

Be a Good Listener
Motivational Interviewing in Short and Remote Conversations
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8/26/26

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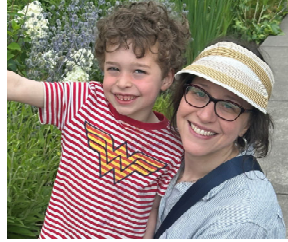
Waterwheel HEALTH CONSULTING

Motivational Interviewing
Collaborative Screening
System Transformation
Research Collaboration
Health Communication

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My firsthand knowledge of feeding challenges!

- Really difficult time with breastfeeding despite a great deal of effort
- Picky eater since infancy – store bought baby food only!
- Drank too much milk
- Still won't eat very many foods
- Strongly defends his autonomy and preferences



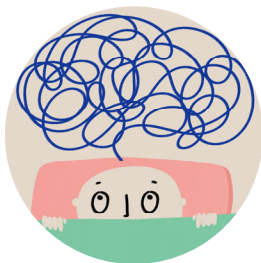
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Quick Review of Motivational Interviewing

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MI Approach to Helping People Change



Ambivalence is normal.

Be a good listener so they want to explore their challenges with you.

Let them know you see their strengths and capabilities.

Build on their motivation and ideas for change.

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MI Approach: *Why* to Change, *Then* How to Change

MI helps the patient answer for themselves:

"Why might I change?"

And then, if the patient decides they would like to change, they can answer:

"How might I change?"



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MI Approach:
Ask good questions and
really listen to what
people say



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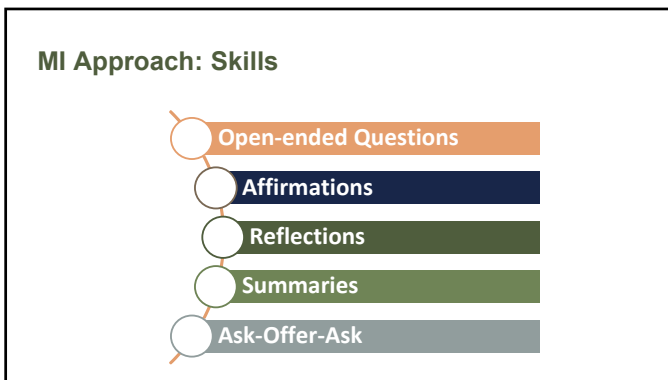
MI Approach: Spirit



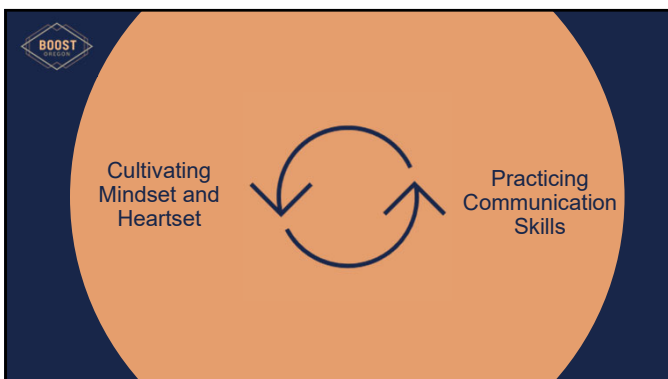
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Motivational Interviewing in Short and Remote Conversations

- Fidelity to MI spirit and communication skills
- Practice and feedback
- Like learning to play a song – once you know the song, you can play it for one minute or you can play the whole thing

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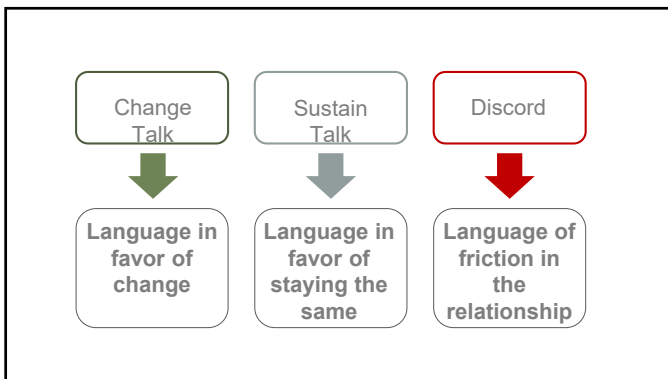


really listen to what people say Conversation Review

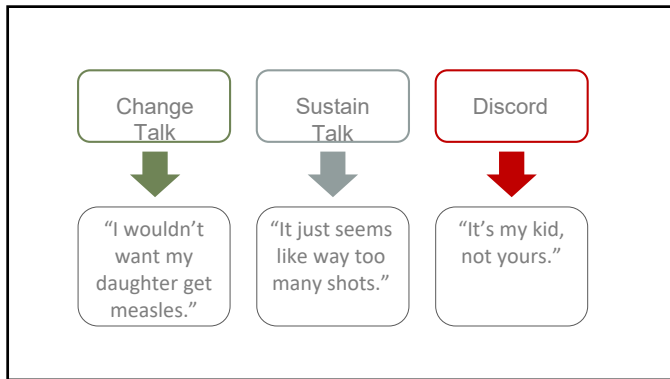
Look for change talk
How did it get there?
What other MI skills stand out?



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Change Talk

- Desire** → I want to
- Ability** → I can
- Reason** → It's important to me because
- Need** → I need to
- Commitment** → I will
- Activation** → I am doing
- Taking Steps** → I have done

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really listen to what people say

Conversation Review



Look for change talk

How did it get there?

What other MI skills stand out?

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really listen to what people say

Worksheet



Read the statement

Write one open question and one reflection in response to each one

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Open Questions

What	Why	How
- Does not have a yes or no answer - Does not have a number as an answer	- Encourages patient to talk and practitioner to listen - Keeps field of possible answers open	- Communicate gentle and nonjudgmental curiosity - Use to evoke change talk

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Accurate Empathy

What it is

- Perspective-taking: ability to understand the complex inner experience of another
- Co-feeling: "feeling with" - sometimes happens, but not necessary
- Personality trait: variable on a continuum from psychopath or narcissist to empath
- Learnable behavior: empathy is something that *you do*

Miller, W.R. (2024, April 11). *Listening well: The art of empathic understanding*. MITC Training and Education, Virtual Workshop.

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Accurate Empathy

What it isn't

Having had the same experience or problem	Advising
Identifying with the person	Asking questions
Experiencing the same emotions as the person	Analyzing
Sympathizing	Reassuring
Agreeing	Persuading
	Silence

Miller, W.R. (2024, April 11). *Listening well: The art of empathic understanding*. MITC Training and Education, Virtual Workshop.

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Reflective Listening

Communicating Accurate Empathy

- Statements, not questions
- Makes a guess about speaker's meaning
- Less likely to put people on the defensive
- Yield more information and better understanding
- Quickly create that relaxing feeling of being heard and understood

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really listen to what people say

Worksheet



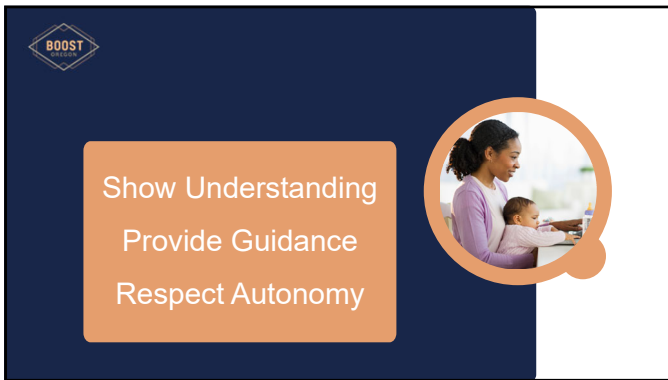
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