

Conversations That Invite Change: A Motivational Approach for Working with People

Facilitators: Julie Kalina-Hammond, MSSW, LISW-S
Deana Leber-George, M.Ed., LPCC-S

Methods & Materials: Lecture, Small and Large Group Discussion, Guided Applied Case Study

Objectives

1. Describe the provider's role within motivational conversations, identifying how to recognize and constructively respond to a client's ambivalence, shame, and avoidance regarding gambling harm.
2. Demonstrate foundational, provider-led MI skills, including open questions, affirmations, reflective listening, and summaries, to deliberately lower resistance and establish a safe therapeutic alliance.
3. Identify, elicit, and reinforce a client's own "change talk" by using at least two targeted provider strategies that highlight discrepancies and honor personal autonomy.
4. Apply stage matched, individualized interventions that skillfully navigates sustain talk when present, reinforces incremental progress with behavior change and avoids discord.

Program Description

As providers, our role isn't to force change, but to create the conversational conditions where change becomes possible. When working with gambling-related harm, practitioners often face a complex web of client ambivalence, shame, and avoidance. This interactive, 3-hour breakout session shifts the focus onto the provider's unique role as a collaborative guide, exploring how our responses can either de-escalate resistance or inadvertently reinforce it.

Participants will examine the core elements of motivational conversations, learning how to intentionally position themselves to support client autonomy. Through practical skill-building, you will master foundational, MI-consistent tools, such as strategic open questions and reflective listening, to de-escalate tension and build immediate rapport. This workshop will empower you to actively listen for, evoke, and amplify "change talk," while giving you the framework to deliver brief, stage-matched interventions. Discover how adapting your approach to a client's readiness can effectively disarm sustain talk and help you steady individuals through the incremental milestones of recovery.

Eligible for 3 CEUs from the Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals Board (OCDPB)