

Getting to change

The following information is based on 1) W. Miller and S. Rollnick, (2002). *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing People for Change* and 2) Rollnick, S.; Miller, W. R. & Butler, C.C. (2008). *Motivational Interviewing in Health Care: Helping Patients Change Behavior*. Both of these books are excellent references for using MI in your practice.

Kinds of change talk: DARN-C

- Desire: statements clients make about preference for change
 - I would like to....
 - I wish..
 - I really want to weigh less
- Ability: Statements clients make about self-capability
 - I think I could walk 2 times a week
 - I can skip that chocolate bar at bedtime
 - I am able to walk from the back of the parking lot
- Reasons: Statements clients make that are specific arguments for change
 - I know I would feel better if I lost 50 pounds
 - I would have more energy if I started exercising
 - I would worry less about my eyes if I went for regular check-ups
- Need: Statements clients make about feeling an obligation to change
 - I should walk at least 3 times a week
 - I should do this for my grandchildren
 - I have to lose weight if I am going to be able to walk up stairs
- Commitment: Statements clients make about the action(s) they will take to change.

Intention or low level commitment: Statements clients make related to an intention to take action to change.

- I hope to...
- I plan to...
- I will try to....

Higher level commitment statements:

- I will walk two mornings next week
- I am going to make a list of pros and cons for exercising
- I will make an appointment with my eye doctor for next month
- I promised my husband I would walk with him twice a week and I am going to start that tomorrow.

Clients need to: 1) recognise the disadvantages of the status quo, 2) recognise the advantages of change, 3) hold some optimism about change, 4) have an intention to change, 5) and make a commitment to change

- **Recognise the disadvantages of status quo**
 - I never really thought about how.....
 - I think I have not taken this serious enough
 - I can see now that if I don't take this weight off I am probably going to die sooner

Ways to evoke change talk about the disadvantages of status quo

What concerns you about your current situation?

What makes you think you need to do something about your weight?

What concerns you about not checking your blood glucose on a regular basis?

What do you think might happen if you don't change your diet?

- **Recognise the advantages of change**
 - If I weighed less I could buy regular size clothes
 - If I weighed a normal weight I would have more energy
 - I would probably feel better if I exercised
 - I might enjoy my grandchildren more as they grow up

Ways to evoke change talk about the advantages of change

How would life be different for you if.....?

If you could wake up tomorrow and things changed by magic, how would things be better for you?

What are the main reasons you see for?

What would be the benefits of..... for you?

You might also explore goals and values with the client

You mentioned how important it is for you to be able to play with your grandchildren and how your current weight interferes with that.

You said you would really like to be able to hike with your friends on vacation and how your current energy level keeps you from doing that.

- **Expressing optimism about change**

- I think I could exercise 2 times a week
- I was able to quit smoking many years ago
- I usually can do something if I make up my mind I am going to do it
- I think I can do this with some support from my family

Ways to evoke change talk about expressing optimism

What do you think would work if you decided to change...?

How confident are you that you can make this change?

What kind of support would be helpful in making this change?

What encourages you to change if you want to do it?

- **Expressing intention to change**

- I think it is time for me to do this
- I have got to do something
- This is not how I want to be the rest of my life
- I don't know how I will do this but I am going to have to do it

Ways to evoke change talk about intention to change

I can see you are feeling stuck right now. What is going to have to change?

How important is it for you to?

What do you intend to do?

What do you think you might be able to do?

What are you thinking about in monitoring your blood glucose?

What are you thinking about in changing your eating patterns?

You mentioned a number of ideas to exercise. Which ones sound like they might work for you?

Ask scaling questions to help clients determine how important a change is and how confident the patient is in making that change:

- On a scale from zero to ten how important is it for you to.....?
- Tell me why you chose that number?
- What could happen that would move you to higher number?
- On a scale from zero to 10, how confident are you that you can make this change?
- Tell me more why you chose that number for your confidence level?
- What do you think might help become more confident in making a change?

Other ideas to help clients change is to use elaboration with questions such as:

- How much, when, Where
- Ask for an example
- Describe what happened last time you.....
- Tell me about a typical day

If clients have little desire to change you might try asking the extreme questions

- What concerns you the most about.....?
- Suppose you do nothing about....., what do you imagine is the worst thing that will happen?
- How much do you know about smoking and what can happen even if you don't see this happening to you?
- What might be the best results you could imagine if you.....?
- If you were completely successful in making changes you want, how would things be different for you?

Looking at past experiences

- Do you remember a time when you weighed a good weight for you? What was it like then?
- What were things like before you stopped exercising?
- What are the differences between the John of 10 years ago and the John today?
- How has your weight stopped you from doing things you might want to do?

Looking forward to future

- If you make a change in your diet, what do you hope to be different?
- How would you like things to be 10 years from now?
- It seems like you are anxious about how things are with you now, How would you like things to be different?
- Suppose you don't make any changes and just continue as you are now, what do you think your life will be in 5 years from now?
- Given how you feel now, if you don't make any changes, how do you think you will feel a year from now?

Reinforcing change talk

It sounds like a good idea

It sounds like that could work

You make a good point

I can see you gave this a lot of thought

It's important for you to.....

Rolling with resistance: Resistance behaviours may include making excuses, blaming others, minimising importance or significance, challenging, hostile language (verbal and non-verbal), and ignoring. Clients who are resistant are not ready to change.

Ways to roll with resistance:

- **Acknowledge the person's perception or disagreement**
 - You don't see a need to check your blood glucose when your hemoglobin HBA1C is always at 6.5
 - You don't think taking your medication everyday is really necessary.
 - You're rather discouraged about trying to exercise again.
 - You think it is better to eat whatever is available any time you are hungry
 - You think you will die anyway and smoking won't make any difference how or when that happens.
 - You think in the long run losing weight will make a difference in how much medicine you have to take and at the same time it is really a hard thing to do.
 - On one hand you know there are some problems that can happen if you don't monitor your blood glucose and the information I suggested is not acceptable to you.

Reframing

- Client: "I have tried to lose weight so many times and failed"
- Practitioner: "You are very persistent, even though you are discouraged. This change must be important to you"
- Client: I tried to quit smoking 4 times and never can stick with it
- Practitioner: It seems to me that you have given this a lot of effort already. Every time you try you get closer. The average number of

attempts to quit smoking before most people quit is 6 times, so don't give up!

- Client: No body can tell me that this stuff works!
- Practitioner: Whether this works or not is up to you. You are in the best position to know what ideas are most likely to work for you.
- Client: You're probably going to tell me I have to eat certain food and that I have to exercise every day and I hate that advice.
- Practitioner: If I were to tell you to do a lot of things that could overwhelm you. When you feel like you have to do something it actually can prevent you from doing what you want to do. Or, I can provide you with information about the benefits of good nutrition and exercise in managing diabetes if you like. It is up to you if you want to change your diet or exercise patterns.
- Client: What if I tell you I won't give up smoking?
- Practitioner: that is a decision you need to make. I can give you information about the risks of smoking. The decision to keep smoking or quit is up to you.

Another approach suggested by Miller and Rollnick is asking the client to take the position of arguing for a change. The practitioner argues the opposite and asks the client to try to persuade the practitioner to make the change. This gives the client the opportunity to list all the reasons why he/she should change.