

Motivational Techniques for the Treatment Court Team: Methods for Compressed Time Frames

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Contractual training (selected list):

- United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNODC), Vienna, Austria
- State Department of Corrections - Kansas – Utah –Oklahoma - New Hampshire – Wisconsin – Wyoming – Michigan – Idaho – Louisiana
- New Zealand Department of Children, Youth & Family, Wellington, NZ
- Virginia Drug Court Association
- Louisiana Association of Drug Court Professionals
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
- New Mexico Association of Drug Court Professionals
- Douglas County Juvenile Drug Court - Omaha, Nebraska
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention(OJJDP)
- University of Missouri-Kansas City
- Manhattan Family Court, New York, NY
- Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT)
- Superior Court of Guam - Agana, Guam
- Puerto Rico Addiction Technology & Transfer Center (ATTC), San Juan, P.R.
- Correctional Services Of Canada
- US Department of State (Mediterranean Section) - U.S. Embassy - Malta
- Brisbane Institute for Strength-Based Practices, Brisbane, Australia

A Six-Pack of Epiphanies: What Treatment Court team members find out when they learn Motivational Interviewing

1. We can make our work harder. If you push, the program participant pushes back. "Getting right to it" and telling a program participant *how* to solve their problems only lengthens our work.
2. Much can be covered in a 10 minute encounter.
3. Behavior change is driven by motivation, not information. "We only change people who give us permission to do so."
4. Almost every piece of advice you might offer has already been thought about, mulled over, and rejected by your program person.
5. Participants will share a lot, quickly, with empathic, attentive listeners.
6. Motivated people solve their own barriers, including those facing mental health and/or AOD challenges.

Reniscow 2007

Motivational Interviewing – Treatment Court Application Guide

In general, Motivational Interviewing (MI) is most useful:

- **(1) When the goal is an observable behavior change.**

MI is a tool for increasing motivation around change. If your goal is primarily to educate, provide information, or gather information, MI is not necessarily the tool. Many of the basic listening skills may be helpful, but the “directional” components of MI are less applicable.

- **(2) When the person is more resistant, angry, or reluctant to change.**

Some program staff take the stance that MI is best for their cooperative participants, but for challenging probationers it's best to use a tough, directive approach. The research suggests just the opposite. Easy clients tend to do well no matter what style you use, but more resistant people benefit more from an MI approach (relative to educational or confrontational approaches). *MI was designed for clients who are more reluctant to change.* When clients are doing well and they want your advice, or simply need help with planning, a direct, advice-giving style may be enough.

- **(3) When the interviewer can separate him/herself from the program participant's attitude, actions, or consequences.**

As every successful practitioner knows, the first step in working successfully with a difficult treatment court client is to separate yourself from the person's own choices. Though you are very willing to assist the person through referrals, advice or assistance, there ought to be a clear understanding that it is the program participant's responsibility to take action. You don't take on yourself, MI helps you – to help them – to take this on for themselves.

All within the context
of a court-mandated process

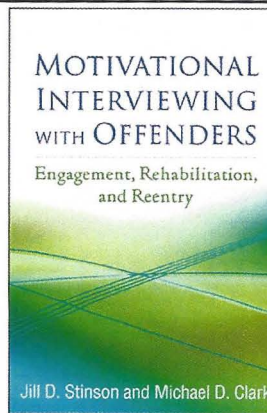
- Punishment and therapy are used in a collaborative process
 - Not positioned as contradictory goals.
 - Sanctions are thought to “augment the treatment process”
- The use of punishment, supervision and sanctions – coupled with treatment – becomes a defining description of treatment courts.

All within the context
of a court-mandated process

- Punishment and therapy are used in a collaborative process
 - Not positioned as contradictory goals.
 - Sanctions are thought to “augment the treatment process”
- The use of punishment, supervision and sanctions – **coupled with treatment** – becomes a defining description of treatment courts.

What to do / What not to do

- The premise of this breakout
- To advance the understanding...
- ***There are limits to a coercive approach.***

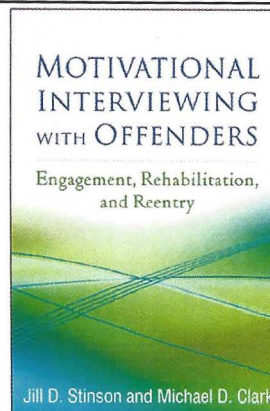


A change
of heart
cannot be
imposed,
it must be
chosen

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What
to
do



What
not
to
do

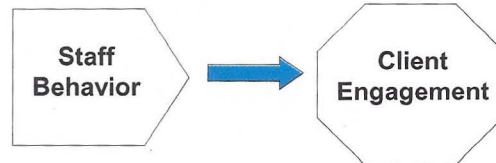
Interviewing Traps with Treatment Court Participants (P)

Trap	What NOT to Say	What TO Say
“Premature Focus Trap” Premature focus on Change (per the Judge’s agenda)	<p>“This problem with your spouse...”</p> <p><i>WHY: Identifies the situation as a “problem” before the (P) has labeled it as such.</i></p>	<p><i>Ultimately you’re the one who has to decide if or how this issue with your spouse will continue. What do you think is the next step for you?</i></p>
“Confrontational-Denial Trap” Arguing the Positive Side	<p>You need to stop making excuses and start this anger management course.</p> <p><i>WHY: Sets up an antagonistic relationship, encourages P to give the counterargument.</i></p>	<p><i>How would things be better for you if you found a way to stop all this trouble?</i></p> <p><i>There’s a part of you that doesn’t feel you need this, but I’ve also heard a part of you that’s tired of this trouble.</i></p>
“The Labeling Trap” Using labels to try and gain an edge – use labels to push change	<p>“C’m on look at your history! Admit it, you’re an alcoholic”</p> <p><i>WHY: See above</i></p>	<p><i>Labels are not important right now. What is important is what you think.</i></p> <p><i>Let’s move past what some people are calling you. I want to hear your thoughts.</i></p>
“The Blaming Trap” Asking Dead or Backwards Questions	<p>Why did you go to that party when you knew it was going to get you in trouble?</p> <p>Did you really think that the police were going to buy that argument?</p> <p><i>WHY: Questions in this format encourage the P to give arguments in support of past behavior.</i></p> <p><i>“Why” questions are actually “who” questions that look to place blame and the session spirals downward</i></p>	<p><i>It sounds like that situation really got you in trouble.</i></p> <p><i>The police didn’t believe you. Now you’re here. What’s your next step(s)?</i></p> <p><i>You believe you got “railroaded” and unfairly convicted by the court. That leaves you frustrated. They placed you in our Treatment Court, so what can we do to finish and get dismissed?</i></p>
“The Expert Trap:” Giving Unsolicited Advice Acting as though the problem would be solved if the program participant would just “listen to reason.” Installing – not eliciting.	<p>You don’t have a job because you’re not putting in enough applications.</p> <p><i>WHY: Sets up an antagonistic relationship, encourages P to give the counterargument.</i></p> <p>You need to get up first thing in the morning, get a cup of coffee, and go in to fill out that application.</p> <p><i>WHY: Encourages P to give the counterargument; Doesn’t encourage P to think about the plan, and thus makes it less likely that P will follow through.</i></p>	<p><i>What ideas do you have as to how you might get a job?</i></p> <p><i>If you decided you wanted to put in a job application, how would you go about that?</i></p> <p><i>Getting a job can be difficult. It’s hard to get into action. So, let’s back up. When you think of getting a job, what do you think about?</i></p>
“The Question-Answer Trap”	<p><i>Using repeated questions without the use of OARS interspaced.</i></p> <p><i>Why a trap? Judge is doing the talking. P is placed in a passive role of answering.</i></p>	<p><i>Avoid the “triple-trouble rule” which cautions a Judge not to use more than 3 questions without a reflection.</i></p>

Today's Techniques -
Consider the 3 Waves in the history of "treatment"

- **1st Wave:** Freud / birth of Psychology
 - Personality is sealed -
 - Problems stem from deep intrapsychic issues.
- **2nd Wave:** Rise of Casework / birth of Social Work
 - Problems are found in everyday living / personality was thought to be fluid and impacted by both nature and nurture
 - Two economic events: 1946 Veterans Admin + 1947 NIH
- **Two things remained the same for both waves...**
- **3rd Wave** = Strength-based Practice (client-centered), Brief Solution-Focused Therapies and MI

Treatment research highlights Motivational Interviewing and the 3rd Wave helping



1,000 + research studies cited that a positive alliance was one of the best predictors of outcome. (Orlinsky, Ronnestad & Willutzki, 2004).

The change attributable to the alliance is 5x to 7x greater than that of specific models or techniques. (Wampold, 2001)

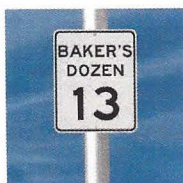
MI and it's ability to help justice staff build the critical relationships with offenders is used in most Correctional Treatments —
but often MI does not get the credit.

- Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS)
- Staff Training Aimed at Reducing Re-arrest (STARR)
- Cognitive-Behavioral Treatments (CBT)
- Thinking for a Change (T4C)
- Strategic Trg. Initiative in Comm. Supervision (STICS)
- Core Correctional Practices (CCP)
- Multi-system Therapy (MST)
- Functional Family Therapy (FFT)

3rd Wave = SBP & Motivational Interviewing

- Shift in expertise and four significant differences gave rise to Brief Therapy:
- 1. **Don't have to know a lot about the problem to begin work at solving it**
- 2. **Emphasis on strengths and resources**
- 3. **Respectful partnership**
- 4. **Hopeful eye to the future**

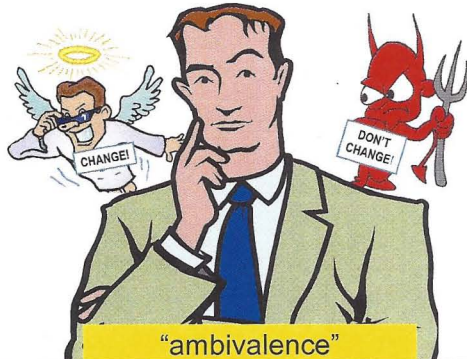
Judicial
Techniques



Techniques from the Brief Therapy models
& Motivational Interviewing

- 3 Types
- (A) **Who are experiencing trouble or regressing,**
- (B) For participants who are losing hope or are overwhelmed
- (C) Several techniques for participants who have made recent progress.

Remember the two-sides to ambivalence



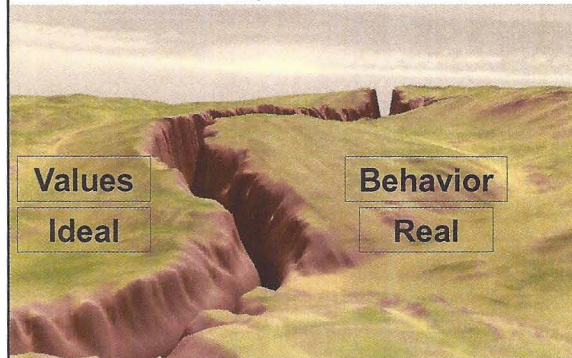
A. Who are experiencing trouble or regressing

- Remember, the person's not the problem...
- More specifically, it's the person's relationship to the problem
 - Being "stuck"

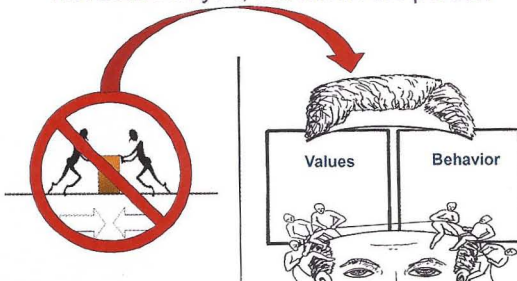
Most positive behavior change occurs as a process – where the offender grapples with these questions – in this order

Should I? → Can I? → Will I? → How Do I?

Discrepancy Values/beliefs *compared to* Behavior/actions



Not *between* you; but *within* the person



"painful present" examines conflict to the valued, important and cherished

1. Survival Questions

- People learn more from mistakes - Explore the lessons from adversity
 - "How have you survived thus far?"
- "What did these troubles teach you about what to do now?"
 - Setbacks are *guides*, not brakes
- This question aids learning about their environment, external resources *and hope*.

2. Exception Questions

- Clients don't notice exceptions
- "Hermit"
- "Purposeful" exceptions

3. Getting Unstuck / "Two Doors Metaphor"

- Mindset to kill, eliminate, defeat the problem
- "Two doors" metaphor



- It's okay to feel shy and it's okay to go to the group therapy anyway"
- "It's okay to feel hopeless and it's okay to keep going"
- "It's okay to feel like you can't do it and it's okay to just keep coming back & try again"

4. "Split Brain" Place Bets On Competency

- I'm really split about your near future, "1/2 of me"....
 - Leave it with -
"Part of me feels that you're up to something big!"

Techniques from the Brief Therapy models & Motivational Interviewing

- 3 Types
- (A) Who are experiencing trouble or regressing,
- **(B) For participants who are losing hope or are overwhelmed**
- (C) Several techniques for participants who have made recent progress.

5. Refer To The Problem As The "Outside Enemy"

- "John, when that 'hassle' of talking back to staff tells you to get into trouble, how will you not listen to it next time?"
- "Mary, when 'being stupid' tells you it's ok to miss important urine drops, how will you fight that so it doesn't hurt you next time?"
- **Don't externalize feelings, only behavior**

6. Percentage Questions

- "Bill, how much of this is you're never going to change or that you're just stuck right now?"
- "How much is this that program staff is against you or how much is it that you just had a bad experience?"
- "Can't stay away from your using buddies or that you just haven't really sat down and talked with someone to figure out a way yet?"

7. Double-Sided Refection

- You don't want to attend that program
'cause you don't think it'll help
- But you do recognize there
are some problems

8. Relationship Questions

- Defendant's *own* perceptions of themselves
(good)
- Defendant's belief of *others* perceptions of
themselves.
(better)

9. Repeat It Back (Write it down!)

- Defendants seldom leave our courtrooms with
the exact info that are presented to them.
- Consider how un-together they can be for
multiple reasons.
- Help them out as best you can by asking them
to repeat "what's important" and writing these
down for them to take with them and refer to.

Techniques from the Brief Therapy models & Motivational Interviewing

- 3 Types
- (A) Who are experiencing trouble or
regressing,
- (B) For participants who are losing hope or are
overwhelmed
- **(C) Several techniques for participants who
have made recent progress.**

10. Re-describe and Blame for Success.

- How did you do this?
–How did you know that would work?
- How did you manage to take this important
step to turn things around?
–What does this say about you?
- Linger over success...my clinical work to
"polish the nugget"

11. Blame for Success - Variation "Expert Consultant"

- Two variations...
- 1. Teach others
- 2. Tell another program participant with the
same problem?

–What would you tell another person
who might have to go through this?

Emphasize Personal Choice and Control
(A note about empowerment)

- Corrections suffers from a reigning – but inaccurate – assumption that defendant's "*don't have a choice.*"
- Defendant's always have the choice to take the consequences

12. Emphasize Personal
Choice and Control

- 1. It's your decision
- 2. Here's what will happen if you.....
- 3. But it's still you choice,
You have control over this.
(What do you think you'll do?)

13. Pre-session Change Question

- From the time of setting up the first appointment and showing up...
- Research at the BFTC (Milwaukee) >66%

Motivational Interviewing (MI): Benefits for Treatment Courts

9 Points to Consider

1. Motivational interviewing aligns your treatment court with evidence-based practice for substance use disorders.

In 2008, MI was listed on the SAMHSA National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs & Practices (NREPP). Adoption of MI allows credibility for using researched-based practice, service integrity across multiple professional domains as well as establishing demonstrations / justifications to funding sources.

2. MI prepares program participants for the work of change.

Program participants need to prepare for change. This is as true for offenders as it is for the rest of us. We are seldom taught to prepare people for change—instead, we jump to problem solving, planning, encouraging positive talk, and the like, ignoring or bypassing the need to orient to change work. This orientation includes raising the participant's sense that change is important to them (beyond avoiding sanctions) and that they have the confidence and ability to make the change(s). Compliance is important, but change must be our final goal.

3. Research finds the use of MI increases (a) engagement and (b) retention in treatment.

Start with engagement or don't start at all. And one of the most consistent findings from addiction studies is that the longer one stays in treatment, the better the outcomes (NDCI, 2008). Starting into treatment (engagement, increasing motivation) and staying in treatment (retention) is a powerful combination.

3. MI equips all treatment team roles to assist change – not just the treatment provider(s).

The unique characteristic of a treatment court is *all program staff* share in the treatment mission (Judge, prosecutor, defense counsel, case manager – probation officer, assessor-treatment provider, etc). Yet few beyond those who occupy traditional treatment roles are adequately trained in how to effectively interact with program participants to increase their readiness to change. *MI allows all roles to increase their treatment skills.* Adds a treatment “multiplier.”

4. MI extends a working knowledge of human motivation and the process of positive human behavior change.

It is frustrating that most treatment court team members (even counselors) lack a working knowledge of human motivation and the process of positive behavior change. MI adoption will build critical knowledge about assisting change that no team member should be without.

5. Motivational interviewing suggests effective ways of handling resistance and can keep difficult situations from getting worse.

Motivation is not a fixed characteristic, like adult height or having brown eyes. Instead, it is a condition or state, and it can be *raised or lowered* by how we interact with program participants. The best sanction is one that never has to be delivered. Teams understand that *all staff* need to develop a supportive counseling style. MI can train all staff, including Judges, lawyers, officers to improve their style of interacting. Learn to work with those who don't want to work with you. 12

6. MI can be a stand-alone or used adjunct to treatment approaches or services already in place.

Treatment courts access a wide-range of community programs for their participants. Use MI as a stand-alone to increase client-engagement and increase the readiness to change. Or, use it adjunct to existing methods or treatments approaches already in place. Your treatment court and the multiple helping domains can all be “on the same page” for language, methods and consistency of service.

7. Efficient use of time-limited interactions.

Constant arguing, persuading or confronting is a poor use of the limited time that team members spend with program participants. MI can improve the value and impact of compressed interactions staff have with program participants. MI is proven to reduce aimless chatter by staff and keep staff-participant conversations focused on objectives and goals (Martino, et al, 2008). We seldom—if ever—change anyone in a short time frame, but MI offers methods and strategies to “raise the odds” and improve the likelihood that short talks will prove helpful.

8. Motivational Interviewing shifts the balance of responsibility, making treatment court staff “agents of change” rather than responsible for change.

Trying to persuade someone to do something they don’t want to do is exhausting, and many treatment team members are exhausted. When MI is practiced correctly, your program participant voices the reasons for change (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). Court personnel have found that using MI lowers their level of frustration and renews commitment and vitality to their work with offenders (Stinson & Clark, in press).

9. Training and coaching resources are readily available to treatment court teams and adjunct treatment court agencies (community stakeholders).

MI has been trained to the addictions field, probation & parole, detention facilities, child welfare, employment services, mental health, schools, juvenile courts, judiciary, attorneys, social work and family counselors. This approach also has fidelity measures to determine if the practice is (a) being used by team members and (b) to what extent. Blended learning formats are also available for sustainability and continued skill building. Adopt-it and keep it growing over time.

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THE IACFP NEWSLETTER

FORMERLY THE CORRECTIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Vol. 45, No. 3

July, 2013



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A Publication of the
International Association for
Correctional and Forensic Psychology

MOVING FROM COMPLIANCE TO BEHAVIOR CHANGE: MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING AND THE FIELD OF CORRECTIONS

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Probation and parole agencies strive to reach several service goals, yet so much of a court's focus can be compacted into two missions of critical importance. The first mission is to stabilize problem behavior and bring into control any behavior that disrupts or threatens our citizens and communities. Courts have a social mandate to bring into control that which is "out of control." The second mission is to assist positive behavior change and to provide assistance to enable adults under supervision to attain optimum health. Both of these missions operate in tandem for the safety of our communities via the development and increased well-being of its citizens.

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is an approach that is gaining notice and popularity across the field of corrections as it helps supervising officers with their mission to assist behavior change. As the name suggests, MI is a method for interviewing clients. However, many who become skilled in its use would argue that it's more than an interviewing method—it informs and influences direct practice efforts as well. Motivational Interviewing first gained prominence in the substance abuse field in the 1980s and found favor in both health care and addiction science due to its ability to enhance client engagement and retention in treatment.

Moving beyond traditional fields of client treatment, disciplines that work with court-mandated clients are also turning to MI.



MICHAEL CLARK

Motivational Interviewing has been embraced by both the U.S. Department of Justice and the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) for its

ability to lessen resistance and increase offender motivation (National Institute of Corrections, 2003). Motivational Interviewing gained a foothold in probation departments in the 1990s, and the use of this approach has been expanding ever since. The answer to why community-based and facility personnel would turn to the strategies and skill sets of MI may be found when one reviews several definitions of the approach. Miller and Rollnick (2002) for example, provide a formal definition of MI as a person-centered, directive method of communication for enhancing intrinsic motivation to change by exploring and resolving ambivalence. Consider two more definitions, in simpler terms:

- It's a way of using questions and statements strategically to help people think and talk in a positive direction.
- It's an easy way of helping people find their own reasons for change.

Beyond a method for interviewing, MI

(Continued on page 3)¹⁴

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING *(Continued from page 1)*

offers direction to the field of corrections in order to answer a critical set of questions:

- How do people change?
- How can staff assist offenders to engage in important alterations in their behavior?
- How can staff lend assistance for enduring behavior change—the type of “self-propelled” change that continues long after the person has been dismissed from court jurisdiction?

It is in the answers to these all-important questions that the utility of an MI approach will be found. Many turn to MI because it represents an investigation into the conditions that build cooperation and increase human motivation, and has been successful in teaching court personnel how to best assist those under supervision towards positive behavior change. Why would correction departments want to implement MI? **Motivational Interviewing provides a structured and proven method for assisting behavior change.**

Go back beyond the last 2 decades and you’ll find that criminal justice suffered from a lack of proven methods for reducing recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2003). Today, it is almost unimaginable that our field ever operated without practice methods being studied and empirically validated through rigorous science. Science-based methods for corrections work were a focus of the NIC’s Evidence-Based Policy and Practice Initiative, which included MI among eight principles of effective interventions that reduce the risks of recidivism (NIC, 2003). The NIC points to confirming research that it’s MI techniques rather than persuasion tactics that motivate individuals both for initiating and maintaining behavior change (NIC, 2003). From NIC’s perspective then, it not only seems reasonable but logical that corrections departments and others in the field, including court services, might benefit from using MI techniques.

Motivational Interviewing can help staff get back into the game of behavior change.

Historically, motivation has been viewed as a more-or-less fixed characteristic of clients. That is, an offender is usually presented with a certain motivational profile, and until he/she was ready to make changes there was not much you could do to influence shifts in behavior. Under this model, the supervising officer becomes an enforcer of the court’s orders, but not necessarily an active participant in the offender’s behavior change. Motivational Interviewing teaches justice staff that motivation is not a fixed trait—something you either have or you don’t. Instead, motivation is more akin to a “state” and a state that can be influenced.

Motivational Interviewing suggests effective tools for

handling resistance and can keep difficult situations from getting worse.

Since motivation has been viewed more like a fixed trait of the defendant, it has been thought that if persons enter probation departments displaying little motivation, then the best strategy is to attempt to break through their denial, rationalization, and excuses:

- “You’ve got a problem.”
- “You have to change.”
- “You’d better change your ways, or else!”

Space prohibits a review of the many studies that have found that a confrontational counseling style limits effectiveness. Miller, Benefield, and Tonnigan (1993), however, found that a directive-confrontational counselor style produced twice the resistance, and only half as many positive client behaviors as did a supportive, client-centered approach. Problems are compounded as a confrontational style not only pushes success away, but can actually make matters worse. Although many probation staff rightly object, “We’re not counselors!—our job is to enforce the orders of the court (maintain facility safety),” this claim only serves to highlight the need for strategies to help staff get back in the game of behavior change.

Motivational Interviewing keeps officers from doing all the work, and makes interactions more change-focused.

Interactions are more change-focused when the officer understands where change comes from. Staff trained in MI can turn away from a confrontational style or logic-based approach as they learn about the process of behavior change. Many in probation believe that what causes change are the services provided to the offender, whether that involves treatment, the threat of punishment, advice, education, or monitoring their activities. These conditions and services represent only part of the picture—and not necessarily the most important part. Research shows that long-term change is more likely to occur for intrinsic reasons (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Often the things that we assume would be motivating to the offender simply aren’t. Thus, motivation is, in part, a process of finding out what things are valued and reinforcing to the individual under supervision.

Change-focused interactions place the responsibility for behavior change on the offender. During MI training, we use an attractive (and accurate) phrase: “When MI is done correctly, it is the offender who voices the arguments for change.” The first step in getting the individual thinking and talking about change is by staff establishing an empathic and collaborative relationship, which includes watching and

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listening to find out what the person values and if his or her current behavior is in conflict with these deeply-held values.

Motivational Interviewing calls our attention to this key idea:

It is discrepancy that underlies the perceived importance of change; no discrepancy, no motivation. The discrepancy is generally between present status and a desired goal, between what is happening and how one would want things to be (one's goals).

It is within this discrepancy that the material will be found for amplifying the defendant's own reasons for change. When working with offenders who see no problem with their illegal behavior, it is essential that an officer have the skills to create an "appetite" for change. Creating this appetite for change involves creating ambivalence.

Motivational Interviewing will change who does the talking.

Motivational Interviewing techniques focus on strategically steering a conversation in a particular direction—yet steering in itself is worthless without the ability to move the conversation forward. Consider how probation officers often work much harder than their probationers. As part of a qualitative research project, Clark (2005) videotaped actual office appointments between probationers and their assigned supervising officers. The finding was that, in office visits averaging 15 minutes in length, officers "out-talk" their probationers by a large margin. For instance, in one session, 2,768 words were spoken between officer and offender. The breakdown? The officer spoke a hefty 2,087 words out of this total while the probationer spoke only 681 words. Although listening by itself is no guarantee of behavior change, using strategies to get the person talking is a prerequisite to being an effective motivational interviewer.

In interactions like this, officers are literally talking themselves out of effectiveness. The problem is not so much that the officer is doing all the talking, but rather that the offender is not. It stands to reason that the more the officer is talking, the less opportunity there is for the person who is under supervision to talk and think about change. Compliance can occur without the officer listening and the offender feeling understood—the same cannot be said if one wants to induce behavior change.

Postscript

Motivational Interviewing can enable courts and facilities to help clients build commitment and reach a decision to change. Rather than remaining "stuck" in the problem, court

staff using Motivational Interviewing techniques can move those we work with toward healthier outcomes.

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