

PATHWAY TO VACCINE CONFIDENCE:

Addressing Vaccine Hesitancy
Through Motivational Interviewing

September 16, 2025

2:00 - 3:00 pm ET





NCUIH Speaker: Alyssa Smith-Longee, MPH, BSN, RN, CPN (Fort Peck Assiniboine/Sioux)
Guest speaker: Jonathan Kratz, MSW, LCSW

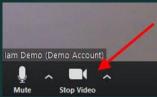
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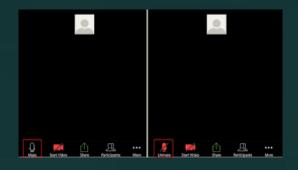
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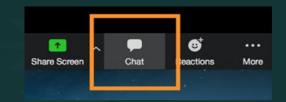




Please mute your microphone when you are not speaking.



Please enter your name, organization, and tribal affiliations (if any) in the chat.



WELCOME!



Agenda

- Overview & Introduction
- 2. Presentation
- 3. Resources
- 4. Open Floor
- 5. Closing

Objectives

- 1. Describe key motivational interviewing techniques, including open-ended questions, affirmations, reflective listening, and summaries (OARS).
- 2. Identify common factors contributing to vaccine hesitancy in AI/AN communities.
- 3. Apply motivational interviewing strategies in clinical conversations about vaccinations.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) recognizes its presence and work within a larger framework of historical and contemporary relationships with Tribes and communities across the United States. NCUIH acknowledges that our national office and nearby activities are situated on the traditional homelands of many Native nations. Some of the communities in the surrounding area include the Piscataway, Pamunkey, Nentego, Mattaponi, Chickahominy, Monacan, and Powhatan peoples. These lands have deep historical, cultural, and spiritual significance to Native peoples.

NCUIH acknowledges that it operates near numerous Tribal Nations and urban Native communities across the country. Our work touches the lives of Native people from diverse Tribal backgrounds, and we are committed to honoring and respecting the unique cultural and historical connections that exist within these communities.

NCUIH is dedicated to promoting the health, well-being, and self-determination of urban Native American communities across the United States. We take our role of supporting these communities seriously and pledge to continue working towards a future of health equity, cultural preservation, and mutual respect.



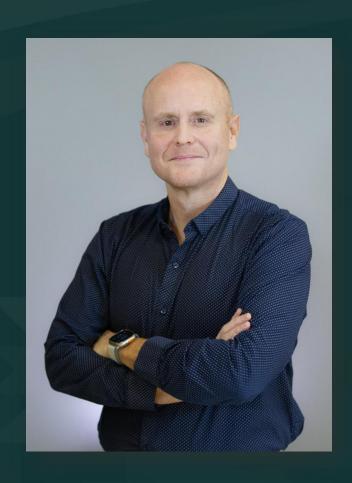
ABOUT



NCUIH is a national representative advocating for the 41 Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) contracting with the Indian Health Service (IHS) under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA). NCUIH strives to improve the health of the over 70% of the AI/AN population that lives in urban areas, supported by quality health care centers.



Please help me in welcoming...



Jonathan Kratz, MSW, LCSW is a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Oklahoma. He teaches across the direct practice curriculum in the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work including courses in mental health, advanced clinical social work, and the integrative seminar. He is a primary investigator for the Healthcare Initiatives Team at the Suicide Prevention Research Center and his work at OU focuses on clinical pedagogy related to Motivational Interviewing, Suicide Prevention/Intervention/Postvention, and High-

Prevention/Intervention/Postvention, and High-Fidelity Clinical Simulations. Jonathan is a member of the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT).

Basics of Motivational Interviewing

Jonathan Kratz, MSW, LCSW
Clinical Associate Professor
Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work, University of Oklahoma

Agenda

- The Fixing Reflex
- The Spirit of MI
- OARS+
- Four Tasks of MI

About Me

- Nothing to disclose
- Fulltime Faculty in School of Social Work (2017-present)
- PI for Suicide Prevention Resource
 Center, Healthcare Initiatives Team
- Member of Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (2020-present)





www.motivationalinterviewing.org

How do we react when people make choices that are harmful to their health?



You need to take your medication every day.



You should cut out sugar and carbs.



You need to exercise more.



You need to get vaccinated.



You need to stop eating so much fast food.



You need therapy.



The Fixing Reflex



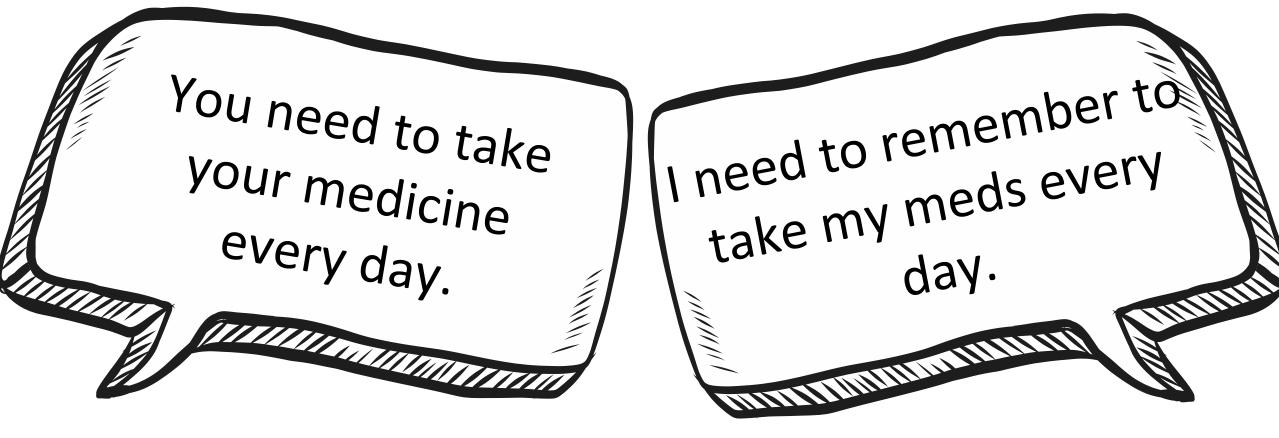


The Things We Notice...

- We may have an aspiration for the patient's health, but it is ultimately their decision.
- We cannot gift motivation to a client, but we can evoke it.
- The words clients say shape behavior:
 - 1. The more they verbalize arguments in support of change, the more likely they are to act on it.
 - 2. The more they verbalize arguments for the status quo, the less likely they are to change.



Fixing VS Evoking





Fixing VS Evoking Cont.

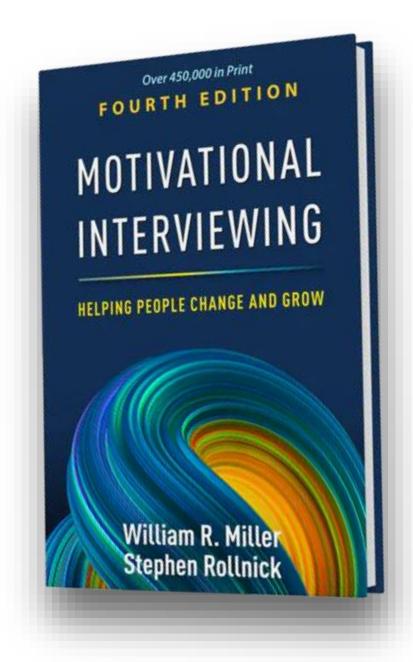




Definition:

Motivational Interviewing is a particular way of talking with people about change and growth to strengthen their own motivation and commitment.





2,000+ **Controlled Trials** 200+ Meta-analyses & systematic reviews



SUBSTANCE MISUSE



CBT

MEDICATION ADHERENCE

SLEEP PROBLEMS

MENTAL HEALTH

ANXIETY

GAMBLING PROBLEMS

SMOKING

WEIGHT LOSS EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

DEPRESSION

SUBSTANCE MISUSE

CARE

COUPLES THERAPY

PARENTING OCD COACHING F

PTSD

CHILD WELFARE

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

NCOURAGING RECYCLING

LEADERSHIP

SEX OFFENDERS

SUICIDE PREVENTION



MI can be helpful in most situations where a person is ambivalent about a behavioral change.



MI & the Stages of Change

Motivational Interviewing Relational Focus

pre-contemplation

Motivational Interviewing,
Relational & Technical

contemplation + preparation

Motivational Interviewing + Treatment

action

Motivational Interviewing + Relapse Prevention

maintenance



Why do people do things that appear to be against their best interest?



Ambivalence





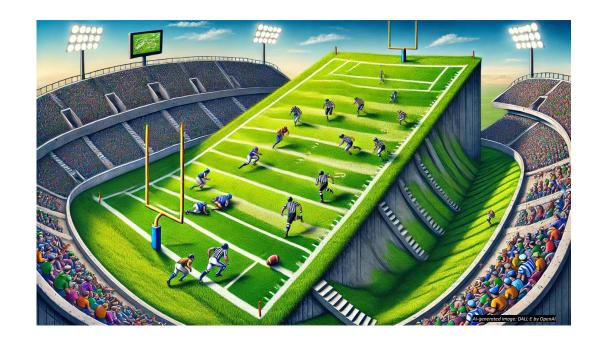


It is normal to struggle with change!



The Problem with Ambivalence

- The status quo has the advantage.
- Default is usually a decision to not change.
- The Blowback Effect and Paradoxical Impact of coercion.





Theory of MI posits:

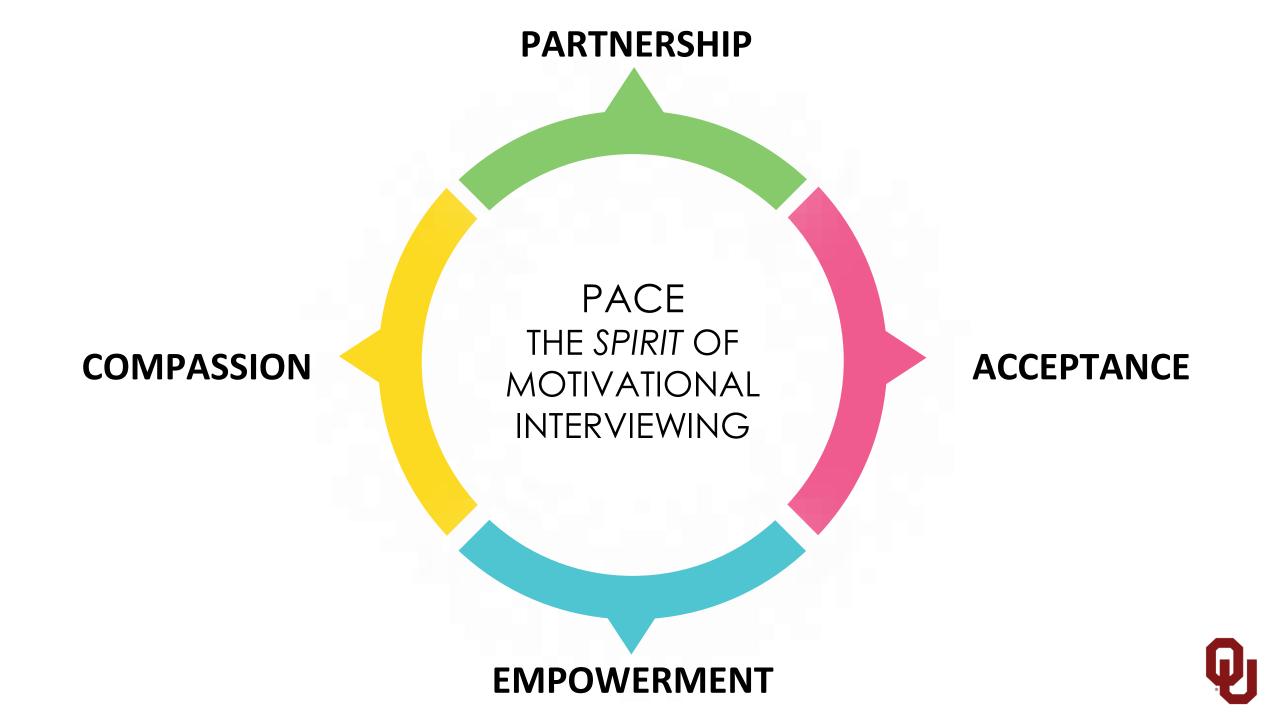
- •MI will increase "change talk" and decrease "sustain talk."
- Verbalization of change talk is directly related to behavior change.
- Verbal defense of the status quo (sustain talk) is inversely related.

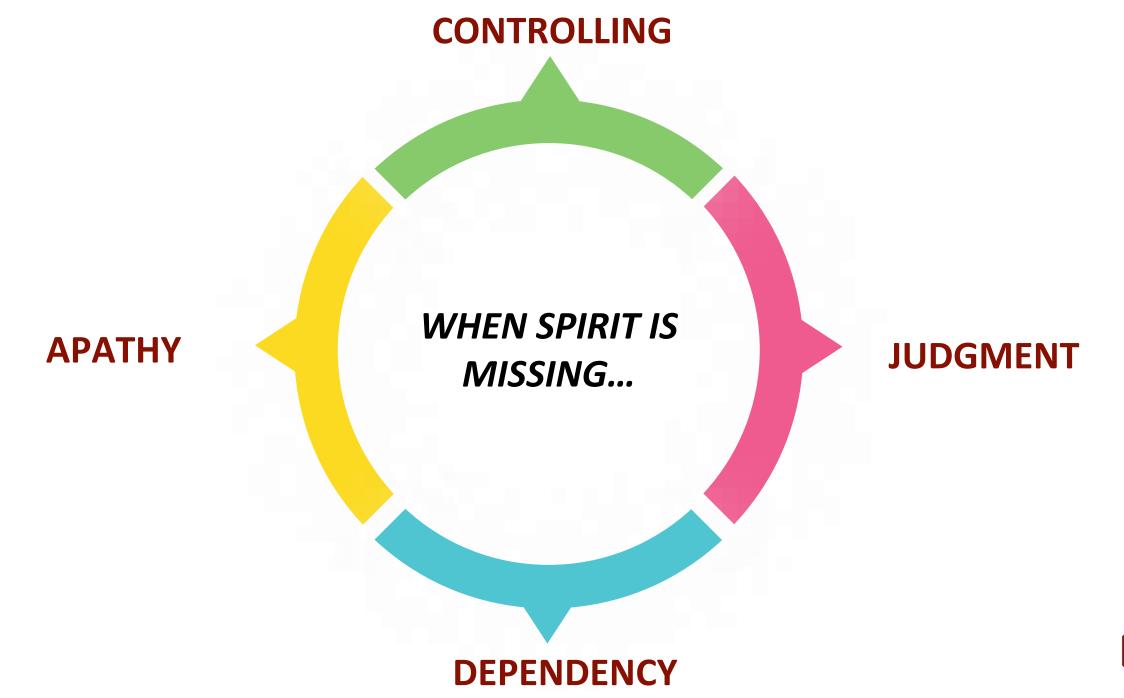


The Basics of MI

- PACE The Spirit of MI
- OARS+ Essential Skills
- 4 Tasks of MI









Foundational Skills

Ask PEN QUESTIONS

Use **R** EFLECTIONS

Add **SUMMARIZATION**

+ GIVE INFORMATION



+Ask, Tell, Ask

- ★ Ask: What do you already know about how this medication works?
- ★ Tell: May I share a bit about the research on how it helps lower blood pressure over time?
- * Ask: How does that fit with your experience so far?



4 Tasks of MI





Task #1: Engagement

- "May I walk with you?"
- Listen to and reflect then patient's perspective (equipoise).
- Understand and reflect the their values and priorities.
- MI Skills: non-directive reflections and open questions.



The Importance of Reflections

THE WORDS
A PATIENT
SAYS

THE WORDS
THE HELPER
HEARS

WHAT THE PATIENT IS EXPERIENCING

REFLECTION

WHAT THE
HELPER THINKS
THE PATIENT
MEANS



Exploring Reflections

Simple Reflections (Surface)

Complex Reflections (Below the waterline)

- Feeling
- Double-sided
- Metaphor
- Affirmation



"I've been depressed lately. I keep trying things other than drinking to help myself feel better, but nothing seems to work, except having a couple of drinks."

You've been feeling down and the only thing that helps is drinking.

Complex, Double-sided Reflection: Drinking helps in the short-term, and part of you recognizes that this may not be a great long-term strategy.



"I've been depressed lately. I keep trying things other than drinking to help myself feel better, but nothing seems to work, except having a couple of drinks."

You've been feeling down and the only thing that helps is drinking.

Complex, Feeling: You're frustrated by the lack of payoff on your hard work.

"I've been depressed lately. I keep trying things other than drinking to help myself feel better, but nothing seems to work, except having a couple of drinks."

You've been feeling down and the only thing that helps is drinking.

Complex, Metaphor: It's like you're covering a wound with a bandaid. Although it temporarily gives the appearance of healing, the wound is becoming infected and it needs more effective treatment than a bandaid can provide.



The Impact of Reflections

NCHECHOID

Simple = *I hear what you are saying*

Complex = *I understand what you mean*

Affirmation = *I see your strengths*

Feeling = *I understand your emotions*

Double-sided = *I hear your ambivalence*



The Impact of Affirmations

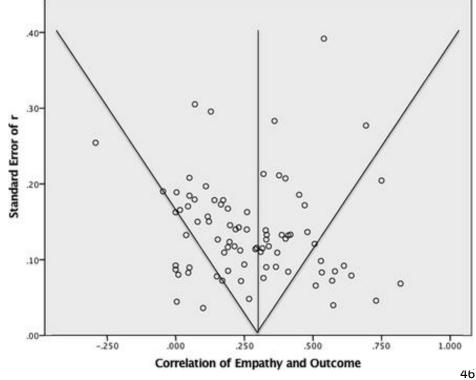
A type of reflection that recognizes a patient's strengths, efforts, or qualities.

- You've managed to keep your blood sugar levels in range more often this month.
 That shows real effort on your part.
- •You've been asking thoughtful questions about your treatment options and that shows how much you care about making the best decision for your health.
- You've made space to come in for your follow-up appointments, and that shows you're prioritizing your health.



Reflective Listening, Affirmations, & Empathy

- Reflections increase empathy.
- Empathy has a strong impact on positive outcomes across wide variety of modalities.



Elliott, R., Bohart, A. C., Watson, J. C., & Murphy, D. (2018). Therapist empathy and client outcome: An updated meta-analysis. Psychotherapy, 55(4), 399-410. doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/10.1037/pst0000175

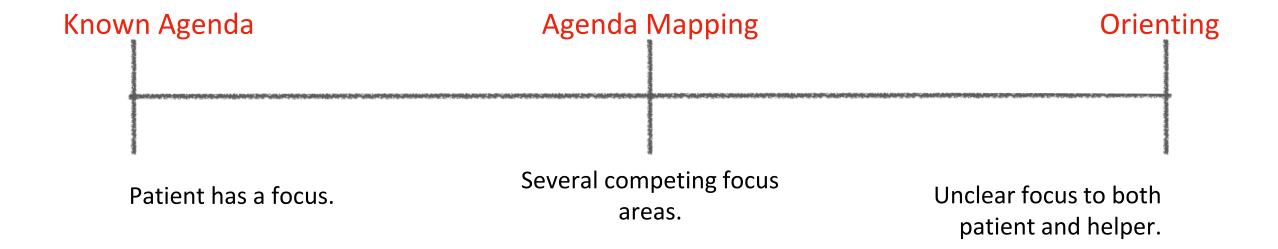


Task #2: Focusing

- "Where are we going?"
- Spirit of Partnership: helping the patient to choose a specific behavioral topic.
- MI requires a shared focus between patient and helper.



Finding the Focus





Example

I'm just so overwhelmed. My blood pressure is too high, and I probably need to start medication. At the same time, my sugar levels keep creeping up, and I've been told I should be more careful about what I eat and get more exercise. I know I should also quit smoking, but it feels impossible right now. It just feels like there's so much wrong with me all at once and I don't even know where to start.

Known Agenda Agenda Mapping Orienting

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Example Cont.

I'm just so overwhelmed. My blood pressure is too high, and I probably need to start **medication**. At the same time, my sugar levels keep creeping up, and I've been told I should be more **careful about what I eat** and **get more exercise**. I know I should also **quit smoking**, but it feels impossible right now. It just feels like there's so much wrong with me all at once and I don't even know where to start.



Example Focusing Response

Many people feel overwhelmed when several health issues come up together. Sometimes it helps to pick one place to start, instead of trying to tackle everything at once. We could spend our time talking more about medication, diet and activity, or smoking...and I'm wondering what feels most important to you right now?



Task #3: Evocation

- "Why might you go there?"
- MI Skills: Directive Open Questions and Reflections
- Goal: To have the patient voice change talk.

Listening for Change Talk

DESIRE - "I want to...", a desire/interest

ABILITY - "I know I can..."

REASONS - "If...then...", incentives/rationale

NEED - "I have to...", importance/necessity



Evoking Change Talk

When you hear it...reflect it!

When it's missing...ask for it!



Evoking with Open Questions

Intentional efforts anchored in the focus.

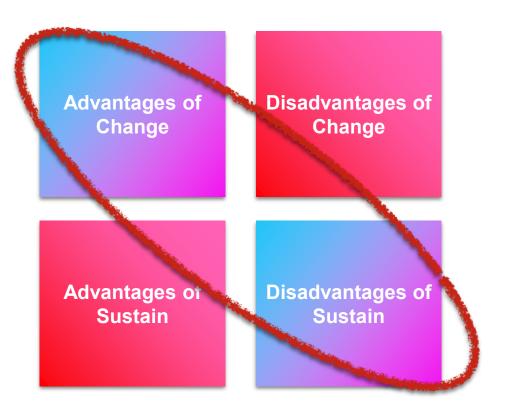
Instead of: Why haven't you changed?

Ask: What are some of the benefits of making

this change?

Instead of: What keeps you from doing this?

Ask: How would you do it if you decided?





Evoking through Reflections

'I really don't want to stop smoking, but I know that I should. I've tried before and it's really hard." **Patient**

"you really don't want to quit smoking." "You're not Helper sure if you can quit." "It's pretty clear to you that you ought 56 to quit."



Example: Evoking through Reflection

I know my blood sugar runs high, but most people eat the same way I do. It's not like I'm eating junk all the time. It's irritating that this cut on my leg is taking so long to heal, but outside of that, I don't think it's as serious as people make it out to be.



Example: Evoking through Reflection Cont.

I know my blood sugar runs high, but most people eat the same way I do. It's not like I'm eating junk all the time. It's irritating that this cut on my leg is taking so long to heal, but outside of that, I don't think it's as serious as people make it out to be.



Example: Evocation Reflection

The way you've been eating feels normal to you, and it would be really upsetting if this wound that has been so slow to heal became infected or worse.



Example 2: Evoking through Reflection

People always say that you're not supposed to drink during pregnancy, but honestly I've been so stressed and a small glass of wine in the evening really helps me relax. One of my friends made a comment about it and that was embarrassing, so I mostly just drink at home. I know people who drank a little during their pregnancies and their babies were fine.



Example 2: Evoking through Reflections Cont.

People always say that you're not supposed to drink during pregnancy, but honestly I've been so stressed and a small glass of wine in the evening really helps me relax. One of my friends made a comment about it and that was embarrassing, so I mostly just drink at home. I know people who drank a little during their pregnancies and their babies were fine.



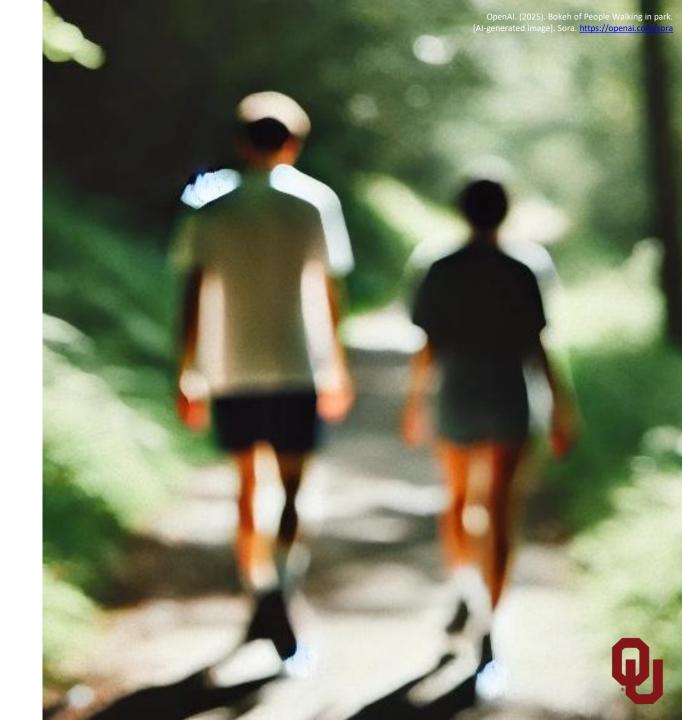
Example 2: Evocation Reflection

It was embarrassing when your friend called you out, and even though you've known other women who used alcohol during pregnancy, part of you worries that maybe they were just lucky... and it would be upsetting if alcohol caused problems for your baby.

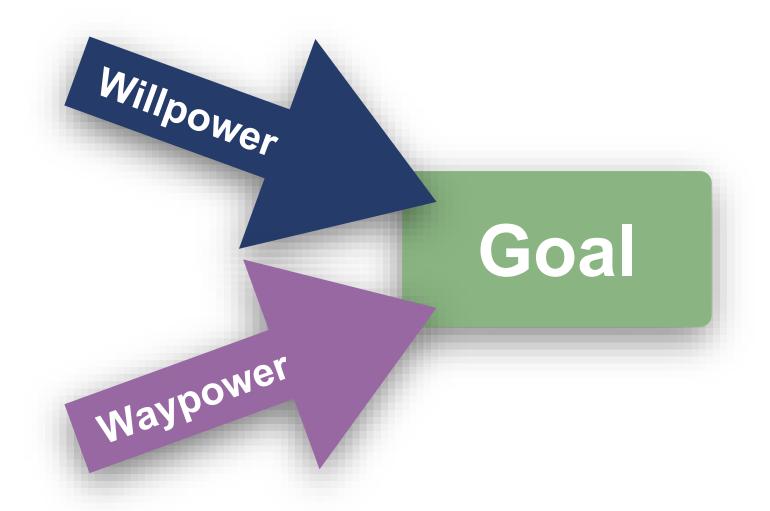


Task #4: Planning

- "How will we get there?"
- MI Skills: Directive Open
 Questions and Reflections
- Goal: To identify specific steps the patient will take to enact the change.



Planning as an Act of Hope





A Conversation That Builds Hope





References

Arkowitz, H., Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (Eds.). (2017). *Motivational Interviewing in the Treatment of Psychological Problems* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

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QUESTIONS?



COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATES



COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATES

- On May 27, 2025, Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
 announced that the CDC would no longer recommend the COVID-19 vaccine for
 healthy children and healthy pregnant women.
- On August 27th, 2025, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. shared on social media, recent approval of updated COVID-19 vaccines.
 - The updates narrow the indications to adults 65 and older and for children and adults with "high-risk" conditions.
 - The CDC has not yet updated their website with the 2025-2026 approved COVID-19 vaccines and indication or use.

- COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations: <u>Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines | COVID-19 | CDC</u>
- Vaccination Schedules: <u>Immunization Schedules | Vaccines & Immunizations | CDC</u>

^{1.} California Medical Association. (2025, September 4). FDA restricts COVID-19 vaccine approval, deepening confusion for physicians and patients. CMA Newsroom. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://www.cmadocs.org/newsroom/news/view/ArticleId/50974/FDA-restricts-COVID-19-vaccine-approval-deepening-confusion-for-physicians-and-patients

^{2.} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2025, June 6). Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccines. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://www.cdc.gov/covid/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html



COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATES CONT'D

- CDC continues to recommend a 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccine for most adults ages 18 and older. Parents of children ages 6 months to 17 years should discuss the benefits of vaccination with a healthcare provider.
- CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has not yet voted on COVID-19 vaccine guidance.
- Next ACIP convening on September 18th and 19th
 - Meeting information available here, including agenda and link to live stream https://www.cdc.gov/acip/meetings/index.html

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>>> Advancing Immunization Leadership







Scan Now to Join!



Motivational Interviewing in the context of vaccination..

Native American Motivational Interviewing:

Weaving Native American and Western Practices

A Manual for Counselors in Native American Communities



Kamilla L. Venner, PhD (Alaska Native) Sarah W. Feldstein, MS

Center on Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Addictions Department of Psychology University of New Mexico

Nadine Tafoya, MSW, LISW (Mescalero Apache)

Nadine Tafoya and Associates Native American Substance Abuse Prevention Programs Technical Assistance and Program Evaluation

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USING PRAYER TO DESCRIBE MI

Guide me to be a patient companion To listen with a heart as open as the sky

Grant me vision to see through (her/his/their) eyes And eager ears to hear his story

Create a safe and open meadow in which we may walk together Make me a clear pool in which he may reflect

Guide me to find in him your beauty and wisdom Knowing your desire for him to be in harmony – healthy, loving, and strong

Let me honor and respect his choosing of his own path And bless him to walk it freely

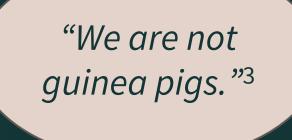
May I know once again that although he and I are different Yet there is a peaceful place where we are one

Venner, K. L., Feldstein, S. W., & Tafoya, N. (2006). <u>Native American motivational interviewing:</u> <u>Weaving Native American and Western practices.</u> A manual for counselors in Native American communities. <u>University of New Mexico</u>, <u>Center on Alcoholism</u>, <u>Substance Abuse and Addictions</u>.

VACCINE CONTEXT IN AI/AN COMMUNITIES

Vaccine Hesitancy/Low Vaccine Confidence

- Historical Trauma
- Discrimination
- Healthcare system distrust
 - Distrust in western medicine
- Lower levels of satisfaction with health care
- Distrust in research
 - Deficit narrative
 - Racial misclassification

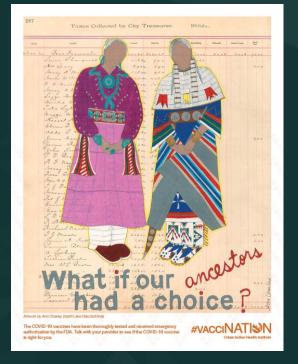


VACCINE STRENGTHS IN AI/AN COMMUNITIES



- Community Strength and deep connection
- Trusted community messaging and providers
 - Culturally responsive messaging
- Respect for Tribal sovereignty
 - Having decision making over public health initiatives
- Rooted value system of protecting elders and relatives





^{2.} National Council of Urban Indian Health. (n.d.). Be a good relative: Get vaccinated. [Poster]. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://ncuih.org/wp-content/uploads/BGR-Vaccine-Campaign-2_NCUIH_D184_V2-Print-Poster.png

^{3.} Urban Indian Health Institute. (n.d.). #vacciNATION Artwork by Avis Charley (Spirit Lake Dakota/Diné) [Poster]. Retrieved [September, 2025], from https://www.uihi.org/resources/vaccination-artwork-by-avis-charley-spirit-lake-dakota-dine/



MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING IN VACCINE CONVERSATIONS



MI IN VACCINE CONVERSATIONS

- Engage patient respectfully and promote collaboration
- Use empathy and consider vaccine burnout
- Utilizing the OARS skills
 - Open-ended questions, affirmation, reflective listening, summarizing
- Simple, strong and personalized recommendations
- Provide science and stories during conversation (if appropriate)

^{2.} PRIME Inc. (n.d.). Motivational interviewing to overcome vaccine hesitance: A step-by-step guide [PDF]. PRIME Inc. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://media.primeinc.org/upload/programs/23WB241/Motivational Interviewing to Overcome Vaccine Hesitance - A Step-by-Step Guide.pdf



SAMPLE CONVERSATION

Background: 40yo relative with a hx of asthma presents to her local UIO for her annual exam.



Engage and Build Rapport

*Use open-ended questions.

Patient

Provider

"It is great to see you again. What's new since the last time I saw you?"

"I have been doing good. The kids are excited to be back in school."

"That's great! Back to school season can be exciting. What are your current priorities for today's appointment?"





Guide and Open a Discussion on Vaccination

*Invite patient to share and use reflective listening.

"You are eligible for your annual COVID-19 vaccine, tell me your past experiences with the COVID-19 vaccine."

"I received it in the past, but I don't want that vaccine anymore, I don't trust it."

"I understand that you have some concerns about trusting the COVID-19 vaccine, could you tell me more about them?"

"Well, the information is always changing, and it doesn't even work.

My sister catches Covid every year, and she gets the vaccine."



3

Share Information

*Ask permission to share information.

"Well, the information is always changing, and it doesn't even work.

My sister catches Covid every year, and she gets the vaccine."

"I hear that you are concerned with the frequent changes to the vaccine recommendations along with feeling it doesn't provide protection. I understand, it can be frustrating when information changes frequently."

"Would it be ok if I provided some information about the COVID-19 vaccine based on what you just shared?"

"Sure, but don't think you can slip a fast one on me doc, ayyy."





Summarize and Plan

*Assess patient's confidence and determine next steps.

"That is interesting, I guess I can see why it could be beneficial for me with my asthma."

"What would you like to do about the vaccination at today's appointment?"

"I still am not sure about it today, but I will think about it."

"I understand and know that your health is important to you. We can revisit the vaccine at another time once you have had time to think about it."

IMPROVE VACCINE CONFIDENCE

with Motivational Interviewing



Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a communication technique used by healthcare providers to help patients make positive health behavior changes. It's especially useful when patients are

hesitant, doubtful or resistant to change. This approach allows providers to engage with their patients using an approach that is patient-centered, non-judgmental, and empathetic. The patient's goals are at the forefront, and through respectful and

collaborative communication, patients are empowered to make informed decisions that focus on their autonomy.

ncuih.org/vaccine

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

STRATEGIES



Build Rapport

Establishes partnership and collaboration.

Example(s): It is great to see you again... How is your day going...What are your priorities today?



Open-Ended Questions

Invites the patient to tell their story and uncovers personal beliefs and fears.

Example(s): What do you already know about the COVID-19 vaccine? Tell me about your previous experience with the COVID-19 vaccine.



Affirmations

Validates the patient's strengths and experiences, and helps build confidence in being involved in their care.

Example(s): Your health is very important to you...You already have a lot of knowledge.



Reflections/Reflective Listening

Invites exploration through active listening, interpreting the conversation, and expressing understanding. Allows the patient to share accuracy of your reflections.

Example(s): It seems that (or I am hearing that) you're afraid of vaccine side effects.



Summaries

Confirms understanding of the interaction and invites elaboration.

Example(s): What matters to you is... This impacts you because...Let's go over what you said about the COVID-19





Motivational Interviewing Skills for Vaccine Confidence

Motivational Interviewing is a communication technique used by healthcare providers that is patient-centered, collaborative, non-judgmental, and empathetic. This helps encourage patients to make positive health behavior changes. OARS are core communication skills frequently utilized in motivational interviewing approaches that can facilitate positive interactions and rapport building with patients.





NEW PODCAST EPISODE!

NCUIH NATIVE HEALTHCAST



PRESENTS

COVID-19 DIAGNOSIS AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS



FEATURING NCUIH SPEAKERS

Alyssa Smith-Longee, MPH, BSN, RN, CPN
(Assiniboine/Sioux - Fort Peck)
Public Health Program Manager



Dr. Kimberly Fowler, PhDVice President of the Technical
Assistance and Research Center

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OPEN FLOOR



One-On-One Technical Assistance Available

https://ncuih.org/training/one-on-one/

- The Technical Assistance and Research Center (TARC) provides individualized technical assistance, training, and support to member UIOs.
- ❖ If your UIO would like further assistance related to COVID-19 vaccines, motivational interviewing, diagnosis and management, and more, submit a <u>TA request form</u> today or reach out to Alyssa Smith-Longee at <u>alongee@ncuih.org</u>.





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UPCOMING EVENTS



Interested in attending more NCUIH events?
Visit <u>ncuih.org/events</u> to learn about more upcoming events, such as:

- October 7, 2025: NCUIH UIO Focus Groups: Setting Policy Priorities for 2026
- October 16, 2025: Using Creative Arts Expression to Explore and Treat Trauma
- October 20, 2025: NCUIH In-Person Event: Urban Indian Organization Caucus + Tacos
- April 27 April 30, 2026: 2026 NCUIH Annual Conference



THANK YOU!

Please provide feedback on today's event by scanning the QR code or using the link in the chat.

This information will also be shared via email.





NCUIH

NATIONAL COUNCIL of URBAN INDIAN HEALTH











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