

Motivational Interviewing
Basic Strategies

Strategy	Description
Ask Open-Ended Questions	<p>Open-ended questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot be answered “yes” or “no” or with one or two words; • Are not rhetorical; • Elicit clients’ feelings about a given topic or situation; • Solicit additional information in a neutral way; and • Encourage the client to do most of the talking.
Affirm Clients	<p>Affirming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports and promotes the client’s sense of self-efficacy; • Acknowledges his or her difficulties; • Validates his or her experiences and feelings; and • Emphasizes experiences that demonstrate strength, success, and power.
Listen Reflectively	<p>Reflective listening involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a reasonable guess about what the client means; • Rephrasing the client’s statement to reflect what the counselor thinks he or she heard; • Continuous tracking of the client’s verbal and non-verbal responses and their possible meanings; • Understanding the communication style of the client’s culture; • Formulation of reflections at the appropriate level of complexity; and • Ongoing adjustments of the clinician’s hypotheses about the client’s behavior.
Summarize	<p>Summarizing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distills the essence of what a client has expressed; and • Communicates it back to the client.
Elicit and Reinforce Change Talk	<p>Reinforcing a client’s change talk includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting the statement; • Nodding or making approving facial expressions; • Making affirming statements; • Asking for elaboration, explicit examples, or more details; • Using questions beginning with “What else?”; and • Asking the client to identify the extremes of the problem (“What are you most concerned about?”).