded parts of the name.

**FedEx**

Image of FedEx letters/logo

# MI Principles and Strategies

## Stages of Change

- a) **Precontemplation:** unaware, unable, or unwilling; often wary  
*(goal is to increase willingness to change)*
  
- b) **Contemplation:** considering or ambivalent; good time to elicit self-motivational statements  
*(goal is to support self-efficacy)*
  
- c) **Preparation:** preparing for action; more willingness/options so work on clarifying goal and steps  
*(goal is collaborate and plan)*
  
- d) **Action:** implementing a plan; receptive but still unstable; support perseverance while finding coping strategies  
*(goal is to affirm and reinforce positive change)*
  
- e) **Maintenance:** maintain a new status quo

(Chasek, n.d.)

# MI Principles and Strategies

## CHANGE TALK: D.A.R.N. → C.A.T

(pay attention to some key phrases (DARN) and to when it mobilizes CAT)

Desire? “I want to...”

Ability? “I could...”

Reasons? “I would if...”

Need? “I have to...”

Commitment “I will...”

Activation “I am ready...”

Taking steps “I am doing it now...”

(Wagner, 2019)

# Knowledge check activity

- Can you identify...?
- ambivalence
- change-talk
- stages of change

# MI Principles and Strategies

- How does a counselor elicit change talk?
- Answer: **O.A.R.S.**
- Open Ended Questions
- Affirm
- Reflect
- Summarize



Image of wooden panels and boat oars

# MI Principles and Strategies

## What NOT to do...

- ❖ **Avoid “righting reflex”** the desire to fix everything or give advice or persuade
- ✓ **instead:** listen, partner, ask questions, show respect
  
- ❖ **Arguing or opposing resistance**
- ✓ **Instead:** point out discrepancies, adjust to resistance, support self efficacy

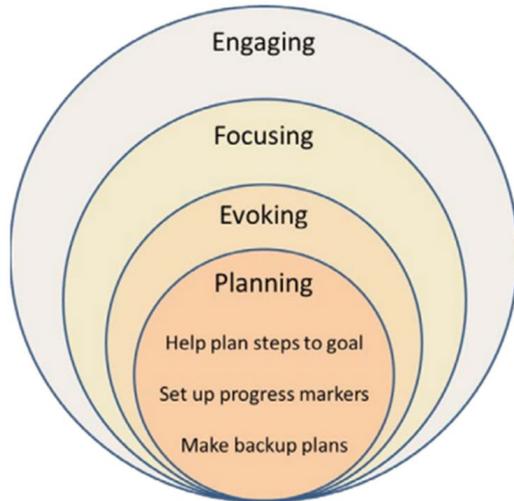


Physician in PCP setting focused on change-talk by using evocation and empathy, rather than education

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URiKA7CKtfc>

# MI Principles and Strategies

## MI processes



Concentric Circle graph depicting MI process:  
Engaging, focusing, evoking, planning

## Summary of facilitating MI in VR

### ➤ Engaging

- Rapport, understand client perspective, focus on relationship

### ➤ Focusing

- Develop agenda, find direction, create change goals

### ➤ Evoking

- Draw out importance/reason for change, and readiness to change

### ➤ Planning

- Steps to the goal, set progress markers, make back-up plans

# Case Study Activity



Image: hands holding notebook and pen

# Summary MI Process for VR

TMI to remember! Let's end on this note

??????

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

- ▶ Co-founder of MI, William Miller sums up MI so you can keep the goal in mind as a guide

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