

Foundational Motivational Interviewing (MI) Skills



Defining MI

The next few slides will cover key concepts of Motivational Interviewing (MI).



Definition

“MI is 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.” (Miller & Rollnick, 2013, p. 29)

Application

MI is an evidence-based practice that was originally developed to support recovery from addiction.

The principles of MI can be applied to any range of issues related to changing behavior.

MI is especially helpful for people where:

- **Ambivalence** is high and people are stuck in mixed feelings about change.
- **Confidence** is low and people doubt their abilities to change.
- **Desire** is low and people are uncertain about whether they want to make a change.
- **Importance** is low and the benefits of change and disadvantages of the current situation are unclear.

- **Partnership:** MI is a collaborative process.
- **Acceptance:** The MI practitioner takes a nonjudgmental stance, seeks to understand the person's perspectives and experiences, and respects a person's right to make informed choices about change.
- **Compassion:** The MI practitioner actively promotes and prioritizes clients' welfare and wellbeing in a selfless manner.
- **Evocation:** MI draws out the person's priorities, values, and wisdom to explore reasons for change and support success.

Spirit of Motivational Interviewing



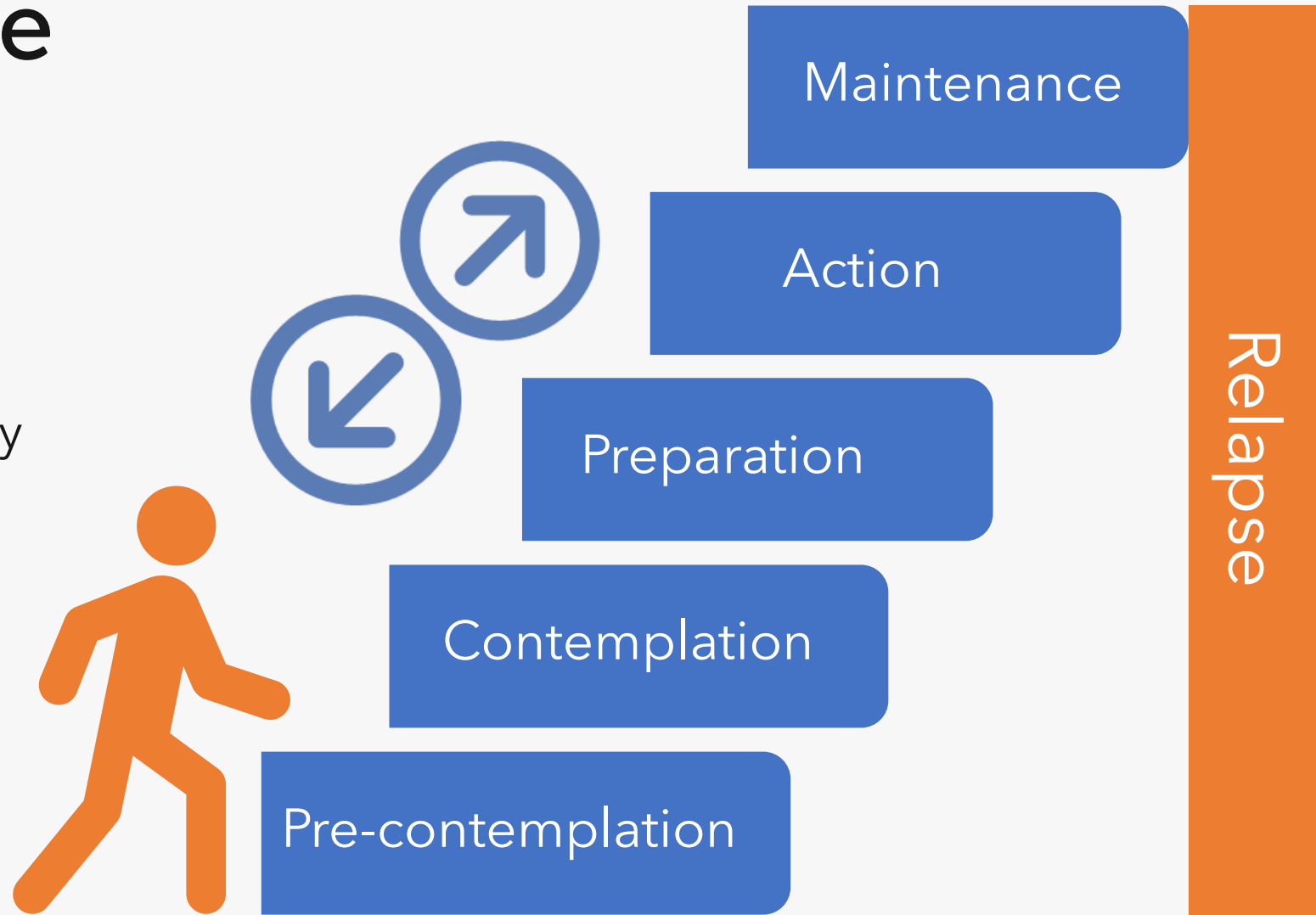
Key Concepts

The next few slides will cover what the nature of change can look like through the different stages of change.

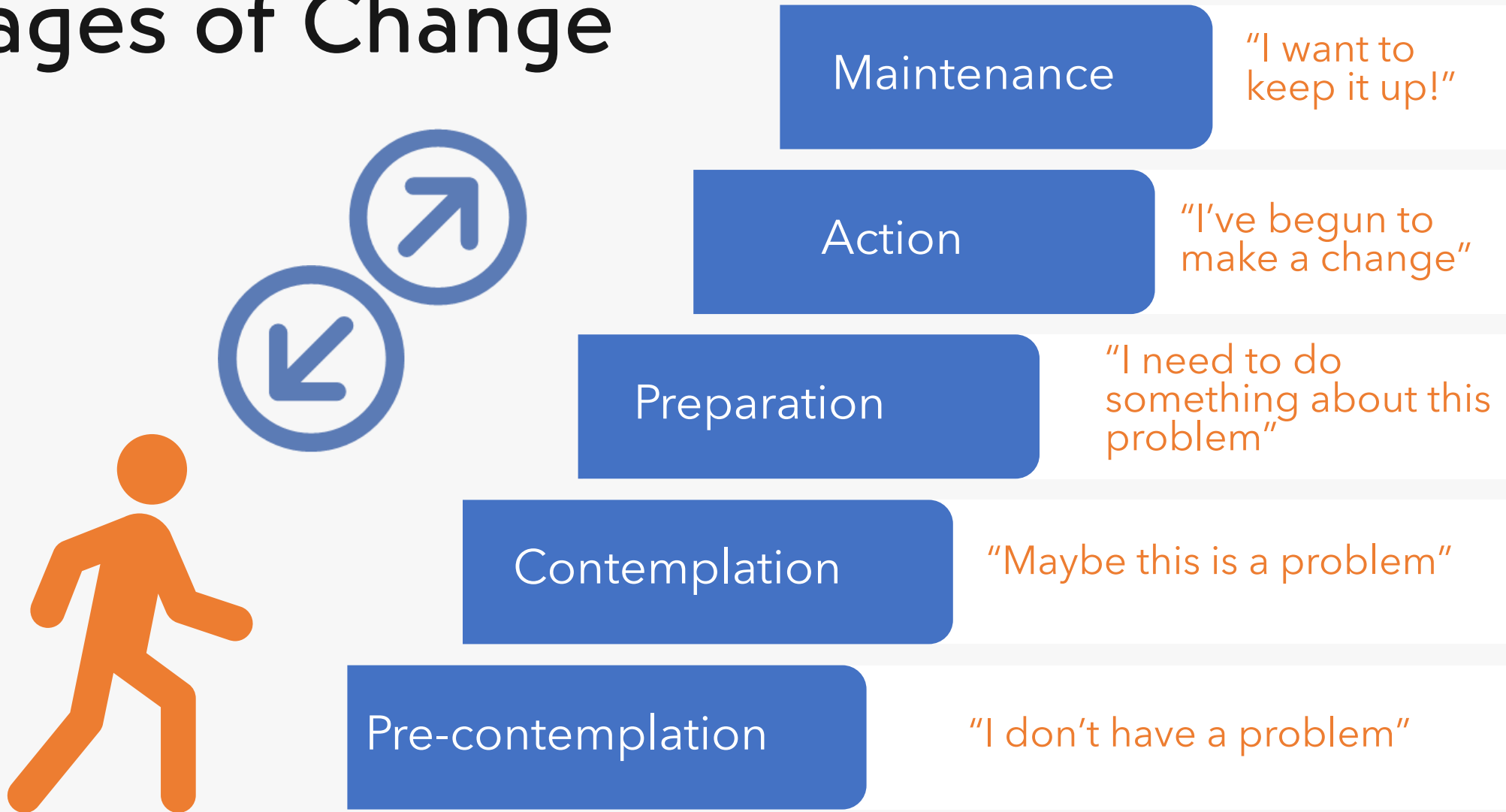
Stages of Change

Change in behavior is usually the result of moving through stages. People can move forward and backward along the stages as they get closer to making a change in their behavior.

Relapse, or returning to the old behavior is a part of this process.

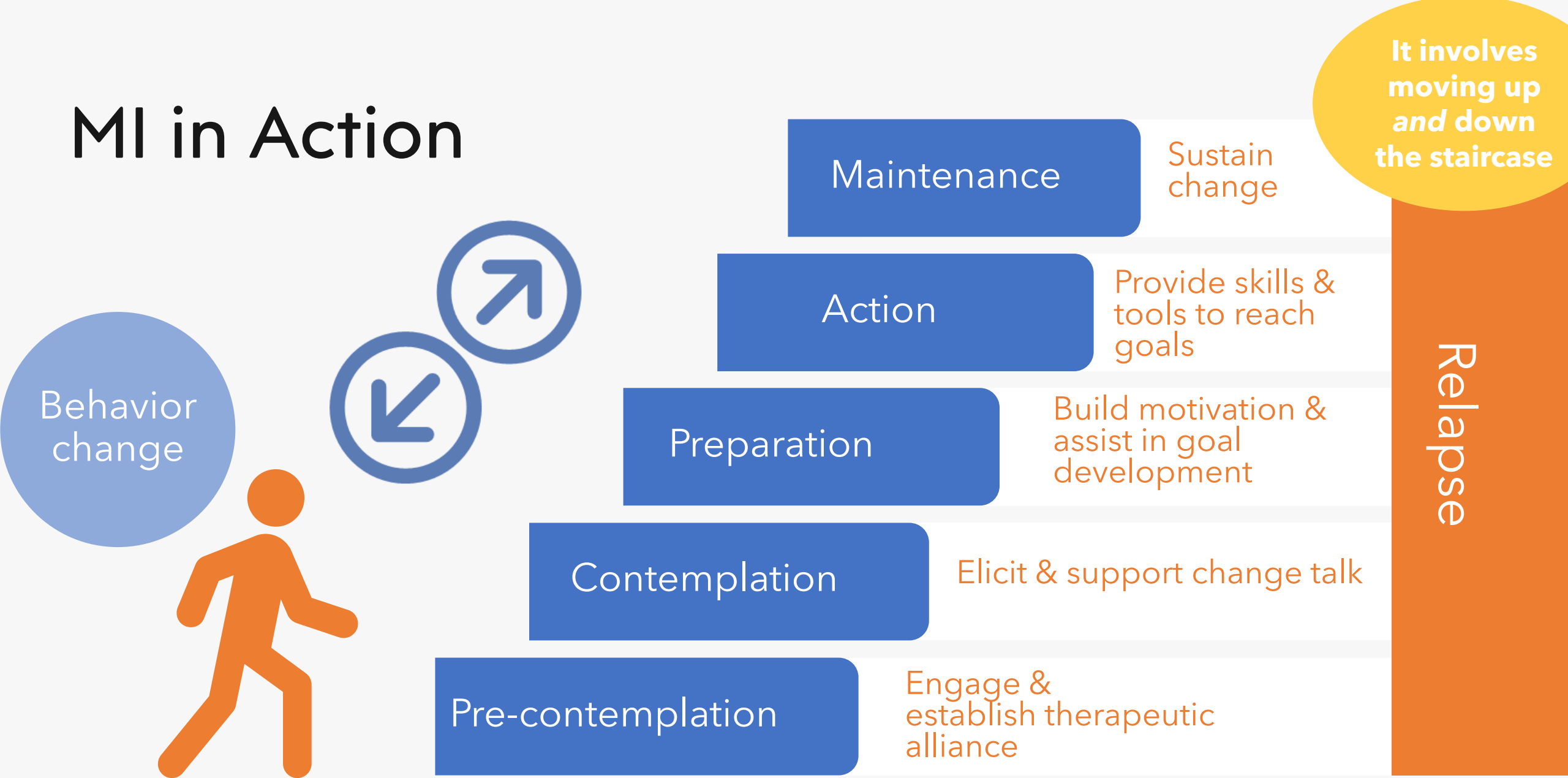


Stages of Change



Relapse

MI in Action





It's all about meeting people where they are....

- We do this by recognizing what stage a person is in and responding accordingly
- Using the interventions that don't match the stage will lead to discord in the form of avoidance or pushback.
- Motivational Interviewing teaches clinician's to "dance with discord" rather than pushing harder for change, or giving up

Change Talk

Any kind of language that relates to the possibility of change.



Change Talk

- Client statement indicating a movement toward change
- May indicate interest in, concern about, readiness to, or ability to change
- May indicate anxiety or distress about the way things currently are
- Primary goals of MI are to create a safe place for change talk to emerge



Desire

- A person expresses a desire or interest in the change
- Buzz words: "Want", "Wish", "Like"

Reason

- A person articulates incentives or rationale for the change
- Buzz words: "If...Then", "Family", "Health", "Safety"

Commitment

- A person indicates a readiness and/or willingness to implement the change
- Buzz words: "I will", "You're ready", "It's time"

Ability

- A person expresses a confidence or belief that he/she is able to effect the change if and when they choose
- Buzz words: "Can", "Able", "Could"

Need

- A person identifies the importance or necessity of the change
- Buzz words: "Have to", "Urgent", "Serious"

Key Skills

The next few slides will cover a key set of skills called OARS.

O-A-R-S



Open-Ended
Questions

Ask open-ended questions to elicit information and storytelling



Affirmations

Affirm and validate the member's experience



Reflections/
Reflective listening

Respond with reflections to deepen understanding of member's thoughts and feelings



Summarizations

Summarize periodically to "connect the dots"

Open-ended questions

What's most important to you right now?

What has worked for you in the past?

Where would you like to be 6 months from now?

How do you feel about things right now?

How do you see me helping you?

What kinds of things would you be willing to try?

What are some things you tried to change in the past?

What has worked for you in the past?

What are some things you would miss if you changed?

What worries you about how things are now?

What do you think might happen if things don't change?

What's getting in the way of what you want?

What would be some advantages to changing?

How would you like things to be different?

How confident are you that you could change if you wanted to?

If you could have anything you wanted, what would it be?



Practice: Open-ended questions

Poll: Determine whether the question is open-ended or closed-ended.

Affirmations

A statement to the client, almost always overtly positive.

Can be done in the form of praise, or statements of appreciation and understanding.

Helps to build and reinforce rapport and encourage progress.

- Praise
 - Ability
 - Motivation
- Validation
 - Acknowledgement of understanding
 - Reinforcement of efforts
- Normalization
 - Comparison to others



Reflections

Reflections clarify the person's meaning and encourages continued exploration.

Four Types of Reflections:

1. Repeating: verbatim reiteration of member statement.
2. Restating: content remains unchanged, syntax or grammar may change slightly.
3. Paraphrasing: making a guess about meaning; putting statement into one's own words.
4. Reflection of Feeling: probing beneath surface content- identifying underlying affect or emotion.



Summarization

- Used to reinforce material that has been discussed.
- Done periodically throughout the session/treatment.
- Links summaries across the current and previous sessions.
- Illuminates contradictions or ambivalence in what's said.
- Encourages the person to hear their own change talk in summation.



Summarization

A great use of summaries at any time during a session is when you feel “stuck” and are not sure which direction to take.

Allows time for both you and the client to “regroup” before moving on to the next topic.

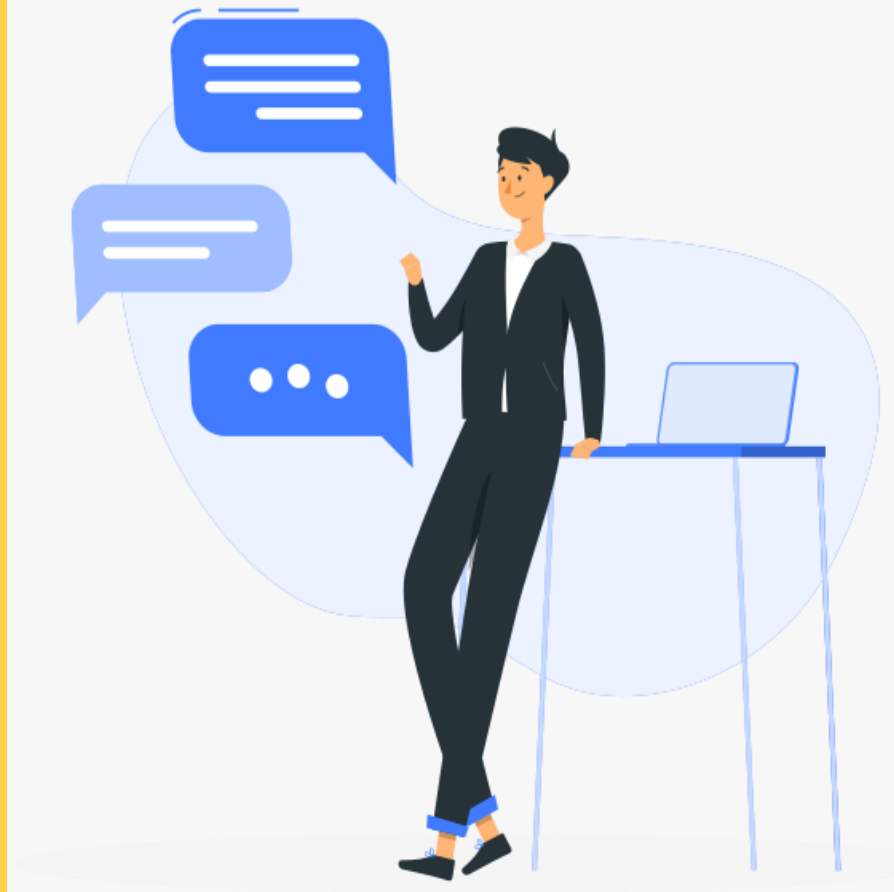
With a summary, you can ask your client for feedback directly, (often using a closed question) whereas you wouldn't want to do so with a reflection:

“Have I got it right so far?”

“What did I miss?”

“Does that pretty much describe where you are right now?”

“How am I doing?”



Common Pitfalls

The next few slides will discuss common pitfalls that staff run into while working with clients who experience ambivalence to change.



Clinician Agenda

Clinicians often are eager to help clients fix problems. This can impact the helper's ability to identify the obstacles a client is facing.

Getting ahead of where a client is with their change can impact the therapeutic relationship.

Moving from one stage to the next can take 6 months!*

People often move back and forth along the stages, and helpers should adjust response accordingly.

Meet the client where they are. Not where you are.



The Righting Reflex



The urge to “fix” the problem by offering solutions or advice (even if asked).

If you jump ahead of the client's readiness and immediately try to offer a solution to the problem, you will likely create discord in the relationship.

“Advocacy Responses”

Arguing for change, assuming the expert role, criticizing, shaming, blaming, labeling, being in a hurry.

Examples:

“You would feel better and your cholesterol levels would drop if you could lose some weight.”

“Your doctor wants you to take one pill, three times a day, ideally with meals.”

“I’ve found that when my clients confront their fears, they get some relief from PTSD symptoms.”

Let go of what you think the member should do!

In Summary

- MI involves taking on the role of supporting someone as they build motivation to move through stages of change.
- Change isn't easy and it takes time.
- OARS is a set of key skills used to support a client safely through reflecting on obstacles and identifying goals.
- Readiness to change can be measured by how much change talk you hear.
- Meet the person where they are and don't rush into problem solving.

Resources

Miller, W. R. & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational Interviewing: Helping people to change* (3rd Edition). Guilford Press.

The Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (2019). *Understanding Motivational Interviewing*. [Motivationalinterviewing.org](https://motivationalinterviewing.org). Retrieved September 16, 2021 from [motivationalinterviewing.org\understanding-motivational-interviewing](https://motivationalinterviewing.org/understanding-motivational-interviewing)

Raihan N., Cogburn M. *Stages of Change Theory* (Updated 2021 Mar 3) In: *StatPearls*. Treasure Island: 2021 Jan.-Available from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK5566005/>