

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEW GUIDE

Motivational interviewing has been shown to be more effective than 'advice-giving' in terms of promoting change. The aim of using this approach is to enhance your clients' self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation by exploring and resolving ambivalence and barriers to behaviour change. Its about guiding rather than directing.

One of the keys to using motivational interviewing is to listen out for the clients own arguments for change and respond to them.

For example the client might say something like *"I know I'd probably feel better if I started to exercise..."* You could then take this further and explore how they might start to feel their health improve if they did that. This type of approach is especially recommended for clients who are ambivalent or resistant to change (Stages 1-3).

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING USES 4 KEY SKILLS – OARS

- O** **Open questions** – to draw out and explore the clients ideas.
- A** **Affirmations** – to build hope and confidence. For example, even just acknowledging they are here and making a start is a success.
- R** **Reflective listening** – this is about reflecting back to the client what they have told you and showing empathy (*"what I hear you saying is..."*).
- S** **Summarising** – this will reinforce all the key points and ensures shared understanding.



Examples of statements that reflect a motivational interviewing approach to communication are listed below.

- “ *Would you like to tell me about what's been happening?*
- “ *How does your current level of activity impact you and your family?*
- “ *What I am hearing you telling me is....*
- “ *Tell me why this is important to you.*
- “ *It's great that you've made a start by coming today and planning to get active.*
- “ *How do you think you could start to get more activity into your day?*
- “ *What has worked in the past?*
- “ *What do you think you will do?*
- “ *What are the best 3 reasons for doing...?*

You are aiming to elicit 'change talk' and ask questions that are answered with statements such as:

- “ *I would like to...*
- “ *I could...*
- “ *I need to because...*
- “ *I am able to...*

This approach may not work as effectively if your client has cognitive and communication issues. Here are some tips to use in these circumstances:

Give time for your client to respond. They may know what they want to say, but it may take them longer to find or articulate the words.

Check that your client has understood you, and check that you have understood them. Repeat, rephrase, check in!

Write down key information/words. It's always good for clients to have something in writing that they can take away with them (to reflect on later, or have a communication partner explain further to them).

Include significant others/ communication partners where appropriate, but speak to the client directly and encourage them to respond themselves.

