

An Example of an initial MI Session

1. **Set the Agenda.** Find the Target Behaviour e.g. substance misuse, smoking, medication adherence, exercising etc. – Warning! It might also be appropriate to avoid the “Premature Focus Trap”.
Clarify the agenda around a target behaviour about which there is ambivalence. Try using your OARS to help sort things out.
2. **Ask about the positive (good things) aspects of the target behaviour.** This is often an engaging surprise. However, it will only work if you are genuinely interested.
 - What are some of the good things about: Example issues- (your alcohol use) (not taking your medication) (not exercising) (not being involved with others) (not using physical aids) etc.
 - People usually.....because there is something that has benefited them in some way. How hasbenefited you?
 - What do you like about the effects of/continuing with/not doing/not taking.....?
 - Use reflection and summary to highlight and acknowledge the positives that the client has stated
3. **Ask about the negative (less good things) aspects of the target behaviour:**
 - Can you tell me about the down side/what’s not so good about...?
 - What are some aspects you are not so happy about?
 - What are some of the things you would not miss?
 - Again use reflection and summary to acknowledge and highlight the negatives that the client has stated
4. **Explore life goals and values.**
These goals will be the pivotal point against which cost and benefits are weighed.
 - What sorts of things are important to you?
 - What sort of person would you like to be?
 - If things worked out in the best possible way for you, what would you be doing a year from now?
5. Use affirmations to support “positive” goals and values.

5. Prompt for a decision.

Restate their dilemma or ambivalence then prompt for a decision.

- You were saying that you were trying to decide whether to continue or cut down...
- After this discussion, are you more clear about what you would like to do?
If the client is still quite ambivalent ask: On a scale of 1 to 10 how willing are you to.....?
- So are you ready to make a decision?

6. Goal setting.

- What will be your next step?
- What will you do in the next one or two days?
- Have you ever done any of these things before to achieve this?
- Who will be helping and supporting you?
- On a scale of 1 to 10 how confident are you that you will do your next step?

7. If no decision is made or the decision is to continue the behaviour.

- If no decision, empathise with the difficulty of ambivalence.
- Ask if there is something else which would help them make a decision?
- Ask if they have a plan to manage not making a decision?
- Ask if they are interested in reducing some of the problems while they are thinking about or making a decision?
- If decision is to continue the behavior, go back to explore the ambivalence.