

Handout 1

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Intensive Skill Training in Motivational Interviewing

Eliciting Change Talk

Evocative Questions – the questions ask the client directly for change talk

- “In what ways does this concern you?”
- “If you decided to make a change, what makes you think you could do it?”
- “How would you like things to be different?”
- “How would things be better if you changed?”
- “So, given all this, what do you think you will do next?”
- “What’s your next step?”
- “What, if anything, will you do now?”

Elaboration – we ask clients for examples of situations that illustrate change talk

- “Tell me about a recent time when you spent money on gambling that you needed for something else.”
- “What does that look like when you get too angry with the children? Describe a time when that occurred.”
- “You said things were better then. Tell me about a time when you and he got along better. Specifically, what was happening?”

Using Extremes – has the client talk about the worst possible outcome and the best possible outcome

- “What concerns you the most?”
- “What is the worst thing that could happen?”
- “What do you hope for the most?”
- “What would a perfect outcome look like?”

Looking Back – helps the client look into the past and contrast it with the present

- “Do you remember a time when things were going well? What has changed?”
- “What are the differences between the Greg who’s in 6th grade and the Greg who’s in 8th grade (or of today)?”
- “What did you want to be or do when you graduated from high school?”
- “What did you envision for your life when you were younger?”

Looking Forward – has the client look into the future if no change happens or if change does happen

“If nothing changes, what do you see happening in 5 years? If you decided to change, what will it be like?”

“What are your hopes for the near future?”

“How would you like things to turn out?”

“How would you like things to be different?”

Exploring Goals – looking at how the change fits with the goals and values they find most important

“What things do you regard as most important?”

“What sort of person (parent) do you want to be?”

“What sorts of things would you like to accomplish in your life?”

Assessment Feedback – personalized feedback give the client an opportunity to compare their situation more objectively

“Your sexual activity places you at moderate to high risk for possible HIV infection, based on your protection practices. What do you make of that?”

“The testing indicates that your brain is having difficulty processing information efficiently. It looks as though shifting easily between ways of thinking will be hard for you, and so things like multitasking may be very difficult. How does that fit with what you know about yourself?”

“You indicate that independence in decision making is important and that social connections are also important. Tell me about how those things fit together in your life.”

Readiness Rulers – using rating to assess for importance, confidence, and readiness

“On a scale of 1 – 10, how confident are you – if you made a decision to change – that you could change, when 1 represents not at all confident and 10 equals extremely confident?”

“What led you to choose a 6, versus a 3?”

“What would it take for you to move from a 6 to a 7 or and 8?”