Motivational Interviewing Workshop: Counseling Dialogue for Moving Toward Change

A Webinar with Dawn Clifford, PhD, RD, and Laura Curtis, MS, RD, authors of Motivational Interviewing in Nutrition and Fitness

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About The Authors

Dawn Clifford, PhD, RD, and Laura Curtis, MS, RD are the co-authors of the just-released *Motivational Interviewing in Health and Fitness*.

Dawn is an Associate Professor and Director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics in the Department of Nutrition and Food Science at California State University, Chico. In addition, she co-founded and is the current director of FitU, which is a peer mentoring nutrition and exercise counseling program on campus. She conducts research and is an accomplished speaker in the areas of motivational interviewing and non-diet approaches to health and wellness. She is a member of the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers.

Laura is the Director of Nutritional Services at Glenn Medical Center in Willows, California. She also serves as a preceptor to undergraduate dietetic students and teaches at California State University, Chico. She has extensive training and experience in motivational interviewing.
Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this webinar, the learner will be able to:

• Define What MI is, and the goal of using it
• State two neurobiological reasons why change is difficult
• List three counseling considerations for eliciting ambivalence and change talk
• Develop MI counseling dialogue for dealing with ambivalence
• List three ways to counsel with an MI partnership in mind
• Develop MI counseling dialogue that promotes a partnership
• Define the Righting Reflex
• Develop MI counseling dialogue that resists the Righting Reflex

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Part One: Why Motivational Interviewing?

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE GREAT TO START, BUT YOU HAVE TO START TO BE GREAT.
Defining Motivational Interviewing

“...a collaborative, goal-oriented style of communication with particular attention to the language of change.” (Miller and Rollnick, 2013, page 29)
Increase client’s interest in **positive change**, by:
- Exploring and resolving ambivalence
- Aligning change with client’s future goals/values
- Nurturing client’s hope and confidence
Poll: How are you using MI?

1. I don’t use MI at all in my practice.
2. I use MI occasionally (~25% of the time)
3. I use MI frequently (>50% of the time)
4. I use MI with every/almost every client.
5. I’m not currently practicing.
The Goals of This Webinar

Give you three concepts to practice immediately using counseling dialogue:
• Increase your awareness of the central role of ambivalence in behavior change
• Embrace the concept of partnership
• Identify and avoid the ‘Righting Reflex’
Part Two: Ambivalence

“If you want something you never had
You have to do something you’ve never done”

“Listening for ambivalence [is] the heart of MI”

Clifford and Curtis, page 14
Ambivalence: The Practitioner’s Role

• Listening for ambivalence is the heart of MI
• Spend time with it
• Shine a light (Notice!)
• Client: voices “Change talk” vs. “Sustain talk”
• Practitioner: acts with curiosity and non-judgement; elicits & highlights change talk

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Scenario 1: Shining a light on ambivalence:

Practitioner: You said you’ve wanted to try out a yoga class at your gym for a long time. What do you think is keeping you from going?

Client: I don’t know, I’m probably just afraid to try something new. It will take me a while to get the hang of it, and I have to figure out if it’s worth the risk of embarrassment.

Practitioner: What could you say next to highlight ambivalence in a curious, non-judgemental way?
Scenario 2: Hearing and highlighting change talk:

Practitioner: And yet you keep putting a yoga class on your to-do list.

Client: I want to be healthy, for one. Plus, my friends talk about yoga all the time. I want to feel like I can join in their conversation. And I have really challenging teenagers who are pushing my buttons lately. I know I could use a way to de-stress.

Practitioner: What could you say next to highlight change talk and help the client recognize the discrepancy between her current choices and goals?

Taken from: Clifford and Curtis, page 15

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“Together, as a team, the practitioner and client explore the client’s world”

Clifford and Curtis, page 27
Key Concept: Partnership

• Avoid the ‘expert trap’!
• Invite client to come up with own ideas
• Provide information without imperatives
• Open-ended questions to assess client interest
• Ask permission to share: ideas, negative consequences

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Scenario: Avoiding the ‘Expert Trap’

Client: *I know I don’t eat enough fruit. I could probably do a better job in that area.*

Practitioner: **What could you say next to elicit ideas from the client?**
“Together, as a team, the practitioner and client explore the client’s world”

Clifford and Curtis, page 27
Key Concept: The Righting Reflex

• Defined as the temptation to provide unsolicited advice or information that corrects something perceived as wrong in the client’s statement.
• Still important to reflect and ask permission even when misinformation is heard!
Putting it into Practice: Resisting the Righting Reflex

Scenario: Example of the Righting Reflex in action

Practitioner: *What do you typically drink? How do you stay hydrated?*

Client: *I usually drink juice. Juice doesn’t have sugar in it. It’s natural.*

Practitioner: *Oh no. Where did you hear that? Juice may have natural sugar, but it’s still sugar. The first thing I want you to do when you get home is to throw out the juice. Do you think you can do that?*

Taken from: Clifford and Curtis, page 177
Scenario: Using MI to counter misinformation

Practitioner: What do you typically drink? How do you stay hydrated?

Client: I usually drink juice. Juice doesn’t have sugar in it. It’s natural.

Practitioner: What could you say next to a) affirm this client’s choices, and b) ask permission to give information?
Key Points to Remember

• Ambivalence is normal and is to be expected.
• Change can happen when the client sees the gap between his/her current behavior, and goals and values.
• A full understanding of and practice with all of the components of MI is a must if you want to use it successfully!
• Additional and ongoing support, education and training is recommended.
More On This Topic

- Questions?
- Thank you for attending!
- *Motivational Interviewing in Nutrition and Fitness (19 CPEUs)*. Available at [www.skellyskills.com](http://www.skellyskills.com).
- Consider getting MI training through a seminar or other in-person training as well, to deepen your skills. Try MINT ([motivationalinterviewing.org](http://motivationalinterviewing.org)).