

Motivational Interviewing

The art of exploring ambivalence and awakening inner motivation

*Motivational Interviewing (MI) was developed by Miller & Rollnick.
Its core insight: motivation for change comes from within, not from
being told what to do.*

THE SPIRIT OF MI

MI is less a set of techniques than a way of being. It rests on four principles:

- PARTNERSHIP: You are a companion, not an expert delivering advice
- ACCEPTANCE: Unconditional positive regard, autonomy, and genuine affirmation
- COMPASSION: Prioritising the person's wellbeing above all
- EVOCATION: People have the resources they need — your role is to call them forth

CORE SKILLS: OARS

Open Questions

Questions that invite exploration: 'What matters most to you about this?' 'What would need to change?' 'What has this been like for you?'

Affirming

Genuine recognition of strengths and efforts: 'That took real courage.' 'You've been carrying this thoughtfully.' 'That tells me something important about what you value.'

Reflective Listening

Reflecting back content, emotion, and meaning: 'So what you're saying is...' 'It sounds like a part of you really wants to...' 'You feel [X] because [Y] matters to you.'

Summarising

Bringing together what's been said: 'Let me see if I've understood... On one hand... On the other hand... What do you make of that?'

WORKING WITH AMBIVALENCE

Ambivalence — wanting to change AND wanting to stay the same — is normal. The MI approach explores both sides

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without arguing for change:

- 'What are the good things about how things are now?'
- 'What concerns you about staying the same?'
- 'If things did change, what might be better?'
- 'What matters to you deeply about this?'

When you explore ambivalence with genuine curiosity rather than trying to resolve it, the motivation for change emerges naturally from within.