


**Motivational Interviewing  
& Employment Case  
Management**

A Workshop for the National  
Transitional Jobs Network Conference  
April 12, 2012

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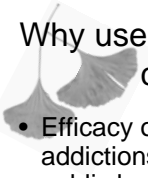
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**Why use MI with challenging career counseling issues?**

- Efficacy of MI has been demonstrated in addictions, mental health and medical and public health counseling (Mason, 2009)
- MI is particularly helpful in working with participants who are resistant to change
- Lack of motivation is frequently reported by career participants as a key factor in hindering their progress (Borgen and Maglio, 2008)

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### Why use MI (cont.)?

- MI has been suggested for use with unemployed, resistant participants (Muscat, 2005)
- Help unemployed participants reduce ambivalence to change and increase motivation to take action steps to seek employment
- The stages of change framework provides a pragmatic model for matching employment services to participants (i.e. MI for those contemplating pursuing employment & employment services for those ready to actively pursue jobs)

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## Principles of Motivational Interviewing



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### What is Motivational Interviewing?

*A collaborative, person-centered form of guiding to elicit and strengthen motivation for change.*

(Miller & Rollnick, 2009)

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## What is Motivation?

- A **state** of readiness to change
- The **probability** that a person will enter into, continue, and adhere to a specific change strategy
- A **fluctuating** product of interpersonal interaction

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## What is Motivation?

*Motivation can be thought of not as a participant attribute, but as an interpersonal process between therapist and participant.*

*Research clearly demonstrates that the interaction between therapist and participant powerfully influences participant resistance, compliance, and change.*

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## Goals of Motivational Interviewing

- Develop discrepancy
- Resolve ambivalence
- Increase intrinsic motivation
- Increase the client's self perception regarding the ability to change
- Encourage the participant to present the argument to change

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## Qualities of an Effective Motivational Counselor

- Respect for individual differences
- Tolerance for disagreement, ambivalence, and uncertainty
- Patience with gradual approximations
- Genuine caring and interest in participants served

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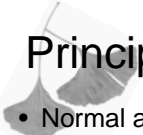
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## Principles of Ambivalence

- Normal and common component of many psychological problems
- Important to understand the unique dynamics of ambivalence for a particular individual
- Pressuring produces resistance
- Working through ambivalence is a central goal of Motivational Interviewing

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When given a choice between changing and proving that it is not necessary, most people get busy with the proof.

John Galbraith

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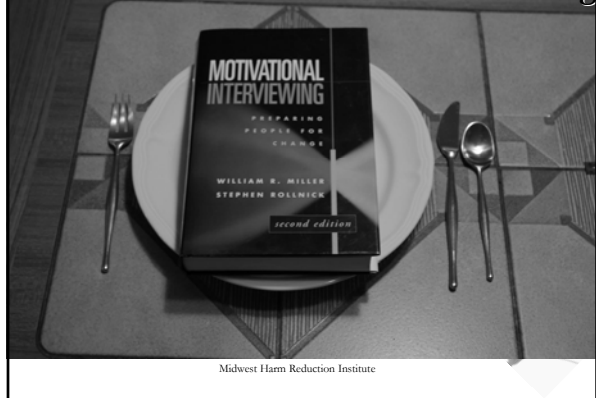
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# A Taste of Motivational Interviewing



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## A Taste of Motivational Interviewing

- Conversation between speaker and listener
- Speaker's Topic - Something about yourself that you:
  - Want to change
  - Need to change
  - Should change
  - Have been thinking about changing but haven't changed yet
  - *In other words, something about which you are ambivalent*

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## A Taste of Motivational Interviewing

- Listener:
  - Listen carefully with a goal of understanding the dilemma
  - Give no advice
  - Ask these open questions and listen with interest:
    - Why would you want to make this change?
    - How might you go about it in order to succeed?
    - What are the two or three best reasons to do it?
    - On a scale from 0 to 10, how important would you say it is for you to make this change? And why are you at \_\_\_ and not zero?
  - Give a short summary/reflection of the speaker's motivations for change
  - Then ask: "So what do you think you'll do?" and just listen

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## Common Human Reactions to Being Listened To

- Understood
- Want to talk more
- Liking the counselor
- Open
- Accepted
- Respected
- Engaged
- Able to change
- Safe
- Empowered
- Hopeful
- Comfortable
- Interested
- Want to come back
- Cooperative

*Would you rather work with these people...*

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## Or these?

- Angry, agitated
- Oppositional
- Discounting
- Defensive
- Justifying
- Not understood
- Not heard
- Procrastinate
- Afraid
- Helpless, overwhelmed
- Ashamed
- Trapped
- Disengaged
- Not come back – avoid
- Uncomfortable

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## Predictable Effects of Confrontation

- Resistance: Non-cooperation
- Reversal: Eliciting the opposite in ambivalence
- Reactance: Assertion of autonomy

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“People are generally better persuaded by the reasons they themselves discover than by those that enter the minds of others.”

Pascal

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### Motivational Interviewing: Spirit vs. Technique

“We believe that each person possesses a powerful potential for change. ***The counselor’s task is to release that potential and to facilitate the natural change processes that are already inherent in the individual***” (Miller & Rollnick, 2002, p. 41).

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### The Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

(Miller & Rollnick, 2002)

#### Motivational Interviewing

- Collaboration
- Evocation
- Autonomy
- “Dancing”

#### Traditional Approach

- Confrontation
- Education
- Authority
- “Wrestling”

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The proper question is not,  
“Why isn’t this person motivated?”  
but rather  
“For what *is* this person  
motivated?”

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**Four Basic Principles of  
Motivational Interviewing**

- Express empathy
- Develop discrepancy
- Roll with resistance  
–(Avoid argumentation)
- Support self-efficacy

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**Express Empathy**

- Acceptance facilitates change
- Skillful reflective listening is fundamental
- Ambivalence is normal
- Necessary, not sufficient
- Not agreement, approval, permission

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## Therapeutic Empathy

- Empathy is not:
  - Having had the same experience or problem
  - Identification with the person
  - “Let me tell you my story...”
  
- Empathy is:
  - The ability to accurately understand the person’s meaning
  - The ability to reflect that accurate understanding back to the person

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## On empathy...

“Practitioner empathy may be the most important nonspecific factor influencing treatment outcome, and it is absolutely critical to the technically correct employment of motivational interviewing...”(Wallace, 2005, p. 144).

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## Develop Discrepancy

- Participant, rather than worker, presents arguments for change
- Motivation stems from perceived discrepancy between present behavior and important goals/values
- **Examining, exploring, and exercising** ambivalence requires that people take more diverse and often conflicted experiences and emotional states into account
- **Invites person to consider options**

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## Roll with Resistance

- Resistance is **caused by counselor behavior**
- Avoid arguing for change
- Resistance is a signal to respond differently
- New perspectives are invited but not imposed
- The participant is the primary resource in finding solutions
- It is how you respond to resistance that makes a difference, and that distinguishes MI from other approaches

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## Support Self-Efficacy

- Belief that one can change is an important motivator
- The participant is responsible for choosing and carrying out personal change
- The counselor's own belief in the person's ability to change becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy

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## Enhancing Confidence

- Confidence is treated as an ambivalence issue: it is unlikely that the person feels totally unable to change
- Low self-efficacy vs. depression, low self esteem, learned helplessness

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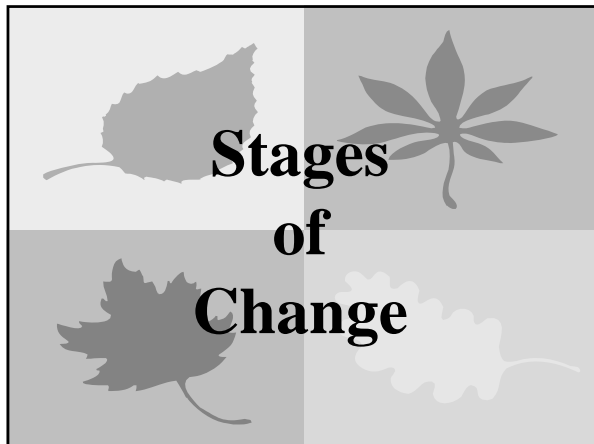
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# Stages of Change

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**Research Evidence Suggests:**

- A cyclical pattern of movement through specific stages of change
- A common set of processes of change
- A systematic integration of the stages and processes of change (doing the right things at the right times)

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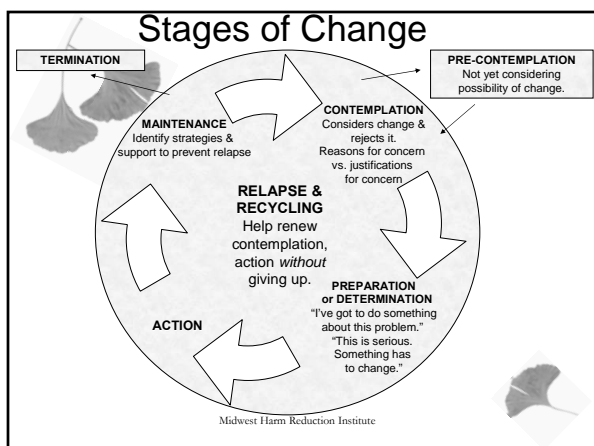
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STAGES OF CHANGE & STAFF TASKS	
PRECONTEMPLATION	Raise doubt - Increase the participant's perception of risks and problems with current behavior
CONTEMPLATION	Tip the decisional balance - Evoke reasons for change, risks of not changing; Strengthen self-efficacy for behavior change
PREPARATION	Help to determine the best course of action to take in seeking change; Develop a plan
ACTION	Help implement the plan; Use skills; Problem solve; Support self-efficacy
MAINTENANCE	Help identify and use strategies to prevent lapse/relapse; Resolve associated problems
RELAPSE	Help recycle through the stages of contemplation, preparation, and action, without becoming stuck or demoralized because of relapse

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### Use of MI in all Career Planning Stages

- Precontemplation:
  - Become aware of the need to make a career decision
- Contemplation:
  - Learn about or reevaluating vocational self-concept
- Preparation/Determination:
  - Identify occupational alternatives
  - Obtain information about occupational alternatives
  - Make tentative choices occupationally and/or educationally
- Action:
  - Implement a vocational choice (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2009)

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### Why Do People Change?

- People change voluntarily only when:
  - They become ***interested in or concerned*** about the need for change
  - They become ***convinced*** that the change is in their best interests or will benefit them more than cost them
  - They organize a ***plan of action*** that they are ***committed*** to implementing
  - They ***take the actions*** that are necessary to make and sustain the change

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## Signs of Readiness to Change

- Decreased resistance
  - the participant stops arguing, interrupting, denying, or objecting
- Decreased discussion or questions about the problem
  - the participant seems to have enough information
- Resolve
  - the participant appears to have reached a resolution

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## Four Early Strategies

- Ask **O**pen-ended questions
- **A**ffirm
- Listen **R**eflectively
- **S**ummarize

Elicit self-motivational statements (change talk)

- problem recognition**
- expression of concern**
- intention to change**
- optimism about change**

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## 1. Ask Open Questions

- Participant should be doing more than half the talking
- Questions that invite elaboration, rather than brief answers
- Avoid asking three questions in a row

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## Open vs. Closed Questions

- Tell me about your employment history
- I'm interested in hearing more about your skills and interests
- How do you see this as being of the most use to you?
- Have you ever been employed?
- Do you have any skills?
- Do you want my help with gaining employment?

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## Forming good open-ended questions

- Participant statement:
- Come up with 2 open ended questions matched to the content of their statement

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## 2. Affirm

- Statements of appreciation and understanding
- Emphasize a strength
- Notice, appreciate positive action
- Should be genuine
- Express positive regard and caring
- Nurture a competent instead of a deficit worldview of clients

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## Affirming Statements

- Directly affirming a participant can help build rapport and increase confidence
- Notice signs of client's strengths and efforts and reflect them back
- *"That seems like a good match for your skills and interests."*
- *"I appreciate you taking the big step and coming here"*
- *"You're clearly a resourceful person to deal with the difficulties you have for so long"*

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## Affirmations may include:

- Commenting positively on an attribute:
  - "You're a strong person, a real survivor."
- A statement of appreciation:
  - "I appreciate your openness and honesty today."
- Catch the person doing something right:
  - "Thanks for coming in today!"
- A compliment:
  - "I like the way you said that."
- An expression of hope, caring, or support:
  - "I hope this interview goes well for you!"

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## EXERCISE: Mining for Affirmations

Darryl is a 29 year old man with a diagnosis of bipolar disorder. He takes lithium for mood swings which he says has helped him to stay out of the hospital. He lives with his girlfriend who works full time as a paralegal in a large law firm. Darryl came to the U.S. from Mexico at the age of 12 with his two brothers to live with his grandparents.

Darryl's brothers are very successful. One owns a clothing store and the other is an accountant. They have both tried to help Darryl in the past, but have become overwhelmed by his symptoms and his drinking.

Over the past year Darryl has experienced increased periods of depression, has isolated himself in his apartment, and has begun to drink more. He has not worked in several years. Darryl completed three years of college but dropped out when he began experiencing symptoms when he was 20 years old. Darryl said that his dream was to be an architect. Darryl reported that over the past several years he has secured two jobs (as a dishwasher and at a fast food restaurant), but both times he did not show up for the first day of work.

**Strengths:**  
**Affirmations:**

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Case study from DHHS, SAMHSA, CMHS Supported Employment Workbook 2003

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### Non-verbal Listening: SOLER

- **S**it squarely
- **O**pen posture
- **L**ean towards the individual
- **E**ye contact
- **R**elax

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### What Good Listening is *Not*

- Asking questions
- Agreeing, approving, or praising
- Advising, suggesting, providing solutions
- Arguing, persuading with logic, lecturing
- Analyzing or interpreting
- Assuring, sympathizing, or consoling
- Ordering, directing, or commanding

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### What Good Listening is *Not*

- Warning, cautioning, or threatening
- Moralizing, telling what they “should” do
- Disagreeing, judging, criticizing, or blaming
- Shaming, ridiculing, or labeling
- Withdrawing, distracting, humoring, or changing the subject

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## Why are these “roadblocks”?

- They get in the speaker’s way. In order to keep moving, the speaker has to go around them
- They have the effect of blocking, stopping, diverting, or changing direction
- They insert the listener’s “stuff”
- They communicate:
  - One-up role: Listen to me! I’m the expert.
  - Put-down (subtle, or not so subtle)
- *Roadblocks are not always wrong. There is a time and place for them. They’re just not good listening.*

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## 3. Listen Reflectively

- Way of checking, rather than assuming that you already know what is meant
- Three steps in communication:
  - Encoding
  - Hearing
  - Decoding

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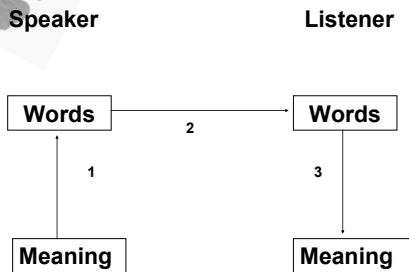
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## Three Places a Communication Can Go Wrong



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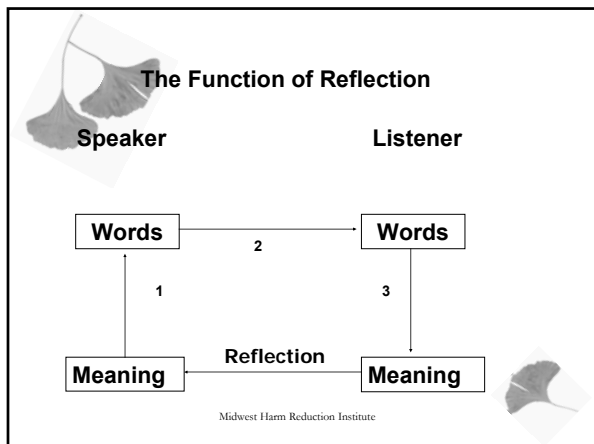
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### Listening

- *“Listening looks easy, but it’s not simple. Every head is a world.”*

» Cuban Proverb

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### Reflective Listening

- Simple reflection
- Double-sided reflection
- Amplified reflection
- Reflection of feeling

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## Forming Reflections

- A reflection states an hypothesis, makes a guess about what the person means
- Form a *statement*, not a question
  - Think of your question:  
“Do you mean that you...?”
  - Cut the question words:  
~~“Do you mean that You...?”~~
  - Inflect your voice *down* at the end
- There’s no penalty for missing.
- In general, a reflection should not be longer than the original statement.

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## Simple reflection

- C: I know smoking is killing me but I don’t know how I can stop.
- T: Smoking is killing you and you don’t know how to stop it.
- *Simple reflection—indicates to the consumer that the therapist is listening*

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## Double-sided reflection

- C: I know smoking is killing me but I don’t know how I can stop.
- T: On one hand you know that cigarettes are dangerous, on the other hand you don’t know what steps to take to quit.
- *Suggests active listening and provides an opportunity to highlight ambivalence*

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## Amplified reflection

- C: I know smoking is killing me but I don't know how I can stop.
- T: You want to quit but you wonder if you have the ability to do so.
- *Amplified reflection infers underlying meaning and invites deeper exploration*

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## Reflection of Feeling

- C: I know smoking is killing me but I don't know how I can stop.
- T: It frightens you to think that you continue to do something that is killing you
- *Reflection of feeling highlights the emotional content of the client's statement*

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## Exercise: Forming Reflections

- Speaker: "One thing I like about myself" or "One thing you should know about me is"
- Listener:
  - Respond only with reflective listening statements: "You..."
  - Speaker says YES or NO **AND** elaborates as appropriate
  - Then listener reflects the new statement
  - After a few minutes, listener gives a short summary of what the speaker expressed

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## Exercise: Reflection

- **Stem 1:** I am just so sick and tired of people always telling me what to do. I mean really – where do people get off thinking they have the right to say that?
- **Stem 2:** It's like this – I've tried everything and nothing seems to be working. So I don't know what to do.
- **Stem 3:** I don't know why I keep doing this. I mean I'm not an idiot – I know it can kill me. I just don't have any will power I guess.
- **Stem 4:** My kids really are important to me and I don't want to do anything that might hurt them.
- **Stem 5:** So, given the big picture, this thing we are talking about really feels like small potatoes.

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## 4. Summarize

- Reinforce what has been said
- Show that you have been listening carefully
- Prepare the person to elaborate further
- Allow person to hear his or her own change talk for a second or third time – organize client's experience
- Type of summaries
  - Collecting
  - Linking
  - Transitional

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## Summaries can:

- **Collect** material that has been offered:
  - So far you've expressed concern about your children, getting a job, and finding a safer place to live.
- **Link** something just said with something discussed earlier:
  - That sounds a bit like what you told me about that lonely feeling you get.
- Draw together what has happened and **transition** to a new task:
  - Before I ask you the questions I mentioned earlier, let me summarize what you've told me so far, and see if I've missed anything important. You came in because you were feeling really sick, and it scared you...

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## Summarizing

- Gather together the bouquets of change statements that the person has offered
  - Certain flowers are placed in the bouquet while others are not
  - Some flowers are put up front in a prominent position, while others are put behind
- Disadvantages of the status quo, reasons for change, optimism about change, desire to change
- Include in the background an acknowledgement of the other side of ambivalence
- Resistance themes are stated in PAST tense, change talk in PRESENT tense

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## Strengthening Commitment

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## Decisional Balance

- Ambivalence is a normal part of the process of change
- Use “conflict” to promote positive change
- Weighing pros and cons of behavior
- Highlighting discrepancy
- Most useful in Precontemplation and Contemplation stages as a tool to increase motivation

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## A Decisional Balance Sheet

Remaining Unemployed	Getting a Job
<p><b>Benefits</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Lots of free time</li> <li>2) Spend time with friends</li> <li>3) Less stress</li> </ol> <p><b>Costs</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Low self-esteem</li> <li>2) Low income</li> <li>3) Boredom</li> </ol>	<p><b>Benefits</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Increase monthly income</li> <li>2) Improve housing situation</li> <li>3) Improve self-esteem</li> <li>4) Avoid boring daily routine</li> </ol> <p><b>Costs</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Loss of government financial &amp; health benefits</li> <li>2) Fear of losing job</li> <li>3) Increased stress</li> </ol>

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## Decisional Balance Art Exercise

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## Conducting a Decisional Balance Discussion

- Accept all answers. (Avoiding arguing with/disputing answers given by participant)
- Explore answers
- Be sure to note both the benefits and costs of current behavior and change
- Explore costs/benefits with respect to participant's goals and values
- Review the costs and benefits

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## Strategies to Develop Discrepancy

- Ask open-ended questions that pull self-motivational statements
- Reflect back, selectively, the self-motivational aspects of what the participant states
- Affirm and reinforce the participant for making self-motivational statements

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## Clarifying Values

- What does the participant hold most dear?
- What goals and values are central to his or her life?
- Which values particularly pertain to this choice point?
- How would each possible resolution move the participant toward or away from important values and goals?
- Where does the participant want to be in 5-10 years?
- How would each possible resolution move the participant toward or away from that envisioned horizon?

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## Resistance in Career Counseling

- Types of resistance in career counseling:
  - Fear of the unfamiliar
  - Feelings of fear and vulnerability
  - Previous negative experiences with counseling or social service agencies
  - Mandated participation
  - Emotional burnout from job search and/or job loss

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## Resistance in Career Counseling continued...

- Denial of problem or failure to take responsibility
- Irrational beliefs (e.g. I must be certain of my choice before I take action)
- Silence and/or passivity
- Making excuses for failure to take action

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## Dealing With Resistance

- **Reflection** – consider carefully which elements to focus on
- **Amplified reflection** – add some intensity to the resistant part of the statement
  - “my wife nags”;
  - *“she doesn’t have any reason to worry”*
- **Double-sided reflection** – include both sides of ambivalence
  - *“on one hand you like the freedom of unemployment, but on the other you worry about money”*

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## Strategies for Handling Resistance

- **Shift focus** – acknowledge current area feels unproductive
  - *“lets not worry about being called a deadbeat dad, maybe we should focus on the consequences of your inability to pay child support”*
- **Agreement with a twist** – reflection or statement of agreement, followed by a reframe
  - *“you’re right, alcohol is probably not the only thing effecting your ability to find a job”*

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## Strategies for Handling Resistance

- **Emphasizing personal choice and control** – remind clients that only they can choose to change their behavior
  - *“it is you who ultimately determines how this turns out”*
- **Reframing** – recasting the resistant or sustain talk element
  - *“I know that you could hold your liquor from the beginning, but what I suspect, is that it indicates a genetic vulnerability”*

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## Strategies for Handling Resistance

- **Therapeutic paradox** – acknowledge that this may not be the right time, place or circumstance for change
  - *“maybe you can’t live without smoking pot”*
- **The drama of change**
  - *relate to them in ways that they don’t expect*

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## Readiness

- In general people cannot be ready to change until they perceive BOTH
  - that they **want** to (importance)
  - and are **able** to do so (confidence)

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## Readiness Ruler

Ready

- **Willing:** The importance of change
- **Able:** Confidence for change
- **Ready:** A matter of priorities

Willing



Able

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## Change Talk: Many Forms

### DARN-CAT

- **D**ESIRE to change (want, like, wish . . .)
- **A**BILITY to change (can, could . . .)
- **R**EASONS to change (if . . . then)
- **N**EED to change (need, have to, got to . . .)
- **C**OMMITMENT (intention, decision, readiness)
- **A**CTIVATION (ready, prepared, willing)
- **T**AKING STEPS

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## Examples of Change Talk

- **Desire:** I want to get a job or go to work
- **Ability:** I could go to work
- **Reasons:** I should get a job because.... or Work would really help me with money issues
- **Need:** I've got to get a job
- Work with these to **strengthen COMMITMENT** to Change: *"I will get a job"*

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## Questions that Evoke Self-Motivational Statements (Change Talk)

### *Problem Recognition:*

- How does your drug/alcohol use interfere with your job goals?

### *Concern:*

What do you think will happen if you don't make a change?

### *Intention to change:*

- What things make you think you should hold off on looking for a job...and on the other side...what makes you think it's time for a change?

### *Optimism:*

- What makes you think you can be successfully employed, even if you decided to?

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## Eliciting Self-Motivational Statements (Change Talk)

### Ask **Evocative Questions:**

- What worries you about your current situation? (Disadvantages of status quo)
- How would you like for things to be different? (Advantages of change)
- What do you think would work for you if you decided to change? (Optimism about change)
- What would you be willing to try? (Intention to change)

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## Eliciting Change Talk

### **Elaborating**

- Asking for clarification, a specific ex., description of the last time this occurred

### **Querying Extremes**

- Ask for a description of the extremes of their or others' concern/consequences that might ensue
- Imagine the best consequences that could follow from pursuing change

### **Looking Back/Looking Forward**

- Remember times before problem/compare with present
- Envision a changed future/how it would be after change

### **Exploring Goals and Values**

- Tell you what things are most important in his or her life

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## Elaborating change talk “What else?”

- Tell me more about that?
- In what ways?
- Give me an example. When was the last time this happened?
- What else have you noticed or wondered about?
- How else could you do it?

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## Reflecting change talk

- Clarifies the person's meaning & encourages continued exploration of the content that is reflected
- **Selective** – one cannot reflect all shades of meaning. You select what to reflect and what to leave unsaid
- Reflecting change talk can have the paradoxical effect of evoking the other side of the ambivalence (resistance) → recover with a double sided reflection

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## Exercise

- **Groups of three** (Participant, Staff, Observer)
- **Participant:** Discuss something you feel two ways about
  - Not a necessarily a personal issue
  - Could be a political issue or candidate
  - Could be a moral/ethical dilemma
  - Not something on which you have a firmly formed opinion
- **Staff:** Use SOLER, OARS
- **Observer:** Use checklist to note SOLER, OARS, Change Talk (DARN-C)

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## Discussion

- What has been your experience in working with challenging career counseling clients?
- What have you found helpful?
- In what ways will Motivational Interviewing be helpful to you in working with clients in your settings?

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## Remember

- Talk less than your participant does
- On average, reflect twice for each question you ask
- When you reflect, use complex reflections more than half the time

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## Remember

- When you do ask questions, ask mostly open questions
- Avoid getting ahead of your client's readiness (warning, confronting, giving unwelcome advice or direction, taking the "good" side of an argument)

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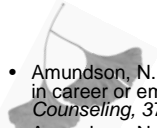
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