

Reaching “Resistant Clients” with Motivational Interviewing



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Agenda



- Motivational Interviewing and MI Spirit
- Ambivalence in the Change Process
- The Power of Change Talk
- Deconstruct “Resistance”
- MI applied to Grant and Per Diem programs

What we hope to accomplish



- **By the end of this training you should be able to...**
- Identify the spirit and principles of MI
- Name several MI skills to improve interactions with clients who are ambivalent
- Describe how ambivalence, change talk, sustain talk and discord affect the change process

Layperson's Definition of MI



- “...a collaborative discussion style for strengthening a person’s own motivation and commitment to change.”

○ -Miller and Rollnick, 2013

Practitioner's Definition of MI



- “...a person-centered counseling style for addressing the common problem of ambivalence about change.”

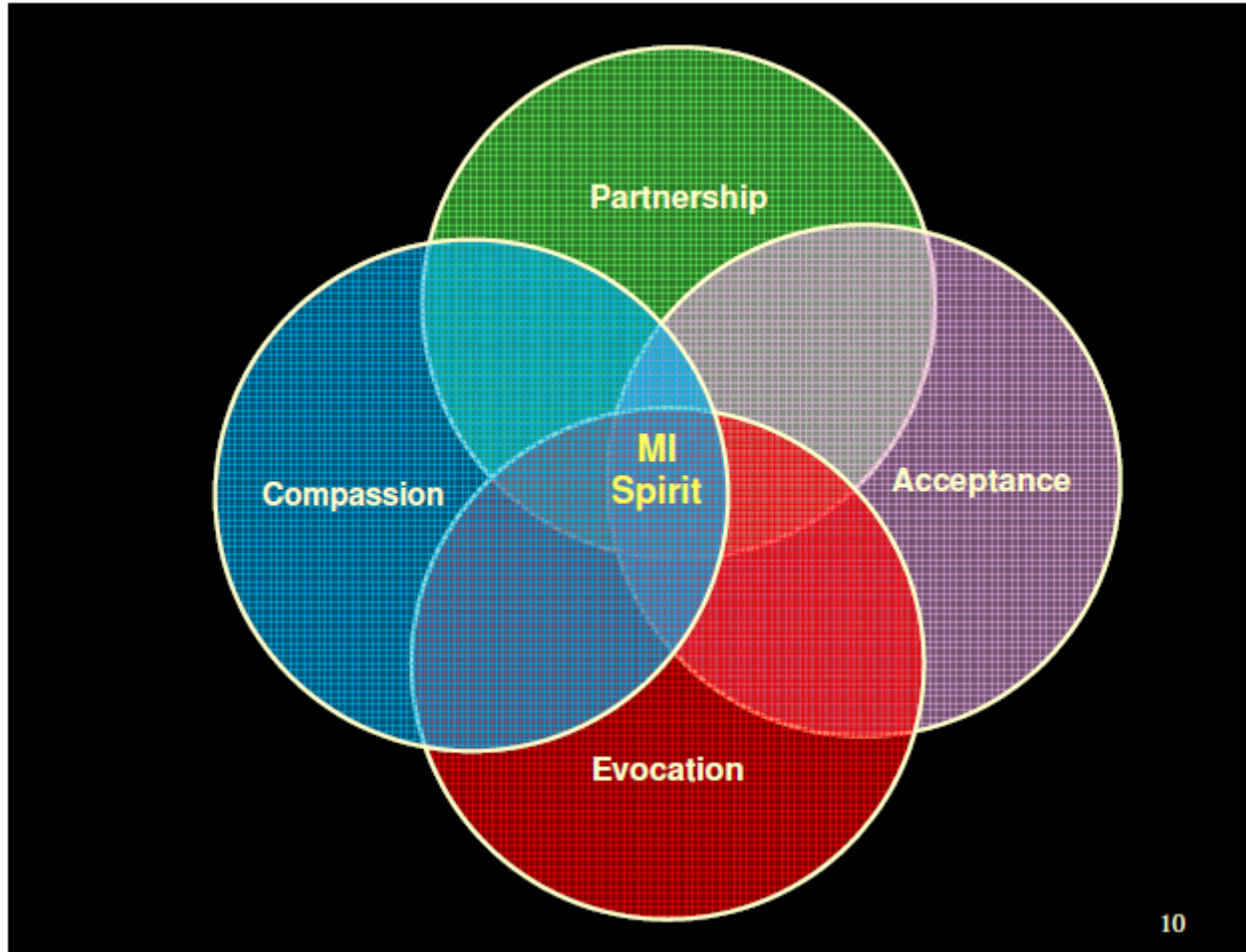
○ Miler and Rollnick, 2013

A technical definition of MI



- “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.”

The Spirit of MI



Elements of MI Spirit



- *Emphasized above technique*: MI is a way of being with people rather than a set of techniques for doing therapy
- *Partnership*
 - work in collaboration with the client; talk less than 1/2 the time
- *Acceptance*
 - based on Carl Rogers' principles of absolute worth, autonomy, affirmation, and accurate empathy
 - acceptance of the client does not mean approving of or acquiescence with the status quo
- *Evocation*
 - we evoke or elicit vs. educate; people are experts on themselves
- *Compassion*
 - we work to promote others' welfare; an intention in MI

The spirit of MI



- *Readiness to change is not a client trait, but a fluctuating product of interpersonal interaction.*
 - “Resistance” and “denial” are seen not as client traits, but as feedback regarding therapist behavior.
 - Discord is often a signal that the counselor is ahead of the patient, and it is a cue that the therapist needs to modify motivational strategies.

The spirit of MI



- The therapeutic relationship is more like dancing than wrestling



Resistance or Ambivalence?



Helping Ambivalent People



- “Convincing” people who are ambivalent can be counterproductive
 - Argue
 - Defend
 - Lip Service
 - Passivity
- Guiding them to explore their own reasons, ability, desire, and need to change is more effective

Change can be undermined by our Righting Reflex



- What is...the righting reflex??
- When you allow your righting reflex to kick in, you often elicit resistance in a person who is ambivalent about changing.
 - “Yes, but....”
- When doing MI you must learn to rein in your righting reflex

What's needed instead?



- *“People are generally better persuaded by the reasons which they have themselves discovered than by those which have come in to the mind of others”*

- Blaise Pascal
- Thoughts on Mind and Style, #10 (1660)

What do you *do* when you do MI?



- Fundamentals for engaging
- **Open-ended questions**
- **Affirmations**
- **Reflective listening**
- **Summarizing**



Using your OARS



- Review MI definition – “a style of communication”
- Basic communication micro-skills
- Pay attention to client’s response
- If you hear change talk – stay the course
- If you hear more sustain talk or discord, change direction

MI skills - OARS



- Open ended questions
 - What's the difference between open-ended questions and closed questions?

Open questions



- Do you know that being overweight increases your risk for chronic illnesses?
- *“What do you know about the risks of being overweight?”*
- Are you thinking about quitting smoking?
- *“How do you feel about your smoking right now?”*
- Has your temper been getting you in trouble lately?
- *“How have you been getting along with others lately?”*

MI skills - OARS



- Reflections
- A part of active listening
- What does it look like in practice?



MI skills - OARS



- Reflections
- A process in which you
 - **Hear** what the person is communicating
 - Make a **guess** about what he/she means
 - Verbalize this guess in the form of a **statement**
- Purpose: to relay your **understanding** of what the patient is trying to convey



MI skills - OARS

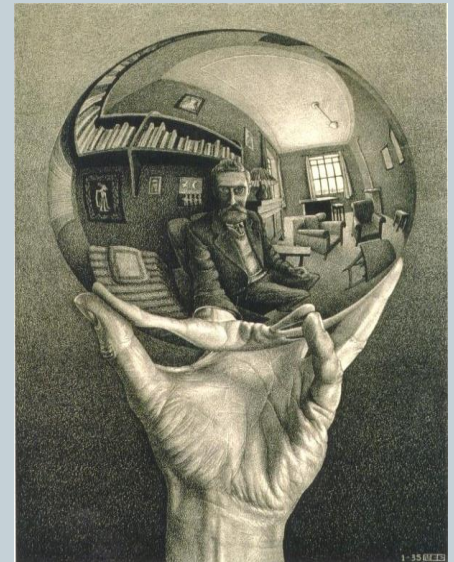


- **Simple reflection**

- repeating key information that the client says to you
- indicates that you've been listening
- no added meaning

- **Complex reflection**

- adds meaning or emphasis to what has been said
- learning to make complex reflections is a more advanced skill



MI skills - OARS



- Reflecting is the main skill used by MI clinicians
- MI clinicians reflect back only certain aspects of what a client says
- What might you focus on reflecting back to your clients?

Listening



- O and R are all about facilitating communication through good listening
- Not listening can lead to disengagement and discord



Roadblocks to listening



- 1) Ordering, directing
- 2) Warning, threatening
- 3) Giving advice, making suggestions, providing solutions
- 4) Persuading with logic, arguing, lecturing
- 5) Moralizing, preaching
- 6) Judging, criticizing, blaming



Roadblocks to listening



- 7) Agreeing, approving, praising
- 8) Shaming, ridiculing, name calling
- 9) Interpreting, analyzing
- 10) Reasoning, sympathizing
- 11) Questioning, probing
- 12) Withdrawing, distracting, humoring, changing the subject



Change Talk and Sustain Talk



- Change Talk – statements that a person makes that favor making a change
- Sustain Talk – statements that a person makes that favor the status quo
- More Client Change Talk -> More Likely Change
- More Client Sustain Talk -> More Likely Stay the Same

Finding Change Talk



- “I wish I could find a job that would hire me, but they take one look at my record... that’s it”

Desire

- “I’ve done rehab many times, but it’s hard to stay sober once I’m back out in the real world”

Ability

- “My ex won’t let me see the kids until I get my act together”

Reason

- “Something has got to change, this isn’t working”

Need

What about Sustain Talk?



- Confronting sustain talk often creates more
- Simple Reflection and then Open Question can shift focus
- Listen for change talk
- Support autonomy (remember MI Spirit!)

Resistance



- Loaded word – can be seen a client “trait”, in reality is about relationship
- Two factors: sustain talk and discord
- Sustain Talk - statements that a person makes that favor the status quo (remember, this is normal)
- Discord – a rupture in the relationship

Dealing with Discord



- **Where does it come from?**
 - Previous experiences, communication roadblocks, not enough attention to engagement
- **How do I notice it?**
 - Arguing, Ignoring, Interrupting, Discounting
- **What do I do about it?**
 - Emphasize Autonomy, Apologize, Shift Focus

What does this look like in real life?



- Given what we have discussed so far, how would MI be applicable to your setting?
- What client ambivalence do you encounter?
- What discussions do you have with clients where you might use MI?

How do I learn to do MI?



- VA Trainings in TMS (if available to you)
- Motivational Interviewing, 3rd Ed., Miller and Rollnick
- MINT trainings (<http://motivationalinterviewing.org>)
- Research suggests that after an initial training of at least 10 hours...
 - There's a spike in client-centered skills
 - No decrease in inconsistent behavior
- You really need follow-up
 - Without follow-up, the skills you learn in a training return to baseline levels after 4 months
 - Adding feedback and/or coaching helps to really learn the skills and to maintain them