The Matter of Motivation: Motivational Interviewing for Substance Misuse

Michael D. Clark, MSW
Center for Strength-Based Strategies (Michigan)
Email: mike.clark.mi@gmail.com
Website: www.buildmotivation.com

Center for Strength-Based Strategies
www.buildmotivation.com
Moderator:

Christine McKenna, MS, LICSW, MLADC, CCTP
Director, Rockingham County Drug Treatment Court – NH
NEADCP Board of Directors member since 2015

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New England Association of Drug Court Professionals (NEADCP)

- The New England Association of Drug Court Professionals is a nonprofit consortium of drug treatment court professionals from six states (CT, RI, MA, NH, VT, ME)
- We exist to: Address critical current and emerging issues confronting drug treatment courts through high-quality training and TA
- Promote regional coordination to address challenges common in New England drug treatment courts and develop responsive pro-active policies and practices
- Provide a central forum and repository of resources relevant to the development, operation, and administration of drug treatment courts
- [www.NEADCP.org](http://www.NEADCP.org)

Michael D. Clark
MSW

Michael D. Clark, MSW is the Director for the Center for Strength-Based Strategies. He holds a Master's Degree in Social Work from Michigan State University (1994). Michael served for 16 years as a probation officer and a hearings Magistrate in Lansing, Michigan. Mr. Clark has trained over 200 Treatment courts and is a member of the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT). Michael is co-author to the book, "Motivational Interviewing with Offenders: Engagement, rehabilitation and reentry" published (2017) by Guilford Press.
A Six-Pack of Epiphanies:
What Treatment Court team members find out when they learn Motivational Interviewing

1. We can make our work harder. If you push, the program participant pushes back. "Getting right to it" and telling a program participant how to solve their problems only lengthens our work.

2. Much can be covered in a 10 minute encounter.

3. Behavior change is driven by motivation, not information. "We only change people who give us permission to do so."

4. Almost every piece of advice you might offer has already been thought about, mulled over, and rejected by your program person.

5. Participants will share a lot, quickly, with empathic, attentive listeners.

6. Motivated people solve their own barriers, including those facing mental health and/or AOD challenges.

Reniscow 2007

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In general, Motivational Interviewing (MI) is most useful:

- **(1) When the goal is an observable behavior change.** MI is a tool for increasing motivation around change. MI was created to resolve ambivalence – but it has a *directional component* – to move someone away from the hurtful, dysfunctional behavior. If your goal is primarily to educate, provide information, or gather information, MI is not necessarily the tool. Many of the basic listening skills may be helpful, but the “directional” components of MI are less applicable.

- **(2) When the person is more resistant, angry, or reluctant to change.** Some staff take the stance that MI is best for their cooperative clients, but for challenging clients it’s best to use a tough, directive approach. The research suggests just the opposite. Easy clients tend to do well no matter what style you use, but more resistant clients benefit more from an MI approach (relative to educational or confrontational approaches). *MI was designed for clients who are more reluctant to change.* When clients are doing well and they want your advice, or simply need help with planning, a direct, advice-giving style may be enough.

- **(3) When the interviewer can separate him/herself from the client’s attitude, actions, or consequences.** No one wants to see clients or their families hurt. MI does not ask you to surrender this mindset, but rather to be able to *suspend it*. We know there are times we can set aside our directing and advice-giving. Knowing the limits and parameters, the client has control of their own choices. Though you are very willing to assist the person through referrals, advice or assistance, there ought to be a clear understanding that it is the client’s responsibility to take action and comply. Our agencies or courts may set consequences but we have to back up and allow a client’s autonomy if we want to assist behavior change.
What is Motivation? What does it mean to be motivated?

- "All purpose energy (to be directed)"
- Motivation as ‘approaching or avoiding something’
- Motivation as "preferences directing outcomes"
- What do people want?
  - To survive
  - To maximize pleasure
  - To be effective in life pursuits
  - Deci & Ryan’s "Self-determination Theory" (SDT)
Over 1200 controlled clinical trials
- Since 1990, scientific publications of MI have doubled every 3 years.
- Evidence-Base Practice for Engagement and Retention
- It didn’t just “come out of” the SUD field...

Research shows staff behavior can predict the appearance of change talk
Change talk predicts later positive outcomes
People can talk themselves in or out of change

"We must remember, there is simply a limit to coercion...."

Change does not have "sides" — two people are involved so staff’s values are critical too.

"Do you want to be right, or do you want to be successful?"

The Spirit of MI
- "Change is difficult"
- So MI creates an atmosphere / a positive climate that helps change to take place...
- MI Spirit (P.A.C.E.) / "Notes" on next page
  - Partnership
  - Acceptance
    - Absolute worth
    - Accurate empathy
    - Autonomy - support
    - Affirmation
  - Compassion
  - Evocation

Heart set
Notes of the Spirit of MI – P.A.C.E.

P – Partnership
Partnership assumes the presence and participation of more than one person in the relationship. Change is driven by individual motivation – not information or advice. Start with engagement or do not start at all. You don't need a partnership for compliance and obedience—yet it is a critical “must-have” for behavior change. Creating partnerships is a learned-skill, it’s more than friendliness or good intentions. And it’s not about being happy or displaying a rosy attitude. Partnerships can be built even with a grumpy personality. We don’t eliminate our authority; we suspend it to build partnerships.

A – Acceptance. There are four key components to fostering acceptance within an offender relationship.

Absolute worth. This is very personal. The challenge is to look within and decide whether or not criminal behavior negates a person’s humanity. MI believes every person has worth and should be accorded basic human respect.

Accurate empathy. With the spirit of MI, you don’t listen to offenders to collect information which supports your preconceived judgments. You truly listen to understand the world as they see it. Since all change is self-change, it is critical to understand their perspective.

Autonomy-support. We understand every person has the freedom to choose his or her own course of action. An offender can always accept the consequences. A person will work harder and make more lasting change when he or she has a choice in important decisions. You’re not losing your power by acknowledging their choice, you’re increasing your effectiveness.

Affirmation. Affirmations helped to create a climate for change. They promote trust. Use affirmations as one might use salt in cooking; a little bit improves the dish, but too much spoils it. Affirmations mobilize client strengths. Affirmations acknowledge a simple truth: people change through their distinctive abilities and attributes, rather than through their failures or flaws. Acceptance is not a private experience, but something purposeful that is communicated through your words and actions.

C – Compassion
Compassion is considering the offender’s welfare and to give priority to his or her needs – while still maintaining a reasonable focus on supervision and orders. It takes deliberate intention. Compassion is not pity – there is much more hope in compassion. One of the most powerful human motivators is the power of the committed heart. This commitment of heart involves more than just the offender; it also involves the values, beliefs and desires of staff.

E – Evocation
We do not install the reasons for change — we evoke them. The mindset for evocation aligns with strength-based approaches where you trust that offenders already have within them what is needed for change. Evocation is more about capacity and values rather than deficit. Most probation, parole or reentry plans are born from our perspective — but this does not make sense. The plan isn’t ours; it belongs to the offender. Build a plan from the offender’s perspective, since it is he or she who will be asked to do the necessary changing. MI calls you to draw forth their wants, values and competencies. Wants and values are why anyone changes. We must get to know what they are.

(Stinson & Clark, 2017)
The Four Processes of MI

- Engagement
- Focusing
- Evoking
- Planning

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The Method of MI

Behavior change is assisted across Four Processes

Plan  When? How?
Evoke  Reasons for change
Focus  Horizon – Direction
Engage  Productive Relationship

3 points
1 2 3
(1) Change Talk
(2) Ambivalence
(3) Discrepancy

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Change Talk

Change talk is the compass
• What we tune our ear to...

Of all the things the person tells you, what is it you want to reflect?

If you don’t know the target, you won’t know the change talk!

Client-centered piece / Directional piece

Video (3 min): Interview with Karen about managing her rheumatoid arthritis

1. This is not an example of MI.

2. Karen will be pushed to change at the end, “please note her language in reaction.

3. Consider how Karen might be feeling when this short interview ends.

Video: Karen and managing her Rheumatoid Arthritis

• (1) This was not an example of MI

• (2) After Karen was pushed, what was her language at the end?

• (3) How do you think Karen felt when this short interview ended?

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"painful present" is examined because it conflicts with the valued and important

Instead of assuming all clients come to us resistant, what might be the benefits if staff would (instead) assume that all clients come to us ambivalent?

The Causal Chain
Talk about Change "Values-Desires" Action Positive Outcomes

"Push" Defend the problem Argue Null Outcomes

Most positive behavior change occurs as a process – where the SUD person grapples with these questions – in this order

Agencies lacking a "Culture of Motivation"

How Do I? Should I? Can I? Will I? How Do I?

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REFLECTIVE LISTENING

- One strategy: Respond to resistance with nonresistance.
- A simple acknowledgment of the client's disagreement, emotion, or perception usually permits further exploration rather than defensiveness.
- Remember, it's impossible to fight alone! You need two people to verbally argue.

DOUBLE SIDED REFLECTIONS

Reflecting both sides of the ambivalence. Start with the resistance side to "open their ears" to the change talk that comes next.

You need help when people call you alcoholic...

But after the trouble last week you recognize you have some problems.

EMPHASIZING PERSONAL CHOICE and CONTROL

Use a three-step process to convey it's the client who eventually determines what happens.

1. "It really is your choice about what you do in this situation."
2. "You may have to face (these consequences)."
3. "But ultimately, it's still your decision. No one can make you do this."

AMPLIFIED Reflection

Increasing the intensity of the resistant element

Reflect back what the client has said in an amplified or exaggerated form to state it in an even more extreme fashion.

"So you don't have any problems, no problems at all."

Be careful! Don't use a sarcastic voice tone or a voice tone that suggests you "know otherwise" as may elicit hostility or resistance.

SHIFTING FOCUS

(changing the subject)

Shift the client's attention away from a stumbling block or impasse. This amounts to going around barriers rather than trying to meet them head-on.

"We've talked about what other people say about your drinking: let's now talk about what you think."
### Interviewing Traps with Treatment Court Participants (P)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trap</th>
<th>What NOT to Say</th>
<th>What TO Say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **"Premature Focus Trap"**    | "This problem with your spouse..."  
**WHY:** Identifies the situation as a "problem" before the (P) has labeled it as such. | Ultimately you're the one who has to decide if or how this issue with your spouse will continue. What do you think is the next step for you? |
| Premature focus on Change (per the Judge's agenda) | **NOT** to start this anger management course.  
**WHY:** Sets up an antagonistic relationship, encourages P to give the counterargument. | How would things be better for you if you found a way to stop all this trouble?  
There's a part of you that doesn't feel you need this, but I've also heard a part of you that's tired of this trouble. |
| **"Confrontational-Denial Trap"** | **NOT** to say | How would things be better for you if you found a way to stop all this trouble?  
There's a part of you that doesn't feel you need this, but I've also heard a part of you that's tired of this trouble. |
| Arguing the Positive Side     | "C'mon look at your history!  
Admit it, you're an alcoholic"  
**WHY:** See above | Labels are not important right now.  
What is important is what you think. |
| **"The Labeling Trap"**       | **NOT** to use labels to try and gain an edge – use labels to push change | Let's move past what some people are calling you. I want to hear your thoughts. |
| Using labels to try and gain an edge – use labels to push change | Why did you go to that party when you knew it was going to get you in trouble?  
**WHY:** Questions in this format encourage the P to give arguments in support of past behavior.  
"Why" questions are actually "who" questions that look to place blame and the session spirals downward | It sounds like that situation really got you in trouble.  
The police didn't believe you. Now you're here. What's your next step(s)?  
You believe you got "railroaded" and unfairly convicted by the court. That leaves you frustrated. They placed you in our Treatment Court, so what can we do to finish and get dismissed? |
| **"The Blaming Trap"**        | Why did you go to that party when you knew it was going to get you in trouble?  
**WHY:** Questions in this format encourage the P to give arguments in support of past behavior.  
"Why" questions are actually "who" questions that look to place blame and the session spirals downward | It sounds like that situation really got you in trouble.  
The police didn't believe you. Now you're here. What's your next step(s)?  
You believe you got "railroaded" and unfairly convicted by the court. That leaves you frustrated. They placed you in our Treatment Court, so what can we do to finish and get dismissed? |
| Asking Dead or Backwards Questions | Why did you go to that party when you knew it was going to get you in trouble?  
**WHY:** Questions in this format encourage the P to give arguments in support of past behavior.  
"Why" questions are actually "who" questions that look to place blame and the session spirals downward | It sounds like that situation really got you in trouble.  
The police didn't believe you. Now you're here. What's your next step(s)?  
You believe you got "railroaded" and unfairly convicted by the court. That leaves you frustrated. They placed you in our Treatment Court, so what can we do to finish and get dismissed? |
| **"The Expert Trap:"**        | You don't have a job because you're not putting in enough applications.  
**WHY:** Encourages P to give the counterargument.  
"Don't" encourage P to think about the plan, and thus makes it less likely that P will follow through. | What ideas do you have as to how you might get a job?  
If you decided you wanted to put in a job application, how would you go about that?  
Getting a job can be difficult. It's hard to get into action. So, let's back up. When you think of getting a job, what do you think about? |
| Giving Unsolicited Advice     | You don't have a job because you're not putting in enough applications.  
**WHY:** Encourages P to give the counterargument.  
"Don't" encourage P to think about the plan, and thus makes it less likely that P will follow through. | What ideas do you have as to how you might get a job?  
If you decided you wanted to put in a job application, how would you go about that?  
Getting a job can be difficult. It's hard to get into action. So, let's back up. When you think of getting a job, what do you think about? |
| Acting as though the problem would be solved if the program participant would just "listen to reason." | **WHAT** to say | Avoid the 'triple-trouble rule' which cautions a Judge not to use more than 3 questions without a reflection. |
| Installing – not eliciting.   | **WHAT** to say | Avoid the 'triple-trouble rule' which cautions a Judge not to use more than 3 questions without a reflection. |
| **"The Question-Answer Trap"** | Using repeated questions without the use of OARS interspaced.  
Why a trap? Judge is doing the taking. P is placed in a passive role of answering. | Avoid the 'triple-trouble rule' which cautions a Judge not to use more than 3 questions without a reflection. |
Motivational Interviewing (MI): Benefits for Treatment Courts

9 Points to Consider

1. Motivational interviewing aligns your treatment court with evidence-based practice for substance use disorders.

In 2008, MI was listed on the SAMHSA National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs & Practices (NREPP). Adoption of MI allows credibility for using researched-based practice, service integrity across multiple professional domains as well as establishing demonstrations / justifications to funding sources.

2. MI prepares program participants for the work of change.

Program participants need to prepare for change. This is as true for offenders as it is for the rest of us. We are seldom taught to prepare people for change—instead, we jump to problem solving, planning, encouraging positive talk, and the like, ignoring or bypassing the need to orient to change work. This orientation includes raising the participant’s sense that change is important to them (beyond avoiding sanctions) and that they have the confidence and ability to make the change(s). Compliance is important, but change must be our final goal.

3. Research finds the use of MI increases (a) engagement and (b) retention in treatment.

Start with engagement or don’t start at all. And one of the most consistent findings from addiction studies is that the longer one stays in treatment, the better the outcomes (NDCI, 2008). Starting into treatment (engagement, increasing motivation) and staying in treatment (retention) is a powerful combination.

3. MI equips all treatment team roles to assist change – not just the treatment provider(s).

The unique characteristic of a treatment court is all program staff share in the treatment mission (Judge, prosecutor, defense counsel, case manager – probation officer, assessor-treatment provider, etc). Yet few beyond those who occupy traditional treatment roles are adequately trained in how to effectively interact with program participants to increase their readiness to change. MI allows all roles to increase their treatment skills. Adds a treatment “multiplier.”

4. MI extends a working knowledge of human motivation and the process of positive human behavior change.

It is frustrating that most treatment court team members (even counselors) lack a working knowledge of human motivation and the process of positive behavior change. MI adoption will build critical knowledge about assisting change that no team member should be without.

5. Motivational interviewing suggests effective ways of handling resistance and can keep difficult situations from getting worse.

Motivation is not a fixed characteristic, like adult height or having brown eyes. Instead, it is a condition or state, and it can be raised or lowered by how we interact with program participants. The best sanction is one that never has to be delivered. Teams understand that all staff need to develop a supportive counseling style. MI can train all staff, including Judges, lawyers, officers to improve their style of interacting. Learn to work with those who don’t want to work with you.
6. MI can be a stand-alone or used adjunct to treatment approaches or services already in place.

Treatment courts access a wide-range of community programs for their participants. Use MI as a stand-alone to increase client-engagement and increase the readiness to change. Or, use it adjunct to existing methods or treatments approaches already in place. Your treatment court and the multiple helping domains can all be “on the same page” for language, methods and consistency of service.

7. Efficient use of time-limited interactions.

Constant arguing, persuading or confronting is a poor use of the limited time that team members spend with program participants. MI can improve the value and impact of compressed interactions staff have with program participants. MI is proven to reduce aimless chatter by staff and keep staff-participant conversations focused on objectives and goals (Martino, et al, 2008). We seldom—if ever—change anyone in a short time frame, but MI offers methods and strategies to “raise the odds” and improve the likelihood that short talks will prove helpful.

8. Motivational Interviewing shifts the balance of responsibility, making treatment court staff “agents of change” rather than responsible for change.

Trying to persuade someone to do something they don’t want to do is exhausting, and many treatment team members are exhausted. When MI is practiced correctly, your program participant voices the reasons for change (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). Court personnel have found that using MI lowers their level of frustration and renews commitment and vitality to their work with offenders (Stinson & Clark, in press).

9. Training and coaching resources are readily available to treatment court teams and adjunct treatment court agencies (community stakeholders).

MI has been trained to the addictions field, probation & parole, detention facilities, child welfare, employment services, mental health, schools, juvenile courts, judiciary, attorneys, social work and family counselors. This approach also has fidelity measures to determine if the practice is (a) being used by team members and (b) to what extent. Blended learning formats are also available for sustainability and continued skill building. Adopt it and keep it growing over time.

References


Michael D. Clark, MSW / Center for Strength-base Strategies / www.buildmotivation.com
Motivational Interviewing (MI) has become a favored Evidence-Based Practice because it’s been found to increase engagement between staff and client and improves retention in services with our clients. Why the demand for MI in Community Work and Counseling Services? Because it’s a helpful way of assisting people in finding their own reasons for change. MI is for working with people who are ambivalent and stuck in indecision!

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Module 2: The Spirit of Motivational Interviewing
Module 3: The Four (4) Processes and Three (3) Styles of Motivational Interviewing
Module 4: The Four (4) Principles of Motivational Interviewing
Module 5: Client-Centered Counseling Skills (I): Open Questions and Affirmations
Module 6: Client-Centered Counseling Skills (II): Reflections
Module 7: Client-Centered Counseling Skills (III): Summaries
Module 8: Resistance Examined: New Tools for an Old Problem
Module 9: Recognizing and Eliciting Change Talk
Module 10: Developing Discrepancy
Module 11: Responding and Reinforcing Change Talk
Module 13: Deepening Change Talk
Module 14: From Evoking to Planning: Change Planning with the Client
Module 15: Strengthening Commitment – Supporting Action towards Change
Module 16: Problem Discussions, Giving Advice and Exchanging Information with an MI Perspective
Module 17: Navigating the Tough Times: Working with Deception, Breaks with Agency Mandates and Sanctions
Module 18: Learning Motivational Interviewing - Experiencing A New Approach to Service Delivery
Module 19: A Deeper Look at Engagement and Focusing: Learning How to Walk Together - Towards the Same Destination
Module 20: From Start to Finish: Putting Motivational Interviewing Into Practice
Michigan - Technical Assistance Center

This Michigan (USA) based technical assistance group is a national leader in implementation and sustainability initiatives for Motivational Interviewing. All CSBS trainers and coders are members of the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT). These training associates have backgrounds in Addictions, Juvenile Justice, Mental Health, Corrections and Criminal Justice.

Our director, Michael D. Clark, MSW has served as a contractual consultant for the United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNODC) in Vienna, Austria (2015-2016). He is co-author to the book, “Motivational Interviewing for Offenders: Engagement, Rehabilitation and Reentry” (May 2017) by Guilford Press.

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Contractual training our Center has provided (selected list):

- Puerto Rico Addiction Technology & Transfer Center (ATTC), San Juan, P.R.
- US Department of State (Mediterranean Section) - US Embassy - Malta
- US Department of Justice - Office of Justice Programs (OJP)
- US Department of Health & Human Services, SAMHSA
- Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT)
- United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNODC), Vienna, Austria
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- Counter-Terrorist Command Unit (Victoria Police), Melbourne, Australia
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- State Department of Corrections- Community Corrections - Wyoming
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- Correctional Services Of Canada
- Brisbane Institute for Strength-Based Practices, Brisbane, Australia
- National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges - (NCJFCJ)
- National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP)
- New Zealand Department of Children, Youth & Family, Wellington, NZ
Bibliography – Motivational Interviewing and the Strengths Perspective


