



Introduction to Motivational Interviewing:

Using Compassionate Conversations to Guide People Toward Growth and Change

Part 1: Friday, March 28, 2025

1:00 - 3:00 PM

Part 2: Friday, April 4, 2025

1:00 - 3:00 PM

Sara Schieffelin, LICSW

Workshop Learning Objectives - Participants will learn how to:

- Describe why Motivational Interviewing can be an effective way of talking with people about change and growth
- Identify how the components of the "Spirit" of Motivational Interviewing (compassion, acceptance, partnership, empowerment) can facilitate conversations about change
- Identify the four MI skills that can be used to help strengthen motivation for and commitment to change

Our Community Guidelines (in the Spirit of MI)

Compassion

We are committed to wellbeing and growth

Take away lessons, leave names and details

Acceptance

We practice non-judgement

We embrace ambivalence

Empowerment

We encourage autonomy

We invite feedback

Partnership

We all have expertise and inherent worth

We will go further together than alone

WHAT IS MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING?

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a particular way of talking with people about change and growth to strengthen their own motivation and commitment.

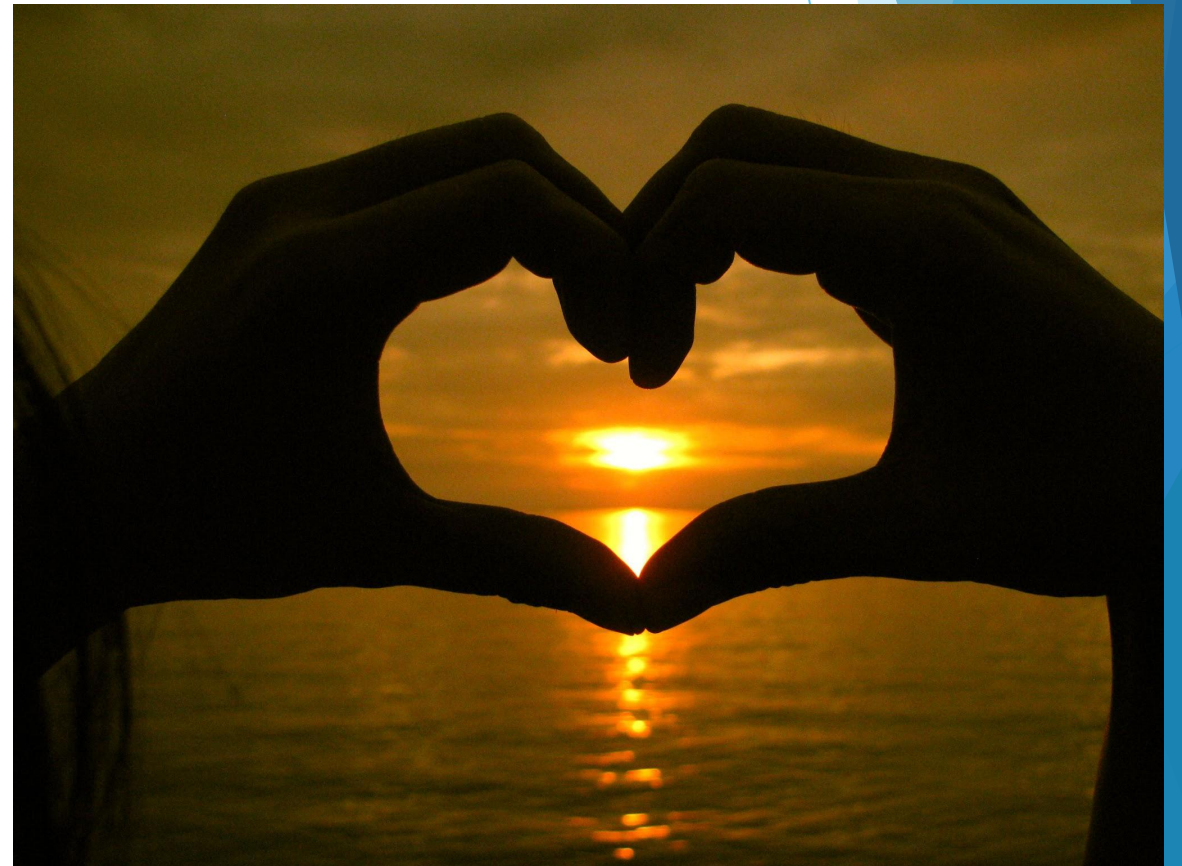
(Miller W.R., Rollnick S. 2023, p. 3)

MI is a person-centred way of supporting someone to make the changes that are important to them.



The Spirit of MI: The Heart-Set and Mind-Set

- The stance we use to approach the conversation
- The way we treat the person
- CAPE- Compassion, Acceptance, Partnership, and Empowerment



MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING SKILLS:

OARS+I

- The types of things we say to people
Open-ended questions, Affirmations, Reflections, Summaries, Information



Motivational Interviewing Strategies

- The techniques we use to draw out and explore the person's reasons for change



Good Listening: How do you know you are being a good listener, and/or how do you know you are being listened to well?

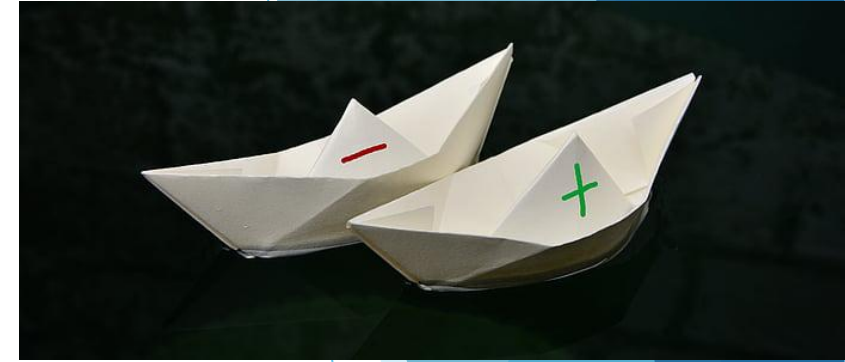


Good listening is:

- ▶ Presence—undivided attention
- ▶ Patience
- ▶ Eyes, ears, and heart
- ▶ Acceptance and non-judgment
- ▶ Curiosity
- ▶ Delight
- ▶ No interruptions
- ▶ Silence: inside and outside
- ▶ Encouragers (e.g. mm-hmm, I see, go on, oh, really, right, no way, what else, wow, tell me more)
- ▶ Reflections
- ▶ Summary



Introductions/Less and More



Listener ask the speaker the following questions:

1. “Tell me about the work you do and what got you into it.”
2. “What are some interpersonal dynamics you would like to have **less** of?”
3. “What are some interpersonal dynamics you would like to have **more** of?”
4. “What is your superpower?”
5. Listener offer a **45-second summary** of what the speaker said, then ask: “Did I get that right? Is there anything you would add?”

RESEARCH SUPPORT

- There are hundreds of randomized clinical trials on MI including the areas of:
 - Substance abuse
 - Chronic illness management
 - Diet/exercise/weight management
 - Tobacco cessation
 - Eating disorders
 - Criminal justice
 - Mental health
 - Education
 - Public health
 - Public safety
 - Supervision
- MI is recognized as an evidence-based practice



“From the time you were very little, you’ve had people who have smiled you into smiling, people who have talked you into talking, sung you into singing, loved you into loving. Some of them may be right here, some may be far away. Some may even be in heaven. No matter where they are, deep down, you know they’ve always wanted what was best for you. They’ve always cared about you beyond measure and have encouraged you to be true to the best within you. Let’s take some time to think of those extra special people. ” –Fred Rogers



Activity: Who has helped you rise?

Think of someone who had a significant positive influence on you and helped you become who you are today. This could be a family member, teacher, supervisor, coach, clergy, mentor, or cultural icon.

In pairs, the listener asks the speaker:

- 1) “Tell me about this important person in your life.”
- 2) “How did this relationship impact you?”
- 3) “What were their attributes/characteristics?”
- 4) Listener offer a 30-second **summary** of the characteristics/attributes of the speaker’s person, then ask: “Is there anything else you would add?”



SPIRIT: COMPASSION

Caring about what is important to another person and feeling moved to help. Coming alongside people in their suffering (e.g., homelessness, trauma, mental illness, addiction, grief, stigmatization, racial injustice, denial of rights); offering the gift of a safe, listening presence; being in solidarity with; acting for and with people.



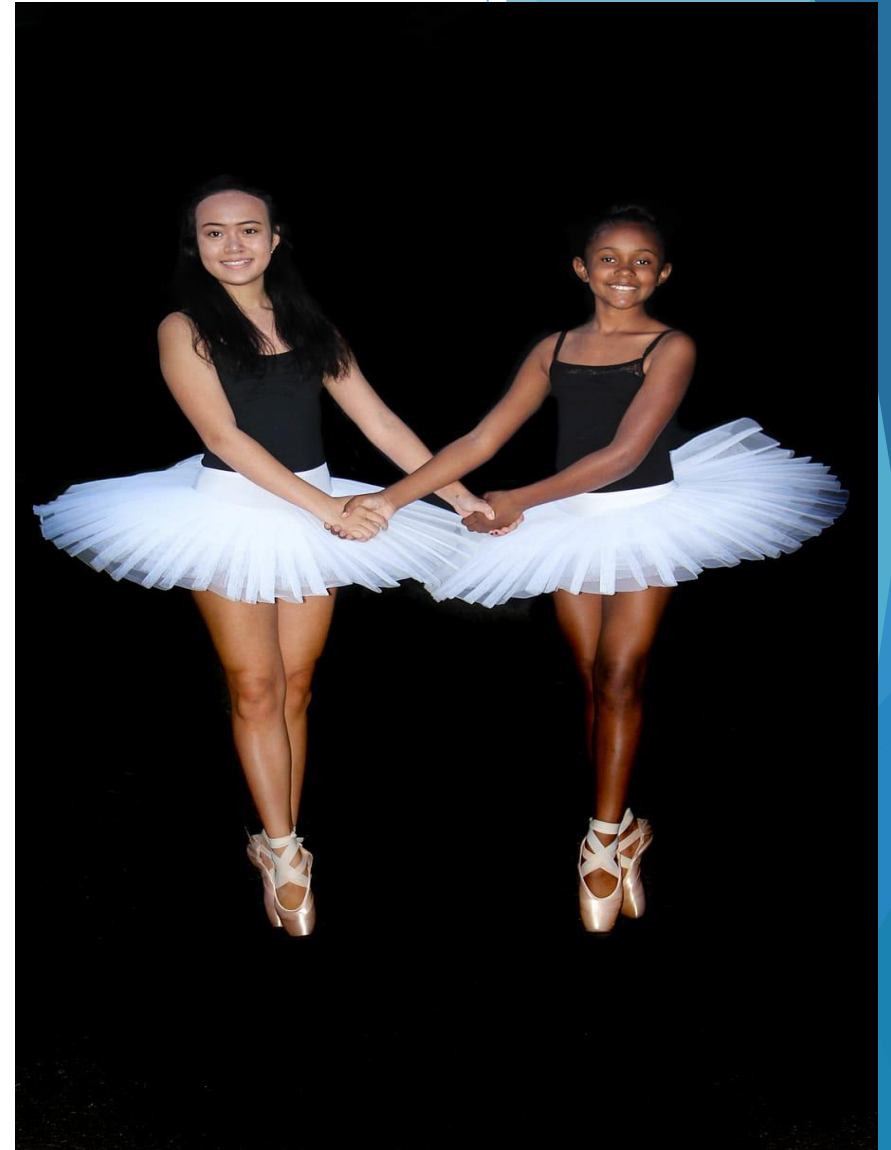
SPIRIT: ACCEPTANCE

Believing in the person's inherent worth and potential; unconditional positive regard; conveying empathy – seeking to understand where they're coming from; shining a light on the good things you see in them. Respecting their right to change or not. [Radical Acceptance Video](#)



SPIRIT: PARTNERSHIP

Working together with another person and recognizing them as equal. Letting go of the need to be the expert by showing genuine respect for the other person's life experience, hopes, and strengths. "Dancing rather than wrestling."



SPIRIT: EMPOWERMENT

Bringing out another's ideas, strengths, and knowledge about themselves and their situation. Encouraging another person to explore and take action.



PUT ON YOUR CAPE!!

- Compassion
- Acceptance
- Partnership
- Empowerment



The Ineffective Physician Video

The Ineffective Physician

The Effective Physician Video

The Effective Physician

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING SPIRIT

“Motivational Interviewing is more than a set of techniques for doing counseling. It is a way of being with people...”
(Miller and Rollnick, 2023)



Ambivalence

The state of having mixed feelings or contradictory ideas.



Ambivalence is a normal and defining state of human experience

- ▶ “I need to but I don’t want to.”
- ▶ “I’d like to but I don’t think I can.”
- ▶ “I will one day, but not today.”



TYPES OF TALK: Sustain and Change

Sustain talk

- ▶ Client speech that indicates staying the same or the “status quo”
- ▶ In MI we want to “soften” sustain talk



Change talk

- ▶ Client speech in favor of change and growth
- ▶ In MI we want to evoke, identify, reflect and amplify change talk!



CHANGE TALK: D.A.R.N. C.A.T.S.



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Preparatory: DARN

- Desire statements- “I want/wish/hope”
- Ability statements- “I can/could/am able”
- Reason statements- “It would help me/I’d be better off if”
- Need statements- “I need to/have to”

Mobilizing: CATS

- Commitment statements- “I will/promise/give my word”
- Activation statements- “I am willing to/prepared to/ready to”
- Taking steps- “I have already done XZY”

Activity: Drumming for Change

“I really don’t have time to attend that anger management class, but I know it could be helpful—mainly because I don’t want my children to see me out of control.”

Activity: Drumming for Change

“I really don’t have time to attend that anger management class, **but I know it could be helpful—mainly because I don’t want my children to see me out of control.**”

Activity: Drumming for Change

“I know you’re worried that I’m getting addicted, and I guess I can see what you mean, but I really need more pain medicine. I don’t know how I would get through the day without it. If that stupid ass doctor won’t prescribe it, then I’ll find someone else who knows how to get it.”

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Activity: Drumming for Change

“I really don’t want to stop smoking weed, but I know I should. I’ve tried before and it’s really hard.”

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“See, the thing is, all my girlfriends drink. Some of them probably drink way too much, too, but if I quit drinking, I don’t have any friends. I just stay home.”

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Evoking Change Talk

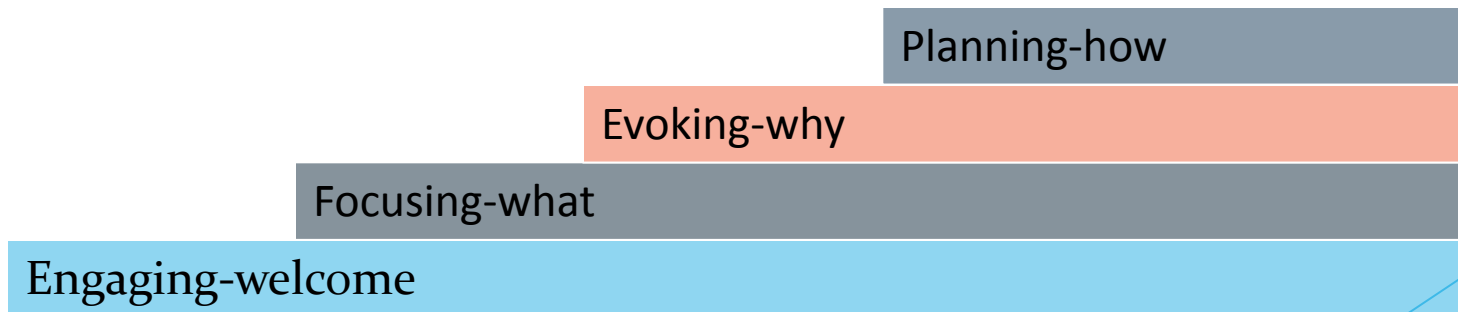
1. Why are you still living on the streets?
2. Do you want to get a roof over your head?
3. What are the main reasons—if any— you're wanting to find stable housing?
4. What do like about living on the streets?
5. What are some of the reasons you don't want to move into an apartment?

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4 TASKS OF MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

- MI conversations have a purpose and direction. They seek to help people identify and explore their hopes, values, and change goals using an empathic, guiding approach. This guiding approach used in motivational conversations generally moves through four tasks.
- The tasks generally occur in a building sequence, but movement “up and down the stairs” is common

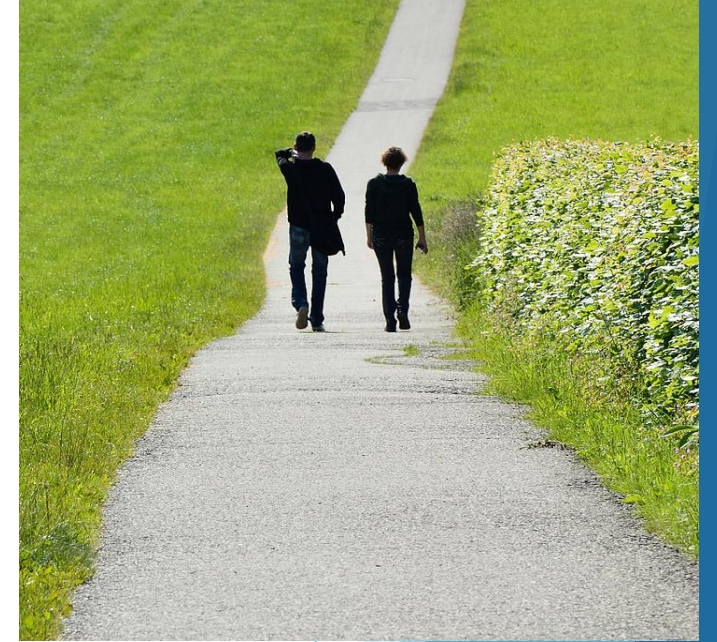


Engaging: “Can We Walk Together?”

Goal:

Safety & Optimism-getting to know someone and building trust

- “Welcome. It’s really good to meet/see you.”
- “How are things going in your life currently?”
- “What are some things you’ve been doing to support your health?”



Focusing: “Where Are We Going?”

Goal:

Figuring out together what to talk about

- “What would you like to focus on in our time together today?”
- “You mentioned some concerns about your weight. Also, about occasional shortness of breath. And that you’ve been feeling more anxious lately. Where shall we start?”
- “Would it be all right if we took a closer look at you and alcohol?”



Evoking:

“Why Would You Go There?”

Goal:

Drawing out the person’s own desire, reasons and ability to change (with a focus on drinking):

- “How would you describe the role of alcohol in your life?”
- “What does drinking do for you?”
- “What concerns, if any, do you have about your drinking?”
- “What impact, if any, does it have on the way you want to live your life?”



Planning:

“How Will You Get There?”

Goal:

Developing a specific change plan
that the person is willing to put in action

- “What do you think you’ll do next?”
- “Who or what could be of help?”
- “What might get in the way of your plan?”
- “How will you know when your plan is working?”



MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING SKILLS:

- The types of things we say to people

OARS+I

(Open-ended questions, Affirmations, Reflections, Summaries, Information)



Reflections:

- “Gentle guesses.”
- Holding up a mirror to what someone what has said.
- What is your understanding?
- What do you think they’re
- thinking or feeling? Say that!





What is David thinking?
What is David feeling?

“David you are...”

Activity: Reflections

Small groups

Think of an attribute/personal quality/characteristic that you would use to describe yourself.

Speaker: Share that attribute with your group “I am a person who can be (state attribute/personal quality).”

Your group members will go around the circle and state back to you “You are a person who can be (synonym or reflection of what you think they might mean).”

Speaker: Feel free to respond with more information if there is a reflection that moves you.



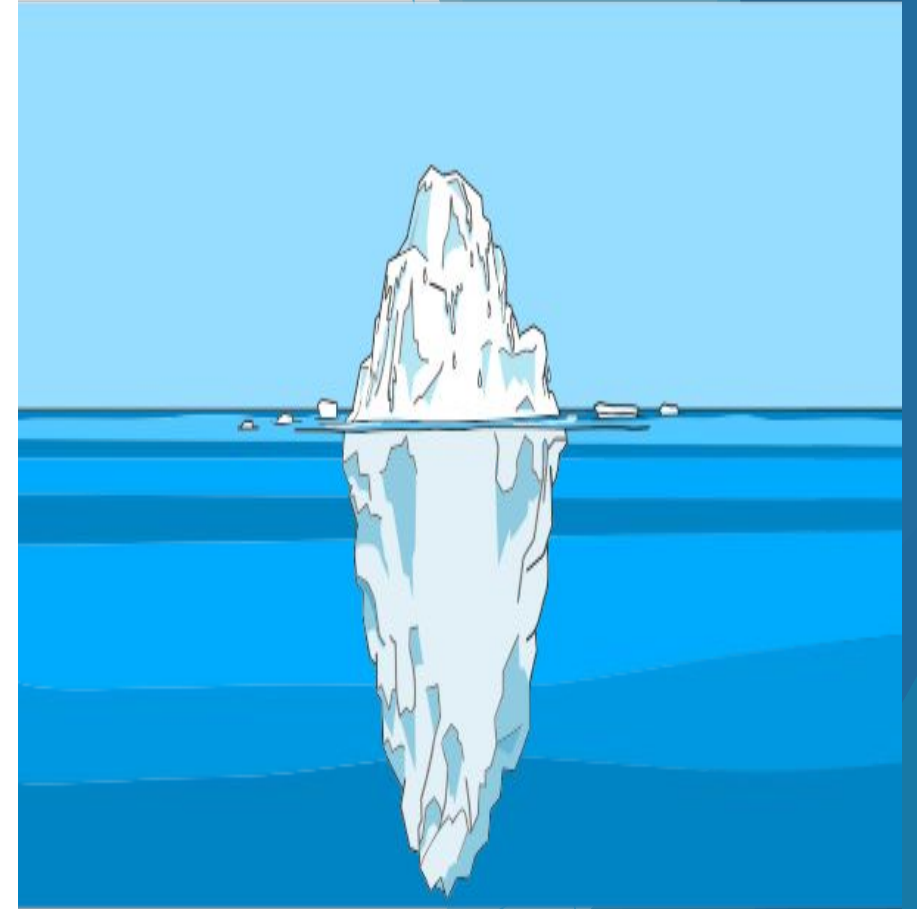
Two kinds of reflections:

Simple:

- ▶ Stay close to the person's words, repeating or rephrasing what they've said
- ▶ A simple reflection is the tip of the iceberg—what is visible

Complex:

- ▶ Add meaning or emphasis to the content
- ▶ A gentle guess about what is not seen—what is underneath the surface



Open-Ended (or Evocative, Invitational) Questions

- ▶ Cannot be answered by yes or no, or a one-word response.
- ▶ Invite the person to reflect and elaborate.
- ▶ Help you understand someone.



Purpose of Open-Ended and Evocative, Invitational Questions

- ▶ To invite conversation.
- ▶ To deepen relationship.
- ▶ To learn what is important to the other person.
- ▶ To explore change.



Affirmations



Affirmations

Statements that recognize strengths, intentions or values that a person has said or implied.

Purpose:

- ▶ To build relationships.
- ▶ To provide support for and increase confidence for change.

Activity: Practicing Affirmations and Reflections

The **listener** asks the **speaker**:

“Tell me what is going on for you on a really good day at work. When you say ‘Yeah, I’m good at this!!’”

Listener offer a few reflections (speaker, allow for this) and at the end, offer a summary of affirmations (characteristics, qualities, values, strengths), then ask “Did I miss anything? Is there anything you would add?”

Summaries

An extended reflection that pulls together what has been said, and ends with a question.

Purpose:

- ▶ To confirm understanding.
- ▶ To focus conversation.
- ▶ To transition the conversation.



Offering Advice and Information

Intent of providing information and suggestions in MI:

- Not an attempt to convince people of the folly of their ways.
- Provides an opportunity to express concerns and help the individual move further along in the process of change.
- Can help a person come to a decision.

PROVIDING INFORMATION

Continued

A few considerations:

- It's all right to express your concerns, and, in fact it might be necessary.
- There are many pathways to change; your way may not be the way of another.
- Focus on helping the person evaluate options.
- Offer information and advice, don't impose it.

Suggested method for
providing information and
offering advice:

Ask-Offer-Ask
(A-O-A)



Exchanging information effectively

Ask-Offer-Ask

Ask- Ask for permission, explore prior knowledge, query interests.

Offer- Offer information/advice that is relevant to the person/family, and promote autonomy.

Ask- Ask to see how the information/advice landed. Check for understanding and see if there are any responses to information you provided or concerns you have.

But Really, it's TripleA-O-A



Ask-about ideas, prior knowledge, prior attempts.

Affirm-what they already know/have done.

Ask-permission to offer your thoughts, ideas, suggestions.

Offer- offer information/advice that is relevant to the person/family, and promote autonomy.

Ask- check back to see how the information/advice landed. Check for understanding and see if there are any responses to information you provided or concerns you have.

Common causes of discord in the relationship

- The two of you have different goals.
- You're trying to get the person to change.
- When either of you brings anger and frustration into the situation.
- You're not truly listening, or you're making assumptions or interrupting.
- There's a lack of agreement about roles in the relationship.



Practitioner behaviors that tend to increase discord

- Pushing too hard on the person to change.
- Assuming you're the expert; not working collaboratively.
- Criticizing, shaming, blaming; using negative emotions to get the person to change.
- Labeling; “that’s because you’re an alcoholic/addict.”
- Being hurried.

Practitioner behaviors that tend to decrease discord

- Using simple and complex reflective statements:

“You’re wondering if I can help you.”

“You’re not sure you can trust me.”

- Other responses:

Apologizing – “Sorry, I didn’t mean to lecture you.”

Affirming – “You’ve been doing this for a long time and know how to keep yourself safe.”

Shifting focus – “Maybe there’s something else that would be more useful to talk about for now.”

Emphasizing personal choice and control – “It is entirely up to you. This is your decision. No one else can make it for you.”

Summary/Wrap-Up



In pairs. Listener ask the speaker:

- 1) “What is one thing you liked about this training?”
- 2) “What is one thing you learned in this training?”
- 3) “What is one thing you might try after this training?”

Listener offer a brief summary then ask “Is there anything else you would add?”



Thank you!

We want your feedback. Please be sure to complete the evaluation.

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