

Searching for Motivation in the Land of Ambivalence

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Recovery Month

- Directed at celebrating those in recovery while also remembering those that were not as fortunate.
- Carry the message that recovery is possible, and can be attained regardless of how distant it may feel at times.
- Message of hope and recovery is needed more than ever at this time where both are increasing at exponential rates.
- Substance use and mental illness are the only things that can rewire the brain to undue the natural connection to family, loved ones, hobbies and a sense of purpose.
- This is why connection is needed during this time, and recovery is connection!

Exercise: Helper Characteristics

Under what conditions would you be totally open, honest and vulnerable with someone?



Guiding Spirit

Intention to:

Fix

Correct

Persuade



Lost the client centered path

Tough Choices

Think about having to make a choice **and** neither of the options are really great for what you desire.

What is it like when you end up choosing?

How do you feel about the decision?

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Tough Choices

- Helps us understand that sometimes we don't want either choice, *and* this is the person sitting across from us.

Partner up: Challenging Clients

- Who has ever worked with a “RESISTANT” Client?
 - Partner up or Discuss at your table.
 - Share about the experience.
 - How would you describe the client?
 - How did the client respond to your efforts?
 - What did your interactions with the client bring up for you?
 - How did that feeling impact your engagement with the client?



Pre-Contemplation

- What do you notice your reaction is to a client described as being “Pre-contemplative”?
- Closely associated with “being in denial” or “resistant”.
 - A way of explaining and blaming clients for noncompliance and oppositional responses.
 - Contributed to harsh, confrontational approaches in SUD Tx that would not be tolerated in most psychiatric disorders.

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Expectations?



Why wouldn't they be suspicious?



They do not know us or our intentions.



Check our own expectations about those seeking care at the recommendations of others.

Expectations?

- What happens in your mind when you show up to help and the person sitting across from you is in “Denial” or using “Vulgar disrespectful language”?



Did Any of these show up?

- "Come back when you are ready"
 - "They don't want it bad enough"
 - "They have to hit bottom"
- Communicates:
- "Come back when your sicker"
Or
 - "Go out and keep using"
- Phrases and frames are counter to the MI spirit and Engagement



“It’s not about the nail”



Genuineness

- Bringing your own humanity into your work.
 - Opposite of this: objective, expert role
- Acceptance of others is directly related to our ability to accept ourselves.
- MI will flow naturally when you are being yourself.
- Humility
 - Don't assume that you already understand and have the solutions.



Genuineness

- What do you notice when it is missing?



Ambivalent Clients

- The way we frame pre-contemplation influences the way we engage.
- Denial vs. Genuinely not knowing or believing they have a problem.
 - How does that change the way you engage with them?
 - I can take it as truth and begin with a beginners mind.
- We have to build a relationship based on trust and engagement before being able to explore discrepancy.
- Acknowledge where they are on in their change journey.

Ambivalent Clients

- “I don’t have a problem with substances, I have a problem with this entity in my life.”
- Not our “job” to tell them they are in denial or get them to admit that they have a problem.
- It may feel like we are not doing our job if we are not addressing the behavior.

What is Ambivalence?

Experiencing Conflicting Motivations Simultaneously

What is motivation?

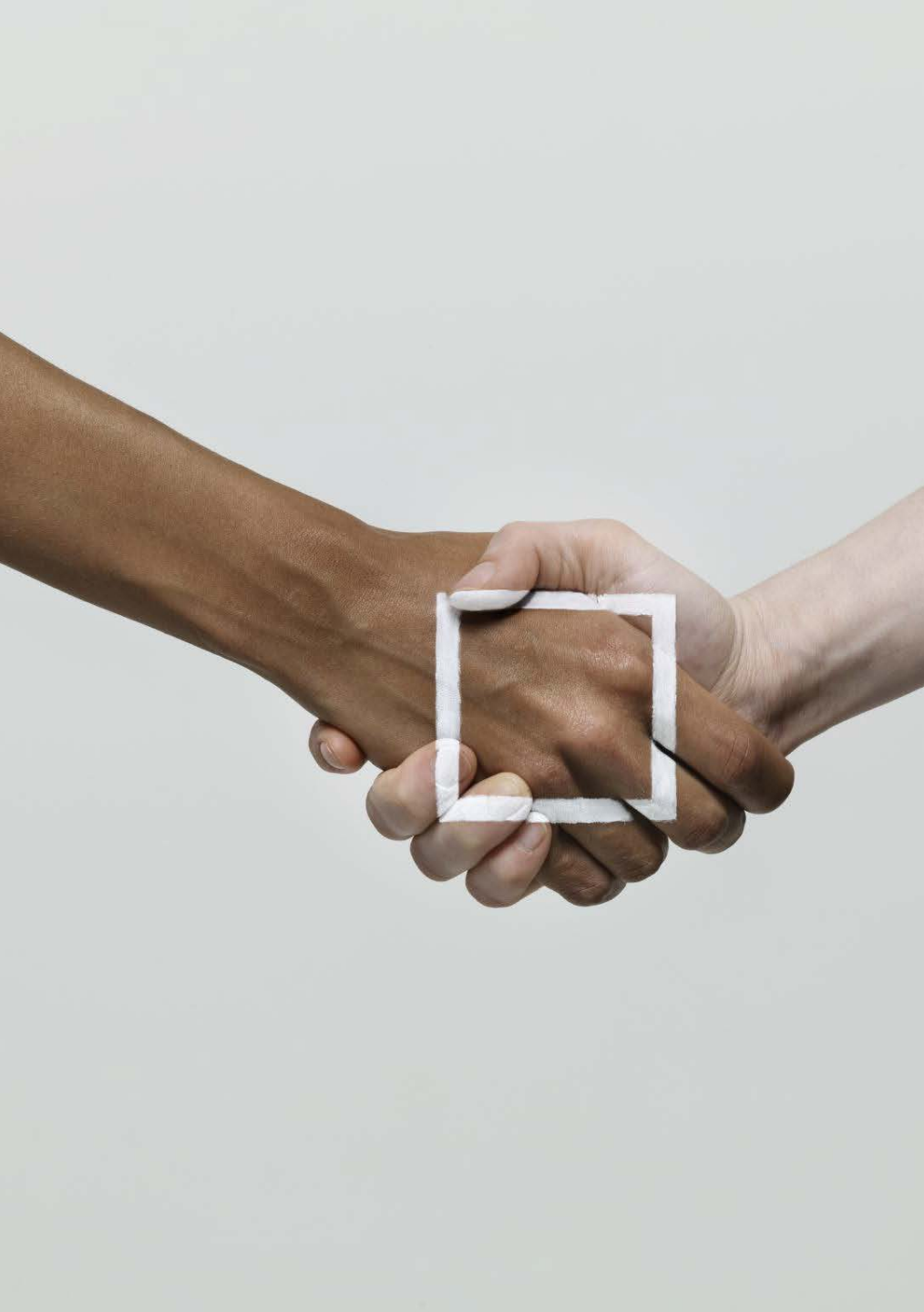
- Something that moves you!





Ambivalence Amplifiers

- **Immediate pleasure vs potential negative consequences**
 - Sex, Drugs, Alcohol, Gambling
- **Identification with the behaviors**
 - “Who I am”
- **Time**
 - “I will deal with it later”
- **Negativity Bias**
 - Focus on the negative information



The Gift of Motivational Interviewing

- To be somewhere with someone exactly where they are.
- Best way to engage another is to provide the space to allow someone to share where they are at.
- Is not about getting people to change, it is about guiding them towards the change that they desire.

Motivational Interviewing

- MI is about evoking motivation from the client, not installing it in them.
- MI is a particular way of talking with people about change to strengthen their own motivation and commitment.

The Gift of Motivational Interviewing

- Can I provide the space for the client to freely explore the reasons for change and the reasons to stay the same?



Our Client as the Expert

- No one is an expert on someone else's life.
- We need their expertise to help facilitate change.
- We are a companion and guide on the client's journey



“Rolling with Resistance”

- Previous editions of M.I. reference to how to respond to discord.
- I am just going to “roll here with this discord”

Resistance

- Resistance is highly responsive to the counselor style.
- Resistance in newer editions broken into:
 - Discord
 - Sustain Talk
- Labeling behavior as resistance is blaming the client for what arises in the relationship.



Who has ever received advice without asking for it?

How was that experience?

Sustain Talk

- One side of the Ambivalence
- About the target behavior or change
- Sustain talk cannot be recognized without first identifying a focus.
- Labeling resistance is pathologizing a normal part of the change process
- Sustain talk is a normal part of ambivalence.

Righting Reflex

- Normal reaction a helper can have when met with ambivalence.
- Our own belief that a person should do a particular thing to progress or succeed.

Softening Sustain Talk

- We have to honor the sustain talk in order to soften it.
- Ways to Soften:
 - Generalize the sustain talk
 - Offer a double-sided reflection
 - Sustain Talk on the front end and Change talk on the back end.
- What you say and how you say it comes out of that moment to guide them towards the change.
 - There is no rehearsed line or script.

Double-Sided Reflection

- Sustain talk is the first part.
- Change talk is the end part.
- Honoring both sides of ambivalence.
- Communicate to the other person that you are attending to their whole story.
- Intention is to put two things together that create discomfort.

Discord

- Something has come between the engagement
 - Highlights this is a two-person engagement.
- About the relationship you have with the client.
 - Communicates we are in a collaborative partnership
 - The words I use and way I engage can either increase or decrease discord.
- The way I engage impacts the depth and potential of the relationship.
- Speaks to the role of the helper.
 - We can be responsible for creating discord.

Our Response....

- Want to Soften Sustain Talk
 - About the target behavior or change
 - Does not mean ignore or dismiss
 - Can lean into with the intention to engage the client
- Elicit Change Talk
 - Using OARS to evoke change talk about the behavioral change goal.
 - Emphasize and amplify the change talk
 - The other side of the coin when looking at ambivalence.

The Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

- Allows us to acknowledge what we are bringing into the room

And

- Set it aside so that we can be present for where our clients are coming from.

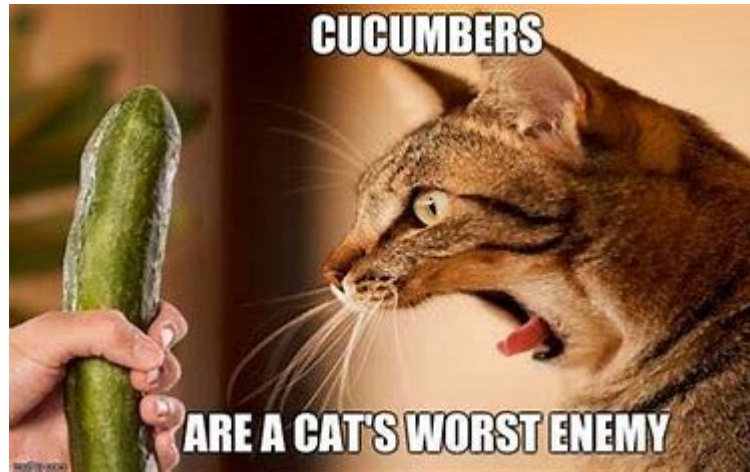
Not supporting Autonomy

- What happens when you tell someone they can't do something?
 - Reassert their freedom of choice.
 - Get more of the Status quo.
- Acknowledging people's freedom of choice
 - Lowers defensiveness
 - Can facilitate change.
 - Highly effective when balancing agency expectations when working directly with clients.

Affirming- Seeing everyone's inherent worth

- Helpful in building and strengthening relationships.
- Searching and seeing what is good in others.
- Recognizing people's best efforts, attempts, intentions or efforts.
- Bonus: Tends to reduce negativity and defensiveness.

Try it out: Affirm your worst enemy!!!



Guideposts for how we want to be

- Partnership
 - Two experts walking down the path
 - The client is the expert on their life vs. I am the expert and I know what is best for them.
 - Do you really believe that they know what is best for them?
 - Will we respect their autonomy even if they chose to make a decision that we believe is not in their best interest.
- What if I don't believe they have the ability within them to make the change?



Acceptance

- When people experience being accepted as they are, it then becomes possible for them to change.
- Feeling unacceptable is immobilizing.

Accurate Empathy: “To get them”

- Not only attention to the other person but also connecting with.
- An active interest and ability in understanding the other person's experience
- Communicates care and respect.
- Helps the speaker explore and understand their experience.
- An evidenced based practice in promoting positive change.

Guideposts for how we want to be

- Compassion
 - Putting the client's agenda above our own.
 - Intention to be in the same emotional space with the client and help.
 - Clients' welfare is primary focus of the session.
 - Keeps us client centered and respecting autonomy.
 - Creates the experience of being heard.
- Empowerment
 - Draw out vs. imposing
 - Strength Focused rather than deficit focused
 - Client has within them their own experience, wisdom, strengths, and resources.
 - Help appreciate and utilize what the client already has.
 - Autonomy Support

Let go

- Of the belief that we must solve or provide the answer to the client's problem.
- Opens the space for use to be curious about them and their experience.

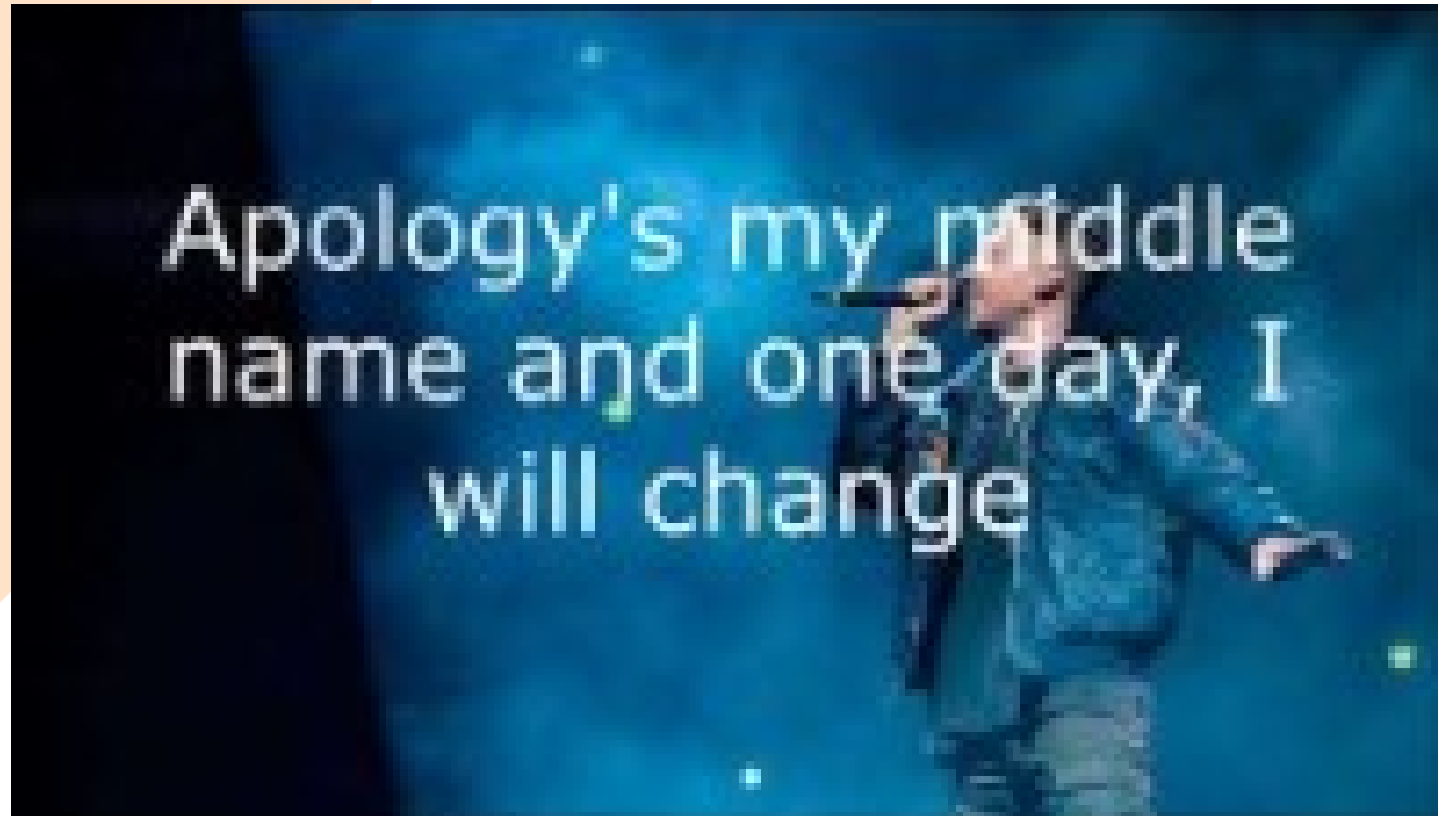
Engaging: Can we walk together?

- Establish a collaborative, trusting and affirming relationship.
 - Lays the foundation for everything that follows.
 - Mutual trust and respect
 - Agreeing on goals.
- People who are actively engaged are more likely to stay in treatment, follow recommendations and benefit from program.

Evoking: Why would you go there?

- Ambivalence is a normal starting point for change.
 - Internal committee debating how important the change *really* is.
 - The side provided with the most airtime will win the debate.
- Evoking task is about tipping the balance towards change.
- Influence this by what we choose to ask and what we emphasize.
- Evoke their own why for change.

Bringing it all together: Practice Responding to the Ambivalence



Our Goal



Build and elicit motivation through engagement



Having the conviction that it is worthwhile to explore and understand the other persons frame of reference.



Bear witness to our clients sharing their goals and help support and guide them on their journey.

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