

## Motivational Interviewing for diet/exercise and obesity

Motivational interviewing aims to enhance self-efficacy and personal control for behavior change. It uses an interactive, empathetic listening style to increase motivation and confidence by specifically emphasizing the discrepancy between personal goals and current health behaviors.

### Key FRAMES to Motivation for Change

#### **F: Feedback**

Present feedback to the patient in a way that is respectful and has impact. This can include providing feedback about how unhealthy behaviors are harming the individual, but ensuring that your communication reflects the patient's statements of concern. Feedback should be based from information gathered in patient interviews, reports, and objective measures. It can be helpful to present this data to the patient and elicit his or her opinions from this information.

#### **R: Responsibility**

Emphasize that the patient has the responsibility and freedom to make the choice to change. This is not a decision that can be made by anyone else, and it is really up to the patient to decide what decisions to make.

#### **A: Advice**

Provide clear and direct advice about the importance of making lifestyle changes and suggest different ways that this can be accomplished. Advice should reinforce that the patient makes the ultimate choice.

#### **M: Menu**

Offer different alternatives that the patient can choose from. For example, *"There are different ways that people successfully change their lifestyle behaviors. Perhaps we can spend a few moments talking about this so that I can tell you some of these strategies, and you can tell me which of these might make the most sense for you."*

#### **E: Empathy**

It is important to listen to, and reflect the patient's statements and feelings. This ensures that you understand the patient, and that the patient feels understood by you, both of which foster productive communication. Expressing empathy to your patient involves communication that is warm and supportive, and demonstrates that you are paying attention to the patient's verbal and nonverbal communication.

#### **S: Self-Efficacy**

Part of your goal in motivational interviewing is to help instill optimism and confidence in your patient that he/she can make meaningful behavior changes. You want to communicate to your patient that "you can change."

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Remember the 5 A's

- Assess
- Advise
- Agree
- Assist
- Arrange

## Questions to Assess Motivation, Readiness, Importance, Confidence and Barriers

### Motivation

How is your current (weight, smoking, lack of activity) affecting your life right now?

On a scale of 1-10, how ready are you to make changes in your eating patterns?

What strategies have worked for you in the past?

What was your life like before (your weight increased, you were more active, you started smoking?)

What are your hopes for the future if you are able to become healthier?

How would your life be different if you (lost weight, exercised more, and stopped smoking)?

### Readiness to Change

How do you feel about changing your (eating, exercise, or smoking) behaviors?

How ready are you to change?

How would you like your health to be different?

People differ in how ready they are to make these kinds of changes. What about you?

Some people don't want to talk about their (weight, exercise or smoking) at all, where as some people don't mind at all. How do you feel about this?

### Importance of Change

Tell me how things would be different for you if you \_\_\_\_ (were at a healthier weight, exercised, did not smoke, etc.)

What do you think would happen if your (weight, activity level, smoking) doesn't change?

What are the most important things to you? What impact does your (weight, activity, smoking) have on that?

What would have to happen before you seriously considered changing?"

Adapted from The Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity of Yale University

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What are the good things about \_\_\_\_ (losing weight, eating healthier, exercising more)? What are some of the less good things about making those changes?

If you were to change, what would it be like?

### Building Confidence

What would make you more confident about making these changes?

How can I help you succeed?

Are there things that you have found helpful in previous attempts to change?

If you decided to change, what might your options be?

What are some practical things that you need to do to achieve this goal?

### Barriers

What concerns do you have about \_\_\_\_ (losing weight, eating healthier, exercising more)?

What things stand in the way of your taking a first step?

What barriers might impede success? (e.g. child care, transportation, distance, cost, accessibility)



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**Advise** -- Use a clear & personalized message

- Expound on the dangers that are specific to her in relationship to the targeted behavior
- Advise her about the benefits of change
- Make the source of your advice clear (medical knowledge or from similar patients)

*Examples for Smokers Interested in Quitting*

- Set a quit date
- Help make a treatment plan
  - Give booklet, website, phone number
  - Offer pharmacotherapy
  - Consider referral for
    - Substance abuse or depression
    - Lack of social support for nonsmoking
    - Lack of confidence in ability to quit

**Agree** -- Set small short term goals with small steps to be accomplished in two-three weeks, and create a personalized plan with specific, measureable steps that can be accomplished in short time frame.

**Assist** -- See Heart Truth Materials for additional resources

- Identify problems (barriers)
- List all possible solutions (brainstorm)
- Pick one, Try it for 2 weeks, if it doesn't work, try another

**Arrange**

- See soon for follow-up
- Address at subsequent visits