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Motivational Interviewing: Observations of one-on-one conversations between residential care workers and adolescents

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EUSARF Conference, September 14, 2016

Adolescent: "I like to smoke weed every day"

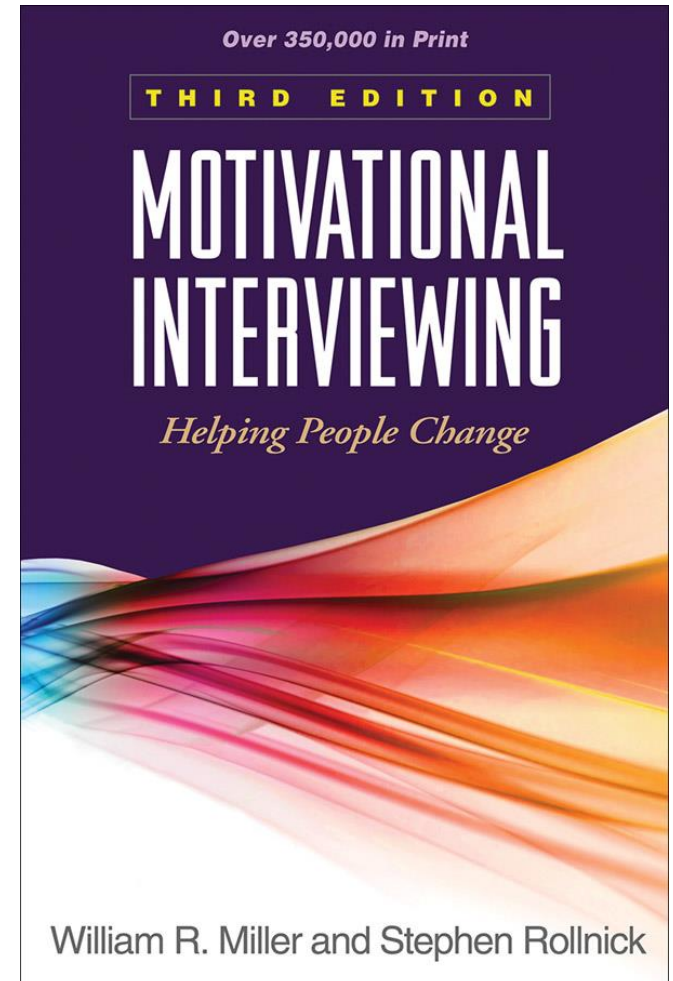
~~Care worker: "It is unhealthy to smoke weed, so it is better for you to quit"~~

Care worker: "Would it be alright if we spend some time discussing the risks of smoking weed?"



Motivational Interviewing (MI)

MI is a “collaborative conversation style for strengthening a person’s own motivation and commitment to change”
(Miller & Rollnick, 2013, p. 12)



Why MI in residential youth care?

- Fits very well with adolescents
(focus on autonomy and motivation for change)
- Can improve alliances with adolescents
(focus on treatment skills of professionals)
- Can improve long-term outcomes
(focus on evoking intrinsic motivations for change)

(Eenshuistra et al., 2016; Markland et al., 2005;
Harder et al., 2015)

Method: Research design study

Audio recordings
of one-on-one
conversations between
care workers and
adolescents

T₀
Before the MI training

MI training

Audio recordings
of one-on-one
conversations between
care workers and
adolescents

T₁
After the MI training

MITI: professionals (Moyers et al., 2016)

MI adherent behavior

- *Affirm*: “Well, it’s great that you want to go to school again, because you did not go to school for a while.”
- *Seeking Collaboration*: “What can I do for you?”
- *Emphasizing Autonomy*: “But David, only if you want it.”
- *Persuade with permission*: “What do you think of saving money?”

MITI: professionals (Moyers et al., 2016)

MI non-adherent behavior

- *Persuade without permission*: “That’s the spirit that you need to keep up.”
- *Confront*: “I don’t believe that.”

Other behavior counts:

- *Giving Information*: gives the client neutral information
- *Questions*: that are asked to the client
- *Reflection*: they essentially capture and return to clients something about what they have just said.
- *Other*: among others utterances that have a structuring function or a combination of a reflection and a question

MISC: youth (Houck et al., 2013)

- **Change talk (CT)**

“What I want is just my old life back without the negative things.”

- **Sustain talk (ST)**

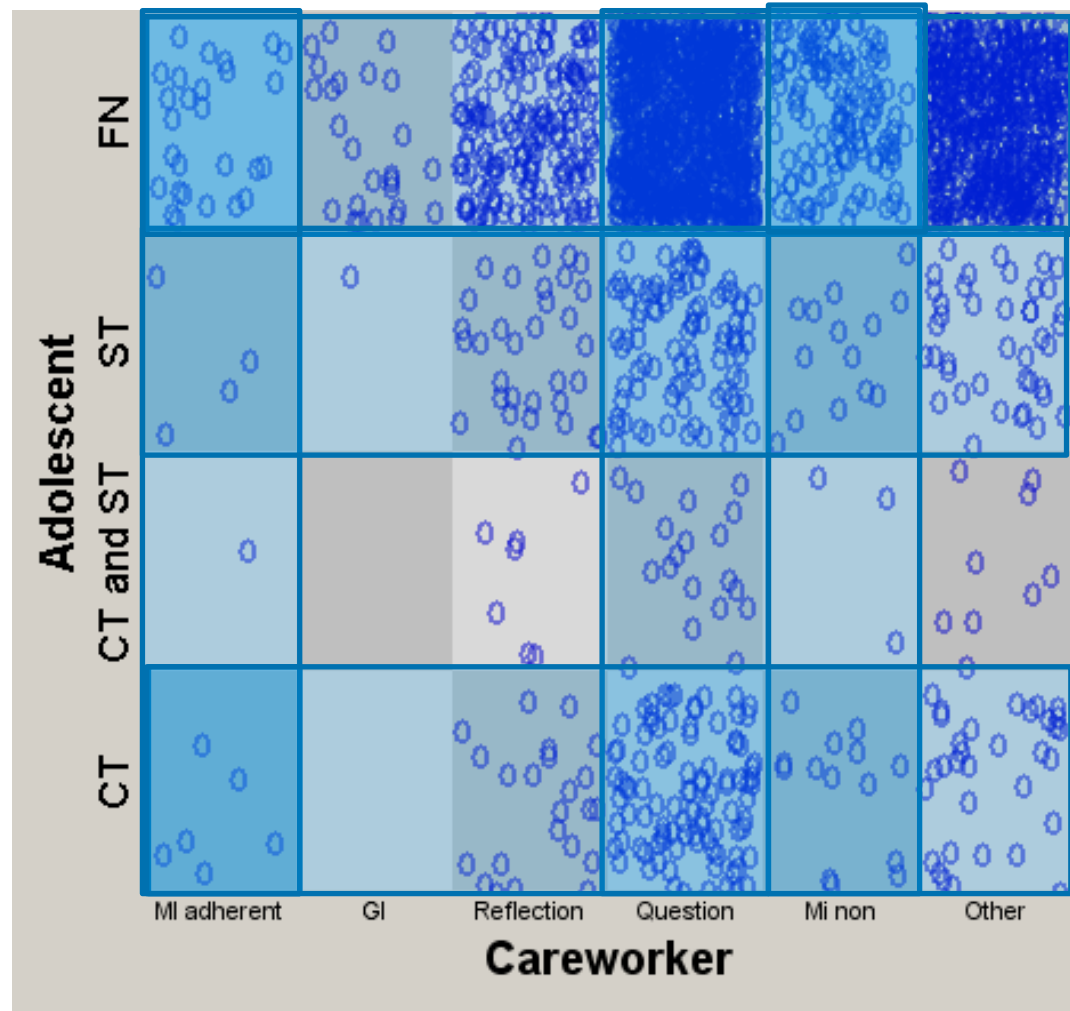
“I don’t want to go to school anymore.”

- **Follow/Neutral/Ask (FN)**

“Yes/no”

“What do you mean?”

Results: care worker-adolescent dyads



Note. CT = Change Talk, ST = Sustain Talk, FN = Follow/Neutral/ask a question, GI = Giving Information, MI non = MI non-adherent

Fragment: MI non-adherent behavior and neutral response

Adolescent: I don't talk a lot with my parents anyway.

Care worker: No. Why is that? *[Question]*

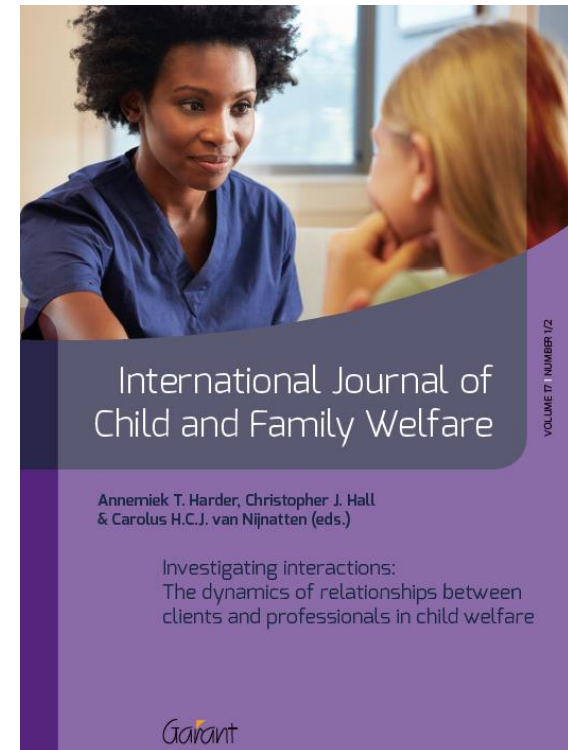
Adolescent: I don't know. Besides I was alone, yes I actually have never done that a lot, talking a lot with my parents. *[Follow/Neutral]*

Care worker: Ok, but these are very important things to discuss, I think. *[Persuade without permission]*

Adolescent: Yes *[Follow/Neutral]*

Main results and implications

- Care workers often use MI non-adherent behaviors
- Adolescents mostly reply neutrally to care workers
- Focus on *(behavior)change* during one-on-one conversations with adolescents
- Provide *MI training* for residential care workers
- Study the *implementation and effectiveness* of such MI training in residential youth care practice





Thank you for your attention

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