



Menu of Options (MOO) *for Motivational Interviewing Exercises*

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Dealing with Resistance from your Trainees:

Here are some tips from Ray Gingerich and Frances Cox:

1. Roll with resistance e.g., in response to issues brought up, such as you don't know our system, our kids are the worst, we have been doing this along, this is just another flavor-of-the-month, are you telling us we are doing something wrong, there are too many changes in the system right now, the problem is the Legislators in Sacramento (which we can't do anything about!):

- "You're bringing up valid points--you are the experts on your system and I know MI. You will be the ones to decide if it's a good match-up."
- "Yeah, California gang kids have the rep all over the country as being the worst. And you're thinking that MI might not be helpful with this population. That may be true. You will be the ones to test that out as well."
- "Certainly, you already have tools and practices that work for you. MI is just another tool that may be helpful--and, maybe not. Your agency is asking that you take an honest look at it. But, they can't make you do that. It's an invitation. You don't have to accept it. It's really pretty much up to you."

* The more present and relaxed we can stay, the better--being present with THEIR reality and reflecting it non-defensively--for us, pre-planned prompts may interfere with "being present."

* For us, having the room all set up and ready to go at least 20 minutes early so we can greet each participant as they come into the room and establish some rapport--that prevents a lot of resistance, I think.

* Keep the atmosphere light. Use of appropriate humor.

* If there are one or two who persist with resistance, we have found it useful to engage them outside the classroom during a break and ask for their help.

* Then there was Liz Barnett's "10 Things" list. That might be a helpful read before class.

* Finally, there is the "Parking Lot" idea for constraints that are raised that are outside of the control of anyone in the classroom or for issues that need to be addressed in sequence or context. One example of constraints outside of class control would be "too many changes in the system." After acknowledging with something like, "You're feeling overwhelmed right now," or, "It's not necessarily MI that you object to, it's just that there is too much right now," that would be something to put on the parking lot--nobody in the classroom has any control over that, but we can pass the info along to somebody who does.

A. "Spirit" Exercises

1. Most Influential Person Exercise

Ray Gingerich

Abstract: For use in criminal justice or traditional therapeutic community settings where coercive change strategies are the norm. This is a discrepancy exercise and provides the "why" for exploring options to the status quo.

Overview: This exercise can be used as a motivational hook for a beginning MI seminar. Trainees reflect on “change agents” from their past and what methods for influencing change worked with them and those that did not. They are then asked to compare the typical change strategies promoted by their organizational culture with the methods that worked for them and those that didn’t work for them.

Guidelines: 1) Ask trainees to think of a designated change agent in their lives (teacher, counselor, coach, clergy person, supervisor, etc.) whose influence they rejected, around whom they felt defensive, or who they avoided. Ask them to list the behaviors that caused this rejection. (*Pause 1 minute*) 2) Then have trainees call out behaviors from their lists while a scribe lists them on charts (usually takes 2 charts) labeled “INEFFECTIVE MOTIVATORS and EFFECTIVE MOTIVATORS” while the trainer reflects comments. 3) Then, ask trainees to think of a person in their life who was a profound positive influence on them. Then ask, “Why was that person such an influence on you—how did s/he behave with you that you allowed her/him to influence you?” List at least three behaviors. (*Pause 1 minute*) 4) Make a second list on charts. 5) Post the charts side by side and ask the key question: “Which of these lists are more similar to the change methods most commonly used in our (e.g., criminal justice) organizational culture?” (*Answer is always “the ineffective list” in criminal justice*)

Reflection to Class: “So our own experience of what works is discrepant with the methods we use at work to motivate others. If I might add, our personal experience is consistent with the research on motivation. Which is the reason for this class—Motivational Interviewing is one of the key components of evidence-based practice that this agency is pursuing. The second list contains almost all of the behaviors that we will be practicing over the next 3 days. It also contains most if not all of the principles on which those behaviors are based.”

Notes: In over 100 sessions with probation officers over a period of 12 years in 10 states, the lists are very similar. The answer to the key question has always been “the Ineffective motivators.”

Lists from a Recent Class: (24 probation officers from a large city in Texas)

Effective Motivators

- Listened-respected my point of view
- Confident in me
- Modeled work-ethic
- Didn't give me advice—but helped me find options
- Open minded
- Optimistic—believed I could succeed
- Dependable: kept his commitments
- Willing to help
- Never gave up on me
- Non-judgmental
- Patient; gentle
- Empowered me: “You can do it.”
- Modeled the desired behavior
- Had faith in me—told me
- Open to options—creative in helping me find the right ones for me
- Supportive, even when I screwed up
- Encouraging—even when suggesting change
- Honest
- Humble, but strong
- Genuine—not phony
- Believed in me more than I believed in my self
- Saw the best in me and brought out the best in me
- Modeled integrity: talk matched walk
- Compassionate
- Kind

Ineffective Motivators

- Demeaning
- Judgmental
- Authoritarian
- Used threats
- Controlling
- Overbearing
- Micro-managed
- No trust
- Bossy
- Self-aggrandizing: all about him
- Duplicitous
- No integrity: talk didn't match walk
- Manipulative
- Moody-angry
- Arrogant
- “My way-highway”
- Closed minded
- Created hostile environment
- Coercive-dictatorial
- Condescending—no respect
- Know-it-all
- Suspicious—accusatory
- Negative, pessimistic, bad energy
- Only talked, never listened
- Vindictive
- Punitive attitude & behavior
- Didn't model the behavior advocated
- Tried to motivate by fear
- Unwilling to understand—no empathy

2. Self-Change and Reflection

Think of something you have changed in your life. Write down the answers to these questions:

- 1) How did the change take place?
- 2) What helped you make this change?
- 3) What made it difficult for you?

Debrief, with emphasize on the last two questions—what helps and hinders the change process.

Ann Fields

Warm-Up Exercise: *Take a look at how participants think about motivation.*

Divide group into fours. Provide each of them with one of the four questions. Ask each group to brainstorm and list their ideas / thoughts on their question. When they are done have each group share their brainstorming. When they are done, the rest of the group can add on additional ideas.

Four Questions:

1. What do you see as the main motivational obstacles in working with youth?
2. What do you think motivates people to change?
3. What are your greatest frustrations in trying to motivate youth to change?
4. How do you currently go about trying to motivate youth?

3. Join Up Video

Join Up Video	
Kathy Tomlin	
Trains to MI spirit and style as well as addresses the paradigm shift from traditional PO practice	
+	Introduce and show the Join Up video. I show from the time he starts training the horse until he is down or 23 minutes. I ask them to watch the video and at the end ask them to tell me why they think I had them watch the video
■	After the video ask the audience to divide themselves into smaller groups of no more than 2-three.
+	Each group then compiles their list of characteristics of traits that they found helpful that mirror MI spirit and style, assist in decreasing resistance, and aids in cooperation from the horse. (takes about 5-7")

● Trainer then asks the group to report out those traits.
● Trainer will either write up the traits identified or ask a participant to help out with this.
● Trainer wraps up the discussion by tying in the exercise with the participants own work with kids.
NOTE: With youth PO's there is a lot of humor and engagement as they process this activity. So, it is a fun one.

4. P.O. 1 and P. O. 2 Video

You can use this quick video in several different ways. To demonstrate the spirit or the “mindset” of MI as we are calling it (to reduce resistance”, you can show this video and ask trainees to provide feedback of what they observed that demonstrated the mindset of MI. It is helpful to show the P.O. 1 tape (of non-MI skills/spirit) so that they have something to contrast P.O. 2 with.

B. Stages of Change Exercise

There was much discussion in our group whether to include even a slide on Stages of Change due to the concern that it is not being held up well in research, can tend to be confused with MI by some trainees, and that some tend to see the stages as static when they are not. Others liked using the SOC as at least a structure to think about targeting interventions instead of assuming everyone is in the same place. In that light, we offer the following exercise. Only you can decide if you want to use it (!).

Thanks to Scott Reiner:

What I often do is ask participants to think about a change in their own lives. Something they have been thinking about, perhaps something they have completed, something someone else has mentioned to them. I ask them not to use their "deepest, darkest" secret. Then do describe each stage very briefly and ask people to stand in groups based on where they are with regard to the change they thought of. E.g., if you're aware that this is something that you might want to do something about but either haven't made up your mind yet or know you should do it but just aren't ready stand over here.

After everyone arrays themselves, I describe the SOC model and the different dynamics of each stage. I ask for volunteers at each stage and ask a variety of questions to bring out key aspects of that stage.

I also time permitting talk about how I might approach someone at each stage and try it out with another volunteer in each group demonstrating matching intervention to stage and modeling some MI in the process.

Using real life experience really helps participants empathize with the struggles of making changes.

C. Open-Ended Questions handout

Ask trainees to turn to open-ended questions handout in packet. Ask them to fill it out and then ask them their responses (open or closed?). You may pick a few of the closed statements and ask them to turn them into open-ended questions.

D. Affirmations Exercise

See slide with exercise. Ask trainees to find affirmations in slide and write them down, then read them off. Debrief.

E. Reflective Listening Exercises

1. Non-verbal listening exercise

Before starting to shape reflective listening, it can be useful to increase awareness of the importance and value of nonverbal (“passive”) listening skills. The training exercise for this step is relatively simple.

*Pair up trainees and have them decide who will speak and who will listen.

Assign a specific topic for the speaker to talk about for five minutes, or offer a menu of options such as:

- What it was like growing up in my home
- Ways in which I have changed as a person over the years
- The good things and not so good things about my high school years
- What I hope and plan to do over the next ten years
- Describe one of your parents, or someone else close to you
- How I came to do the kind of work I am doing.

*Instruct the listener to say *nothing at all*, not even “mm hmm” or other vocal noises. Absolute silence. Instead the listener is to use nonverbal skills to communicate to the speaker that he or she is listening and understanding.

*Allow the monologues to continue for 5-10 minutes, then ask the speakers to finish.

*Debrief. What was this experience like for the speakers? For the listeners? Listeners often observe that they were aware of all the things they *would have said*. Ask listeners to indicate the kinds of things they might have said had it been permitted. The experience is often a mixture of pleasure and frustration for both, who would like more interaction. This sets the stage for introducing reflective methods for “active” listening.

2. Thinking and Forming Reflections: Do you mean that....?

Briefing:

a. Participants in each triad are to take turns, in rotation, saying one of their sentences to their two partners.

b. When a speaker has offered a sentence, the other two serve as listeners and respond by *asking questions* of this form: “Do you mean that you_____?”

c. The speaker responds to each such question *only* with “Yes” or “No.” No additional elaboration is permitted.

d. Demonstrate this by offering a personal example to the audience, and having trainees ask you “Do you mean that you...?” questions. Respond only with “Yes” or “No.” Example:

YOU: One thing I like about myself is that I’m organized.
TRAINEE: Do you mean that you keep your desk tidy?
Y: No!
T: Do you mean that you manage your time well?
Y: Yes.
T: Do you mean that you always know where to find things?
Y: No.
T: Do you mean that you manage to get a lot done?
Y: Yes.
T: Do you mean that you are a good planner?
Y: Yes.
T: Do you mean that you’re difficult to live with?
Y: Yes.

e. Instruct the triads to begin this process, generating at least five different “Do you mean...” questions for each statement that is offered. When questioning for one statement seems to have reached an end, rotate on to the next person, who becomes the speaker while the other two generate questions. Ask groups to stay on task and not stop for discussion. Circulate among groups to reinforce, clarify, give examples, and make suggestions. Allow about 20 minutes for this exercise; adjust time as needed, depending on progress.

Debriefing:

In a large group, ask for comments on this experience. What did the participants learn? What surprises were there? What was it like to be the speaker? Usually there are comments here about the speaker’s wanting strongly to elaborate and explain, which is a good illustration of how the reflective process, even at this simple level, pulls for more exploration. What problems were encountered? Highlight how many different meanings a seemingly simple statement can have (the number of different “Yes” answers), as well as the fact that many early guesses are wrong (“No” responses). Point out how each guess receives immediate feedback (“Yes” or “No”) in this exercise, which also happens during good reflective listening. Common themes during debriefing are:

Satisfaction. The speaker felt good, understood.

Frustration. That it is frustrating to be able to say only “Yes” or “No” because the speaker wants to say more. This is a good example of how even this simple level of reflection pulls for self-disclosure.

Fascination. It's amazing how easy it is to miss, and how many different things can be meant. Speakers may have the experience that is made me think of things I hadn't considered. Again, that is an effect of reflection, even at this simplistic level.

With the background of how to *think* reflectively and generate alternative hypotheses about meaning, the next step is to teach trainees how to form good reflective-listening statements.

3. Hypothesis testing

Aim: To help trainees learn how to form effective reflective-listening statements.

Time: 20 minutes plus discussion

Format: Participants are arranged in groups of three.

Trainee Preparation:

*The questions asked in the last exercise are very close to reflective listening, but not quite. The process, however, is the same as in the prior exercise: The listener makes a guess about the speaker's meaning and offers this to the speaker for response.

*Explain how good reflective-listening statements are very similar to, yet different from, the "Do you mean..." questions. They *do* offer a hypothesis about what the speaker means, but this is done in the form of a *statement* rather than a *question* (difference in inflection at the end of the sentence). A good reflective listening response is a *statement*. Its inflection turns *down* at the end: Illustrate by inflecting the word "said" differently in this sentence:

"You're angry about what I said?" (up)
vs. "You're angry about what I said. (down)

*It may feel strange to make a statement instead of asking a question; for example it may feel presumptuous, as if you are "telling the person what they feel." Yet statements usually work better. Why is that?

*Some people find it helpful to have some words to get them started in making a reflective listening statement. The common element is the word "you." The stereotypic counselor statement (which we recommend never be used) is: "What I hear you saying is that you..."

Some simpler forms:

So you feel...
It sounds like you...
You're wondering if...
You...

Be careful, however, about overuse of such stems. No stem words are needed to form a reflective listening statement.

*Demonstrate the skill by having someone from the audience volunteer a self-statement such as:

"One thing I like about myself is that I...."
"One thing you should know about me is that...."
"One thing about myself that I'd like to change is...."

And respond only with reflective listening statements, being careful to inflect them downward at the end. Generate several different hypothesis-testing responses for each self-statement, and point out how each corresponds to a "Do you mean that...?" question.

*Next offer a self-statement of your own to the audience, and have them generate reflective listening responses.

*Have each participant be prepared to offer at least three different personal statements of the form.

*One thing about myself that I would like to change is..." Again, avoid concrete attributes (e.g. "... my hair color").

Commentary:

It is a short step from the questions of “Thinking Reflectively” to reflection statements, but trainees often find this harder and need some coaching and encouragement. Circulate among groups, reinforce good reflection responses, make suggestions, and offer some reflection statements, and encourage a downturn in voice (statement) rather than upward inflection (question).

Briefing:

1. Participants in each triad are to take turns, in rotation, saying one of their sentences to their two partners.
2. When a speaker has offered a sentence, the other two serve as listeners and respond with reflective-listening statements.
3. The speaker responds to each statement with elaboration that probably includes but is not limited to “Yes” or “No.” The next reflective-listening statement, then, takes this new information into account, adding a degree of complexity not present in Exercise 3.

4. Mary Had a Little Lamb

Kathy Tomlin

Trains to differences b/n simple and complex reflective listening
● Trainer offers content of reflective listening, what it is, why it is important what the types of reflective listening and the importance (based on MITI fidelity) of complex reflections and accurate empathy.
■ Trainer states to the large group that he/she will offer them a nursery rhyme. The group then is asked in each presentation of the rhyme to offer a simple repeat, rephrase and then complex reflection.
● Trainer starts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ “Mary had a little lamb”○ Group repeats “Mary had a little lamb”○ Trainer states then “Mary had a little lamb whose fleece was white as snow” and asks for simple rephrase.○ Someone in the group offers-Mary’s lamb was white, the lamb was little, etc..
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Trainer states then “Mary had a little lamb whose fleece was white as snow and everywhere that Mary went, that lamb was sure to go!” in a very sweet, friendly tone of voice. Then asks someone from the group to offer a complex reflective statement. This is when it gets fun and can be very instructive. Sometimes someone will make a simple rephrase, such as Mary’s lamb follows her everywhere or Mary’s lamb is white and follows her everywhere. Often, someone in the group will say Mary’s lamb loves her or Mary really loves her lamb. Those statements then offer the trainer the opportunity to help participants understand the difference b/n types of reflections. It is common for someone in the group to joke and make a complex reflection with inaccurate empathy, such as Mary is irritated with that lamb,, or Mary is thinking about lamb chops for dinner, which can be a lot of fun, technically a complex reflection, but with inaccurate empathy.○ Trainer then shows another version of the rhyme by saying in a frustrated tone of voice, “Mary had a little lamb whose fleece was white as snow,..(trainer then starts pounding on a table or doing something that shows frustration..) and EVERYWHERE that Mary went that lamb was sure to go!○ Next trainer asks for complex reflections with this type of tone and presentation; following the format from above.○ After a bit of more practice and attempts, the group begins to understand that MI is asking for accurate empathic complex statements that add meaning or offer emotion or intent in listening.
NOTE: This activity follows a training module that addresses reflective listening. From Miller. Thinking and Forming reflections.

5. Youth Correctional Worker Responses Questionnaire

The purpose of this exercise is for trainees to practice reflections in a non-threatening manner. It is sometimes easier to think them through and write them out, than have to think on one's feet.

Ask participants to go to this handout in their packet. Ask them to work in pairs, perhaps with a new partner. Each is to pick 3 of the items in the handout and write a reflective response to the statement. Have different pairs then read the statement and the response (after you have gone around the room and looked over their shoulders, making sure they are ok). Debrief.

6. DJJ Vignettes, part 1

The purpose of this exercise is to have trainees identify the issues that they see in the vignette, to think about the directive part of MI, to identify where they might be hearing ambivalence, and then to practice reflective listening.

Ask trainees to go to this handout in their packet. Working in pairs, assign consecutive groups the first 2 items, the next 2, etc. Then ask them to read their answers out loud. Discuss and debrief.

DJJ Vignettes, part 2: Putting together the skills

This exercise asks trainees to begin to put all the skills together. Using the “Cascading skills” slide helps give a structure for how to do this. Ask the pairs to form into groups of 4. Ask them to select a vignette, then follow the cascading skills exercise, with one youth, one DJJ staff, two observers. When the group is done, have them debrief and then switch roles, picking another vignette.

Cascading Skills Exercise:

Make a reflective statement

Describe to the client his or her ambivalence

Affirm the client

Ask an open-ended question

Repeat skills 1-4.

Summarize

Debriefing Question:

What was it like to be the youth in this role-play?

What was it like to be the staff member in this role-play?

What conflicts do you feel in your role as a staff member in this case: a) Youth health and safety b) rehabilitation efforts

How does Motivational Interviewing hinder you in your role in this case?

How does Motivational Interviewing help you in your role in this case?

7. OARS Round Robin

Dee-Dee Stout

Purpose: To practice OARS

Format: Large or small group

Tools needed:

- Scrabble tiles, blocks, or simply cards with *O,A,R,S* on them.
- Volunteer from audience to play client (real or role-play)
- OARS Crib Notes: (Their notes they have taken on using OARS)

Tiles/cards are placed in a bag and passed out either at the beginning of training for later use or at the commencement of the game (Note: It can be fun to also have more “R’s” than O-A or S’s to guide folks into using more reflections than questions). You can ask for a volunteer to play a client while you pass out the tiles and provide the instructions, or earlier in the day.

Instructions:

A volunteer “client” stands at the front of the room (preferably). All willing audience participants have a tile in front of them. Tell them that you will be practicing OARS by having participants responsible (with help if wanted) for coming up with a statement at the appropriate time in the “play” corresponding with their tile. Let folks know that they may use the “crib notes” to help in this effort; no shame!

Begin the “play” by introducing yourself and thanking the client for coming. Then ask an open question such as, “So, what brings you here today?” Wait for the “client” to respond then ask participants, “Where do you want to go now – OAR or S?” Each person gets one turn (or more if a small group) and I walk around and collect the tiles as they “use” them in their turn.

A few words: That’s the basic idea. I have used this for many years in various forms and with many different groups. Typically it’s been well received. It’s fun, energizing, and engaging as well as really useful for folks to see how using OARS works. It also provides me an opportunity to “fine-tune” things a bit before they work in dyads or triads where I can’t follow conversations as closely.

8. Practicing Complex Reflections with Feedback

Cathy Cole, from the Listserv

Ask trainees to generate statements youth/wards might make, such as “This is too hard, to do all these things you want me to, to stay out of trouble.” Or you could use statements from the DJJ vignettes. Post these on the board/wall.

Ask the group to sit in a circle. One person reads the first statement and the next three participants would generate three complex reflections. Ask the reader which statement was the preferred one to respond to and why and then respond. Continue around the circle, with the next three people next moving to open questions to elicit change talk and so forth. This exercise is a combination of several from different MINTies, including ideas from Bill.

What was different was my asking which response the speaker related to the most...trying to go more to those private thoughts. I was often surprised at the choice as it was not what I would have selected as the most skillful; it usually came to the person selecting the response that FELT like being understood.

What did I take from this? We can't say what will feel meaningful to another person; feeling understood can not be underestimated; no matter whether I would have resonated with the response or not, another person did; simple was often best; I should not overcoach when supervising, rather wait to hear responses; it is fascinating to hear those private thoughts.

F. Summarizing Exercise

Part 1: Have group work in pairs. One person is to talk for about 2 minutes about a habit, behavior, dilemma, or something they are thinking about changing.

The listener's task is to be an interested listener without saying anything or asking questions. At the end, they are to give a summary of what they have been told. Do not try to solve the teller's problem or give advice. Instruct that their task is to try to listen and remember as well as they can, and give an exact summary as possible. When summarizing, try to avoid changing or adding things to what was said.

Change roles and repeat. Debrief.

Part 2: The person again tells their story without being interrupted. The listener's task is again not to provide advice or interrupt, but this time to give a summary with what they think is the underlying meaning, feeling, or dilemma.

Change roles and repeat. Debrief. What are the differences between the two summaries? How was it for the person who received the summary? How was it for the person who gave the summary? Which summary was most difficult? Why? What is the effect of telling the story several times?

Hint: Ask the "youth" to discuss why he likes being in a gang. This may help get at the Righting Reflex. Debrief how it felt to not say anything and to reflect the youth's thoughts.

G. Rolling With Resistance Exercises

1. Batting Practice

<p>Abstract: Trainees can learn to make reflections or respond to resistance. Doing so is easier than it looks, and this can be a confidence builder.</p>
<p>Overview: Trainees can learn to make reflections “on their feet” by using an exercise called “Batting Practice,” drawing on an image from baseball or cricket. The concept of the game is that the trainee does not have to “hit a home run,” but merely has to “get some wood on it” as if it were batting practice rather than a major league game.</p>
<p>Guidelines: Provide a demonstration before the exercise begins by having members of the audience “pitch” statements to you and model reflective listening or other ways of responding to resistance. Any group member makes a “pitch” and the batter (you) takes a swing at it and that is the end of the turn. (The pitcher does not respond to the batter’s reply.) Then form trainees into small-group batting cages of 6-8 in which one person at a time takes a turn as batter. The other members of the group throw out specific client statements to which the batter responds with a short, simple reflection or other resistance-coping strategy (such as emphasizing personal control). Each batter responds to a specified number of different “pitches” (3 or 4 work well) volunteered by other members of the group, before the turn moves on to the next batter.</p>
<p>Example(s): Two good applications of the exercise are in helping trainees to make reflective listening statements, or in coping with client resistance statements.</p>
<p>Notes: This exercise is usually a lot of fun. It’s a good, energizing on-your-feet exercise after people have been sitting or listening for a while, after lunch, or toward the end of a training day.</p>

2. Group Huddle

From Jacque Elder, from the Listserv:

I keep meaning to share a variation on Dodge Ball that I have used the last two times I have trained, and it has gone quite well.

I have re-named this one Group Huddle. As in Dodge Ball, the group lines up in two lines (with a big group, you would want to have groups of 10 facing each other but I was working with 20 people each time). We decided to practice Simple Reflections first so one person on the team faced the other person and made a typical client status or resistant statement. The other Reflecting team person would reflect back but if the respondent didn't feel like it "fit", the Huddle person could call a Team Huddle and the team would help that person come up with a Reflection.

This, of course, happened by accident when we were trying to play Dodge Ball and someone got stuck. I asked the person if they wanted help and on impulse (big surprise there), brought the group around me. The atmosphere really took on the spirit of a team sport and the teams actually got funny with their competitiveness ("We have got a good one for you!") It also took the heat off the person trying to practice their MI skills, while allowing us (while in the huddle) to hear some rather good reflections and then letting the player pick which one they thought was best.

We had so much fun (I think Margo Bristow and Ray Daugherty were there the first time it happened), and when I was trying to wrap it up, they wanted to keep going, only practicing Affirmations. How often does that happen?

Linda Erhlich-Jones and I just used it and one lesson we learned. We did it at the end of Day One of a 2 day training, and so Day Two needed something equally as energizing, and we didn't have anything planned. I could sense that they were expecting something as fun as the Huddle.

3. Three Chair Exercise

Thanks to Mike Clark via Ray Gingerich

Abstract: To help trainees increase awareness of signs of defensiveness and/or cooperation and motivation from an interviewee. Purpose: so trainees can begin to see how to learn MI from their clients. This isn't necessarily a "Resistance Exercise" but it does demonstrate how interactions can cause defensiveness.

Overview: To increase awareness of interviewee's feelings of defensiveness or motivation The trainee is able to directly observe how his/her utterances affect the interviewee by getting overt (gross body) feedback depending on the interviewer's use of MI skills or roadblocks or traps.

Guidelines: Three chairs are arranged to face five other chairs (about 6-8 feet between the facing rows). Five trainees occupy the chairs in the one row. The trainer takes the middle chair in the three-chair row, facing the trainees. The trainer real-plays (the client role), choosing a behavior about which s/he is ambivalent or has not mastered change. The remaining participants observe in a fish-bowl arrangement.

The trainee at one end of the row begins with 3-5 interactions in an MI interview and then passes to the next person who uses 3-5 interactions, and so on. The stated goal is to explore and possibly resolve ambivalence.

The trainer takes the middle chair which is designated "neutral" and remains in that chair until feeling particular empathy or affirmation, on the one hand, OR feeling some defensiveness or resistance on the other. The chair to his left is designated "motivated or cooperative," the chair to the right "defensive or resistant." Immediately after an utterance from a participant which evokes feelings in one direction or the other, the trainer moves to that chair while verbally responding.

Any trainee, whether participant or observer, can call "time out" to inquire about why the trainer moved OR about any other process matter. (Variation: while moving to a chair, the trainer can mutter to him/herself what is happening internally as to why s/he is moving).

The trainer demonstrates how the exercise works before beginning.

Example(s):

Trainer: I have some ambivalence about always using MI-adherent behaviors in the classroom.

Trainee: (*judgmental tone*) Hmmm. After 10 years of training this, I would think you would have resolved this by now. (*Trainer moves to the "defensive" chair*).

Trainer: Well, I haven't.

Trainee: (*empathic tone*) So, you have been struggling with this for a long time.
(*Trainer moves to the "cooperative" chair*).

Notes: Trainees need to have some experience practicing MI before using this exercise—otherwise they find it hard to understand why the trainer is moving and can become defensive. Most trainers use it in MI Training, Part 2, rather than Part 1.

Trainer needs to be able to multi-process what is going on internally and externally. This role should only be given to a trainee where the trainee has DEMONSTRATED the ability to perform this role before using it in the classroom.

Trainees consistently report that this is "the" or "one of the most powerful" exercises they have tried in MI.

4. Developing Discrepancy

Ann Fields

Have everyone think of a behavior they would like to change. Write it down. Have participants list their top 3 values. Have them spend a little time defining their values by writing down what each value means to them. Have them pair up and take turns reading their top 3 values and their definitions to one another. (Make sure you instruct them to say thank you when each person is done sharing). Now tell them that each person will ask each other two questions. (Let them know this may cause some discomfort and that we will talk about that the exercise). Each person will be asked to answer both questions before switching to the next person.

TWO QUESTIONS:

- 1) Thinking about the behavior you want to change, what's been the negative impact of that behavior on each of your values?** (*Make sure they look at their definitions when answering*)
- 2) Do any of your values support you continuing your behavior?**

Debrief: Discuss the feelings related to Discrepancy.

5. S-A-C-R-E-D

Ray Gingerich

After several experiments on helping trainees to respond with other than coming-alongside reflections, I finally chanced upon something this week that REALLY WORKED well. This was a MI-Part 2 training (might be too complex for introductory MI)3/30/2009

* Trainees write 4 resistive or sustain-talk statements they have heard from clients recently.

* Trainees bring that list and the S-A-C-R-E-D list (Shift focus; agree w/a twist; come-alongside; reframe; emphasize personal control; disclose feelings) with them and to stand in a circle (I got the acronym from Brad Bogue)

* To demo, trainer stands at 12:00 o'clock and asks the person at 6:00 to pitch a resistant statement to which trainer responds with a simple reflection.

* Example: Pitcher (juvenile probationer): "I'm not learning anything at school." #1 [reflection] swing: "School didn't go that well this week."

* The same participant is instructed to make the #2 "pitch," this time "tossing the ball" up in into the middle of the circle so that anyone has time to "step up and take a swing" with one of the other SAD-SACRED strategies.

* Example: "You really want to learn something for all your effort"

* Regardless of the swing, trainer asks the group to reflect on, "where did that [last response] leave your thinking" after every bat-swing (to the above example, "leaves me thinking about things I want to learn at school."

* Move around the circle by having the next pitcher at 7:00 pitch to batter at 1:00, etc. (got this method from Dee Dee) Result: By simply directing the trainees to their own thoughts in response to each response of the "batter," I noticed a much speedier improvement (with this evoking approach) from the upcoming batters than from my past attempts at coaching (from an installing approach). For example, one of the participants said, "I notice every time a person ends a double-sided reflection with the sustain side, I leaves me thinking of more sustain talk, but when Joe ended that last DSR with the change side, it left me thinking about change."

Following that testimonial, all future DSRs started with the sustain and ended with the change. In the past when I have offered that same observation, I don't recall it working so well, presumably because of the expert trap. Also this time, there was a great increase in enthusiasm for volunteering: I had to limit the swings at the second pitch to not more than 3 so we would have time to get around the entire circle within 30 minutes. At the end, several participants volunteered that they had learned more from this exercise than any to that point. But, then we ended (last activity) with Mike's 5-Chair Exercise which, as always ends with "it made it all come together" and "I have so much more to learn." I leave you thinking about, "how does it get better than that?"

H. Eliciting Change Talk Exercises

1. Drumming for Change Talk

Round # 1: Drum Roll – DARN Talk

Frances Cox: Adapted from Stephen Berg- Smith for Probation

I do some didactic around change talk and then instruct the participants to identify which of the following statements indicates change talk, beginning with DARN only. When they hear DARN change talk they are to drum on the table....I like to have fun with this and get every one involved. I read statements, they drum or not! I try to elicit discussion at some points if there is confusion around one of the statements or may elicit which kind of change talk it is - desire, ability, reason, need but do not do that too much. I am not so concerned about their ability to identify type as to be able to identify change talk in general.

The second part - clapping is to identify commitment talk. So, some didactic around commitment talk as type of change talk we want to be able to hear specifically and reinforce. etc.

Then, the participants drum (D) for DARN and clap (C) for Commitment Talk.

I hate this treatment program.

My probation officer is out to get me.

I really like to smoke weed.

I don't want to go to jail.

I just want to wake up sober in the morning.

I wish I could get off supervision.

I need to get high to feel right.

I really want to get a job.

I want to get my GED.

Yea, I blew off school on Thursday.

I'll go to the anger management class even though I know that stuff already.

I stayed away from drug dealing all week.

I mostly forgot to call my probation officer.

There is no way I want to be on electronic monitoring.

I definitely can't afford to get another DWI.

I could quit smoking pot.

There is no way I can pay restitution.

I have to clean up my act.

I believe I could get back with my spouse. I've done it before and it's possible.

The cops have it in for me – it's wasn't my fault.

I might be able to cut down some.

At least my wife would quit bugging me if I found a job.

I can't do all these conditions of probation – it's impossible.

Send me to prison now.

Smoking crack really flares up my asthma.

I have got to get out of that living situation – it is too hard to stay clean.
I could do it if I tried.
No one will hire someone with a record.
I've gotta go to AA.
If I lose this job, my girlfriend I definitely going to leave me.
Smoking weed doesn't hurt anybody.
I don't want to set a bad example for my kids.
I want to be clean and sober, period.
All my friends use, I don't see the big deal about it.
I hate that my mom is real worried about me.
My UA was dirty because of these cold pills I'm taking.
I'm working two jobs to pay all these fees.
I'll make the next appointment.
I'm really trying to do all these conditions.
I want to get off probation and have a good job.

Round # 2: Include commitment talk
Clapping when hear commitment talk

I guarantee I'll make my next appointment
Five job applications? Yeah, I'll do that.
There's no way I could make it without my gang bros.
I might be able to cut down a bit.
I'm starting to get a little tired of the drug scene.
I'll go to AA everyday like the conditions of probation say.
I'm sure I'd feel better if I didn't stay up all night .
I'm ready to take my medication exactly like the Dr. tells me.
If I don't begin and finish this treatment program, I might as well throw in the towel.
I'll pay all my fees by the end of the month.
I'll attend all the classes I have to so I can complete probation.
I might be able to report if I get my car fixed.
I know I'm not dirty.
I'll do my best to complete this GED program.
I'm doing all my assignments for group.
I'm staying clean and sober.

After this, we look at the **video of PO 2**. Participants identify change talk from probationer as well as how probation officer responds to change talk.

2. Readiness Ruler

Goal: To practice the Readiness Ruler.

Directions: First demonstrate the Readiness Ruler in an interaction with a trainee. Then ask trainees to work in pairs. They are then asked to pick a behavior they are thinking about changing or something where they have ambivalence. Have them go through the questions as indicated on the slide.

Debrief. Use this as a chance to discuss ambivalence about Importance, Confidence, and Readiness.

3. Evocative questions/ DARN-C

Goal: To practice using DARN-C type questions.

Directions: Ask the pairs to switch to new partners. Working in pairs, practice the DARN-C questions regarding an issue the Speaker is ambivalent about. Use the powerpoint slide as a reminder. See the slide for the questions.

Debrief.

4. Decisional Balance

Goal: To practice the Decisional Balance.

Directions: You will need to demonstrate this if you haven't done so already. Ask them to work on the Decisional Balance handout with another new Listener. Use the powerpoint slide as a reminder.

Debrief: How did this work for you? How might you use this in your work?

Overall Debrief: Which exercise/method did you like best as the Speaker? Listener? Why? Which may be the best to use, given your setting and role?