

Motivational Interviewing Form

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a client-centered, directive method for enhancing intrinsic motivation to change by exploring and resolving ambivalence. This form guides therapists through an MI session, helping clients articulate their motivation for change, address ambivalence, and set realistic goals.

Remember to maintain an open, empathic, and nonjudgmental tone when using this form. Avoid arguing for change; use reflective listening and open-ended questions to elicit "change talk" from the client. *Change talk* refers to clients' statements indicating their desire, ability, reasons, or need to change. In MI, this is a critical sign of a client's openness to change and willingness to engage in the process. It also predicts the likelihood the client will make a change, as these statements reveal the client's motivation and commitment to change.

Examples of types of change talk:

1. Desire to Change

- Statements about wanting or hoping for change.
- Example: "I really want to stop drinking so much."

2. Ability to Change

- Statements indicating the client's belief in their ability to change.
- Example: "I think I can do it if I take it one step at a time."

3. Reasons for Change

- Statements that explain why the client feels change would be beneficial.
- Example: "If I quit smoking, I'd have more energy and save money."

4. Need for Change

- Statements that reflect an urgency or necessity for change.
- Example: "I have to do something about my anxiety. It's affecting my work."

5. Commitment to Change

- Statements of commitment or determination to make the change.
- Example: "I'm going to start going to the gym next week."

6. Taking Steps

- Statements about actions the client has already taken or plans to take.
- Example: "I bought some nicotine patches to help me cut back on smoking."

When a client expresses change talk, the therapist can reinforce it by reflecting the statement back, affirming the client's motivation, and exploring these statements further. This approach strengthens the client's motivation and helps them feel more confident and ready to take actionable steps toward their goals.

Therapist Tips:

1. Familiarize yourself with MI techniques like open-ended questioning, affirming, reflective listening, and summarizing.
2. Start by establishing rapport and move sequentially through each section. Allow flexibility based on the client's needs and responses.
3. Use the form as a flexible guide, adapting questions as necessary to stay responsive to the client's statements. Reflect their statements back to encourage deeper exploration.
4. At subsequent sessions, review MI notes and revisit goals and action steps to reinforce commitment and celebrate progress.

Client Name: _____

Date: _____

Therapist Name: _____

Section 1: Establishing Rapport and Exploring Client Concerns

Purpose: Establish a trusting relationship and allow the client to share what they hope to address in therapy.

What brings you here today? _____

What would you like to get out of our time together? _____

What are some challenges you're facing? _____

What's something that's been going well for you lately? _____

Notes:

(Use this space to note any important context about the client's current situation and areas of life they identify as strengths and challenges.)

Section 2: Exploring Ambivalence and Motivation for Change

Purpose: Elicit the client’s thoughts on change, including positive reasons and any hesitations or doubts. Use reflective listening to clarify and validate their feelings.

What are some reasons you want to make this change? _____

What are some reasons you might be hesitant? _____

How important is this change to you on a scale from 1-10? One means it’s not at all important, and ten means it’s extremely important: _____

Follow-up: What makes you choose that number, not a lower one? _____

On a scale from 1-10, how confident are you in making this change? One means you’re not at all confident, and ten means you’re extremely confident: _____

Follow-up: What would help you feel more confident? _____

What values are most important to you? _____

How do these values align with the changes you’re considering? _____

Notes:

(Document the client’s self-assessment of importance and confidence and any key values and goals related to change.)

Section 3: Developing a Vision of Change

Purpose: Assist the client in visualizing potential outcomes and clarifying how their life could look if they made the change. Encourage “change talk” by asking them to reflect on the benefits and possible challenges.

How do you think your life would improve if you made this change? _____

What benefits do you see in making this change? _____

What do you think might happen if things stay the same? _____

How might this affect you in the long run? _____

Notes:

(Write down specific examples or images the client shares about their envisioned future with and without the change.)

Section 4: Setting Goals and Creating an Action Plan

Purpose: Guide the client in breaking down their vision into actionable steps, exploring short-term and long-term goals, and identifying potential barriers to progress.

What specific goals do you want to work toward? _____

What is a small first step you could take toward this goal? _____

What might make it difficult to achieve these goals? _____

What strategies could help you overcome these challenges? _____

What steps will you take this week to move closer to your goal? _____

What support or resources do you think would be helpful? _____

Notes:

(Outline the client’s goals, identified barriers, coping strategies, and agreed-upon steps. This will serve as a reference for tracking progress in future sessions.)

Section 5: Reinforcing Motivation and Self-Efficacy

Purpose: Focus on past successes, strengths, and available support systems to strengthen the client's belief in their ability to change and reinforce their commitment to the plan.

What gives you hope that you can make this change? _____

Have you ever overcome a similar challenge before? If so, explain.

What strengths do you have that could help you succeed? _____

Who can you count on for support during this journey? _____

If you accomplish this goal, how will it impact your life? _____

What might your life look like once you make this change? _____

Notes:
(Document insights on client strengths, past successes, sources of motivation, and external support networks. These can be revisited to reinforce their progress in future sessions.)

