

## Tips for Motivational Interviewing

1. How can I start the conversation with open-ended questions? How can I stop myself from asking “why” questions? How can I get permission before giving advice?

**Examples:**

- a. *How can I help you today?*
  - b. *Given we have 30 minutes today, what would you like to talk about today?*
  - c. *Since the last time we met, how have things changed for you?*
2. Listen for Desire, Ability, Reasons, Needs, Commitment, Action, Taking Steps  
Construct at least one reflection for each statement you hear. Go as deep as you feel comfortable but be tentative.  
**Examples:**
    - a. *What I hear you say is .....*
    - b. *It seems to me you are feeling.....*
    - c. *This means a lot to you... It is hard when we are being pulled in two opposing directions ....*
  3. Construct at least one affirmation; more is better (most likely to generate change talk), e.g., *I appreciate how hard it is for you to keep coming back despite feeling like you aren't stopping completely. That takes perseverance.*
  4. If you feeling stuck, ask the person to elaborate by asking “What else?” Or “please Tell me more?”
  5. Summarize your understanding of their ambivalence to signal transition into focusing.
  6. Scale readiness to change
    - a. *Given everything going on in your life right now, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 10 is the most important thing to do and 0 is not at all important, how important is it for you to <insert behavior change here>? By when?*
    - b. *On a similar scale how confident are you that you will <insert behavior change here>?*
    - c. *Optional question: On the same scale how ready are you to <insert behavior change here>? By when?*
  7. *Help me understand what is good about staying the same for you? What else? Use OARS ( open ended questions, Affirmations, reflections and summary statements”. Help me understand what is not so good about staying the same? What else? Use OARS.*
  8. Ask: *So, what do you think/feel you will do next?* Listen for Change talk or sustain talk.
    - a. If Commitment language: Ask: *What might come in the way of you achieving your goal?*
    - b. If sustain talk listen and use OARS to evoke change talk.
  9. Planning: SMART goals: Listen for Specificity, measurable, achievable, realistic and time limited goals.
  10. End interview with a brief summary and ask: *When would you like to come back and see me again to discuss how things are going for you?*