

# MI & Stages of Change Core Principles

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## Progressing Toward Change

1. All people want to be happy and healthy
2. All clients possess some motivation to change and some ambivalence
3. Clients are ready to change when they are both willing (motivated) and able (confident)
4. The goal is to help clients move through the **stages of change** (helping them get “ready”):
  - a. Precontemplation
  - b. Contemplation
  - c. Preparation
  - d. Action
  - e. Maintenance
  - f. Relapse
5. Readiness, motivation, confidence, and ambivalence fluctuate
6. Resistance is the client saying “no” to a treatment request; it can be used to better understand the client’s needs, interests, values, and stage of change
7. When clients are ready, they can then be helped to develop and troubleshoot a change plan

## MI Spirit

1. Collaboration instead of confrontation
2. Evocation instead of education
3. Autonomy instead of authority

## MI Core Strategies – READS

1. Roll with resistance – resistance is the conflict between the intervention and the client’s needs, interests, values, and readiness to change; it is a healthy part of the change process
2. Express empathy – by expressing non-judgmental attitudes towards clients’ attitudes towards change (positive or negative), clients feel supported enough to change
3. Avoid argumentation – arguing for change forces clients to argue against change
4. Develop discrepancy – helping clients identify their own desires for change by identifying conflicts between their behaviors, values, needs, interests, and/or goals
5. Support self-efficacy – it is not enough to have motivation (be “willing”); clients must also feel confident in their ability to change (feel “able”); the counselor is a cheerleader who builds on any positives that clients present

# MI Skills

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## Essential MI Skills – OARS

1. Open-ended questions – questions that do not invite short answers
2. Affirmation – supporting the client
3. Reflections – statements expressing a listener’s reasoned guesses about a speaker’s intended meaning
  - a. Simple reflections
  - b. Amplified reflections
  - c. Double-sided reflections
4. Summaries
  - a. Collecting summaries
  - b. Linking summaries
  - c. Transitional summaries

## Additional MI Techniques

1. Amplified reflection
2. Double –sided reflection
3. Asking evocative questions
4. Pros and cons
5. Elaborating
6. Asking about extremes
7. Looking back
8. Looking forward
9. Exploring goals and values
10. The confidence/importance ruler
11. Reviewing past successes
12. Identifying personal strengths and supports
13. Brainstorming
14. Giving information and advice (with client permission only)
15. Reframing
16. Considering hypothetical change
17. Considering radical change
18. Shifting focus
19. Agreeing with a twist
20. Emphasizing personal choice and control
21. Coming alongside/siding with the negative

## Techniques for Responding to Resistance

1. OARS
2. Amplified reflection
3. Double-sided reflection
4. Shifting focus
5. Reframing
6. Agreeing with a twist
7. Emphasizing personal choice and control
8. Coming alongside/siding with the negative