

Motivational Interviewing: It's Not Just For Health Anymore

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“Motivational Interviewing (MI) is not an end in itself. Rather, practicing and teaching MI contributes to something larger, serves some deeper meaning or purpose. I find that people are drawn to MI because we recognize it, experience in it a connection with something that is deeply right and human.

William R. Miller

Motivational Interviewing

Motivational Interviewing (MI) - a person-centered method of guiding to elicit and strengthen personal motivation for change.

William R. Miller, 2008

Motivational Interviewing

- The Spirit of MI:
 - Collaboration
 - Evocation
 - Autonomy

Key Elements of MI

- Express Empathy:
 - Acceptance of people as they are
 - Reflective listening
 - Ambivalence (normalizing)

Expressing Empathy

■ Examples:

- Your schedule sounds crazy. I would imagine that any student with a schedule like this would feel frustrated...
- I can understand your annoyance with your parents as you are trying to be independent, but they keep intervening... If I were in your situation I would probably be annoyed as well.

Key Elements of MI

- Clarify Discrepancy:
 - Create and amplify discrepancy between the way things are now and how one wants things to be
 - Importance of change – not the amount of change

Clarify Discrepancy

■ Examples:

- You say your grades are important to you. Are you satisfied with where your grades are now?
- You say you want your roommate to pick up her clothes and quit leaving her stuff all over, however, have you described your feelings to him/her?
- On the one hand you're getting bronchitis regularly, and on the other hand you are saying cigarettes are not causing you any problems. What do you think is causing your bronchitis?

Key Elements of MI

- Roll with Resistance:
 - Arguing is counterproductive
 - “Psychological judo”
 - Reluctance to change is normal

Rolling with Resistance

■ Examples:

- “I work 20 hrs/wk and am taking 16 s.h. and I can’t get my paper in on time...” Response: Okay, let me tell you the consequences of that choice.
- “My parents are concerned about my homesickness and told me I had to come here (UCS) before going home and this annoys me” Response: So what do you think they are concerned about?

Key Elements of MI

- Support Self-Efficacy:
 - Students need to believe they have the ability to change
 - Students need to take personal responsibility for change

Supporting Self-Efficacy

- Examples:

- I know you can do this as you've already taken the first big step by coming here and talking about it.
- I had a student in last week who had a similar problem with his roommate and he's making great progress.

Process Methods

- Open Questions
- Reflective Listening
- Summarize
- Affirmative statements
- Change Talk

Process Methods

■ Open Questions:

- Student should do most of the talking
- Allow student to explore their concerns
- Open the individual up to possibilities
- Not presume an answer
- Promote deep thinking
- Be in positive terms

Open Questions

- Examples:
 - What is happening that leads to missing classes?
 - Tell me about your favorite classes... (obvious career connection)
 - What do you like most about Spanish?

Process Methods

- Reflective Listening:
 - Look for underlying meaning
 - Make a guess as to what the speaker means
 - Respond in a statement

Reflective Listening

- Example:

- “I don’t think I’m cut out for college.”

Response: It sounds like you are feeling pretty unsure of yourself. Tell me more about this.

Process Methods

- Affirmative statements:
 - Be supportive
 - Compliment or state appreciation and understanding

Affirmative Statements

■ Examples:

- I appreciate that you took a big step in coming here today.
- I enjoyed talking with you today, and getting to know more about you.
- You showed a lot of courage in talking to your roommate about his behavior.
- I can understand your reason for drinking – because you want to fit in.

Process Methods

- Summarize:

- Used to link together and reinforce material that has been discussed.
- Allows students to hear their own words.

Summarizing

- Example:
 - Your friends think you have an anger problem, but you think if they wouldn't make you mad everything would be fine. Is this a fair assessment of the situation?

5th Method - Change Talk

- Change Talk: (4 Categories)
 - Disadvantages of the status quo
 - What worries you about your current situation?
 - What do you think will happen if you don't change your study habits?
 - Advantages of change
 - How would you like for things to be different between you and your roommate?
 - What would be the advantages of seeing a counselor?

Change Talk

- Optimism for change
 - Who could offer you helpful support in taking this next step?
- Intention to change
 - What would you be willing to try?
 - I can see that you're feeling stuck at the moment. What's going to have to change?

Small Group Discussion Questions

- How do you or could you use MI in your interactions with students?
- Given the students you work with, including their social, cultural, and academic backgrounds, are there modifications or caveats to the use of MI that should be considered?

Resources

- Miller W, & Rollnick S (2002) *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing People for Change* (2nd Edition). New York: Guilford Press
- Soderlund, L. L., 2009. *Challenges of Learning & Practicing Motivational Interviewing*. Masters Thesis, Linkoping Studies in Health Sciences, Linkoping University, Sweden.

More Open Questions...

- What sorts of things are you doing in your free time?
Friends?
- What advice have you sought from your departmental academic advisor/professor/instructor?
- (Transfer students) What are you hoping the U of Iowa will offer?
- (Students with violations) What have you learned from this experience? If faced with the same situation in the future, what would you do differently?
- How are you finding community on campus?