

What is motivational interviewing?

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Definitions of MI*

Public Definition:

A collaborative conversation style to strengthen a person's own motivation and commitment to change.

Professional Definition:

A person-centered counseling style for addressing the common problem of ambivalence about change.

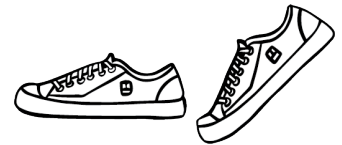
Scientific Definition:

A collaborative, goal-oriented style of communication with particular attention to the language of change. It is designed to strengthen personal motivation for and commitment to a specific goal by eliciting and exploring the person's own reasons for change within an atmosphere of acceptance and compassion.



Ambivalence

Ambivalence is feeling two ways about something. When people grapple with ambivalence towards change, their thoughts and words move them towards and away from change.



Remember, ambivalence is normal. When someone feels ambivalent, you can use the spirit, skills, and strategies of MI to help them to work through it. If you tell someone what to do, there is a risk that they will push back, withdraw or appease you by saying they will do it and then not. MI is more like dancing with someone than wrestling.



Change Talk and Sustain Talk

Change talk is speech that favors movement toward positive change. It expresses a desire for, ability to, reason to, need to, commitment to, or steps toward change.

Sustain talk is speech that favors the status quo or moves away from change.

"People are generally better persuaded by the reasons which they have themselves discovered than by those which have come into the mind of others."

- Blaise Pascal.

Pensées #10

* Definitions from Miller W and Rollnick S, 2012.



The Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

The spirit of MI is the mindset that guides those all MI conversations. There are four things that make up the spirit of MI:



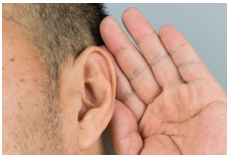
Compassion: Caring about what is important to another person and feeling moved to help.



Acceptance: Respecting another person and their right to change or not change



Partnership: Working together with another person and recognizing them as equal.



Evocation: Bringing out another person's ideas, strengths, and knowledge about the situation and themselves. This can include encouraging to explore.



Definitions of the spirit of MI based on Miller W and Rollnick S, 2012.

"You have what you need and together we will find it."

-Miller and Rollnick

Miller W and Rollnick S, 2012. p21.

Examples of Ways to Demonstrate the Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

C ompassion	<p>Take action to address what is important to the other person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend to comfort. • Advocate for what is needed. • Listen to what they need and follow through.
A cceptance	<p>Use Autonomy Supportive Statements: These statements let the person know you know and understand that they are in charge.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It’s up to you.” • “You have choices.” • “The decision is in your hands/in your court.” • “You’re the one who will know what will fit for you.” • “No one can make this decision but you.” • “You’re in charge.” • •
P artnership	<p>Partnership Statements: These statements express your desire to work with the person and/or recognizes their expertise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I may have some ideas, but you will be the one who knows best for you.” • “We can work together on that if you’d like.” • “I’m here to support you.” • “Your ideas about yourself and what works for you is the important thing here.” • “My role here is to support you in the changes that make sense to you.” • • <p>Resist the “Righting Reflex”– the helper’s tendency to want to fix things for other people or to correct a situation. In MI, our goal is to recognize the other person’s expertise and to help them to make the changes they want to make.</p> <p>Ask permission before giving information or advice. This simple approach acknowledges autonomy AND partnership.</p>
E vocation	<p>Be gently curious. This will spark curiosity in the person and a desire to know themselves and move forward.</p> <p>Avoid the question and answer trap. Too many questions create a passive conversation partner.</p>

A Range of Styles*



* Concept based on Miller W and Rollnick S, 2012.

MI Evidence Summary

Better outcomes (healthier changes) are associated with

- **The Spirit of MI:** compassion, acceptance, partnership and evocation.
- **Responding Strategically to Sustain Talk:** Maintaining engagement while helping people to focus on the desired change instead of barriers to change.
- **Responding Strategically to Change Talk:** Responding to change talk with hope and forward movement.

These are accomplished through the following approaches:

- High quality, complex reflective listening and high relational skills.
- Avoiding giving advice without permission.
- Having the person—not the helper or guide—determine next steps.
- The skills and approaches of MI can be taught and monitored using research-based tools. Practice and feedback is nearly always required to learn MI well.

What is happening when MI doesn't work?

- **Poor fidelity to MI:** There were no checks on whether or not MI was being used or being done well.
- **Inflexible approaches:** Very structured MI has been found to not lead to change. This may be because the clinician was not responding to where the person was in their journey to change.
- **Focusing on barriers:** Another interesting finding is that if clinicians bring up barriers when a person is ready to change, the person may actually go backwards in being ready to change.

Lesson References

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