

**Preventing Marijuana Use Among Young People:
The Motivational Interviewing Approach to
Dealing with Ambivalence and Resistance to the
Prevention Message**

An Invited Presentation at
The Marijuana Prevention Conference:
The Science of Prevention for Professionals

Provided by
David A. Haapala, Ph.D.
President
Bold Solutions
PO Box 1335
Tacoma, WA 98401
253-565-8300
haapala@harboret.com

PRESENTATION HANDOUTS

JUNE 10, 2016

WHAT IS MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING?

Motivational Interviewing is a person-centered, guiding method of communication for eliciting and strengthening internal motivation for change

Motivational Interviewing is a particular way to facilitate the recognition of problem behaviors and, as the individual who “owns” the problem, building one's own case for positive change. This method effectively serves those individuals who are reluctant to change and ambivalent about modifying their behaviors.

Universally, an individual's ambivalence about continuing an existing pattern of behavior versus making a change in that pattern stands out as a common stumbling block to helping efforts to create positive, constructive behavior change. Motivational Interviewing -- a non-authoritarian style of interaction designed to help people identify their own incentives and resources -- has been shown to be an effective way to assist people to clarify their own ambivalence and resolve their problems.

Motivational Interviewing gives responsibility for change back to the individual. The strategies of the approach are persuasive and supportive. The overall goal in the use of this method is to increase the individual's own self motivational statements and rationales for change.

The “Motivational Interviewer” has a strong sense of purpose, clear strategies and skills to resolve difficulties, and a sufficient understanding of the change process to alter his/her "helping" behaviors depending on the stage of change experienced by the individual seeking help. The helper is not passive.

The purpose of Motivational Interviewing training is to assist preventionists, counselors, child welfare workers, public health nurses, law enforcement officers, educators, "natural helpers", and others to expand on their existing skills while learning and strengthening new skills to help people change. All of this is done to enhance motivation to change in a positive direction.

**FIVE EARLY STRATEGIES:
“OARS” lead to “CHANGE TALK”**

Open-Ended Questions

Affirmations

Reflective Listening

Summarizing

Eliciting Change Talk

CHANGE TALK

Four Critical Elements...

- 1. Problem Recognition**
- 2. Level of Concern**
- 3. Intention to Change**
- 4. Supporting Optimism**

AMBIVALENCE

Definition of ambivalence

am·biv·a·lence

1. **simultaneous and contradictory attitudes or feelings (as attraction and repulsion) toward an object, person, or action**
2. **continual fluctuation (as between one thing and its opposite)**
3. **uncertainty as to which approach to follow**

Mindsets for Approaching Ambivalence...

- "Lack of motivation" is often ambivalence; both sides are already within the person
- If you argue for one side, an ambivalent person is likely to defend the other
- As a person defends the status quo, the likelihood of change decreases
- Resist the "righting reflex" and temptation - to take up the "good" side of the ambivalence

CONSIDERING RESISTANCE

Definition of Resistance

re-sis-tance

1. refusal to accept something new or different
2. effort made to stop or to fight against someone or something
3. the ability to prevent something from having an effect

"I give him my best advice, but he just ignores what I say and goes off in another direction. Why can't he see that what he is doing is only going to make things worse?"

From the Motivational Interviewing point of view resistance does not reside within the individual, rather, the potential for resistance exists within the interaction relationship created between the "customer" and "helper".

DEALING WITH RESISTANCE

Eight Strategies to Handle Resistance

- 1. Simple Reflection –**
- 2. Amplified Reflection –**
- 3. Double-Sided Reflection –**
- 4. Shifting Focus –**
- 5. Reframing –**
- 6. Agreement with a twist –**
- 7. Emphasizing Personal Control -**
- 8. Siding with the Negative –**

“People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing - that's why we recommend it daily.”

Zig Ziglar