

## **Motivational Interviewing**

### **Adapted by Teresa Hicks to support Wellness Education**

#### Helpful Materials

Handout on last page of this activity guide.

#### Number of Participants

This activity has been done with small groups of people during community health worker trainings.

#### Amount of Time

30 minutes

The purpose of this activity is to invite participants to experience motivational interviewing as a way to support people to make personal health choices.

Start with the activity before explaining anything about motivational interviewing.

Have people work in pairs: Participants choose who will role play being the client and who will role play being the community health worker (CHW).

Client role: Identify a change that you are considering, something you are thinking about changing in your life, but have not definitely decided. It will be something you feel two ways about. It might be a change that would be “good for you”, that you “should” make for some reason, but you have been putting it off.

Give people a minute to think.

#### *First Part*

CHW role: You are to try as hard as you can to persuade this person to make the change that would be good for them. This is a serious matter.

1. Explain WHY the person should make this change.
2. Give at least three specific BENEFITS that would result from making this change.
3. Tell the person HOW they could make the change.
4. Emphasize how IMPORTANT it is for them to make the change. This might include the negative consequences of not doing it.
5. Tell/persuade the person to do it.
6. If you encounter resistance, repeat the above steps with more emphasis.

After people have had about 5 minutes to role play, ask them to write down how they felt about this interaction without discussing how they are feeling.

### *Second Part*

The CHW and the client keep their same roles.

CHW role: Don't try to persuade or fix anything. Don't offer advice. Instead ask these five questions one at a time, and LISTEN VERY carefully to what the person says:

1. Why would you want to make this change?
2. If you did decide to make this change, how might you go about it in order to succeed?
3. What are the three best reasons for you to do it?
4. How important would you say it is for you to make this change, on a scale from 0-10, where 0 is not at all important, and 10 is extremely important? You can use the talking tool at the end of this activity to support this part of the conversation. (Follow up question: And why are you at \_\_\_\_\_ rather than a lower number?)
5. After you have listened carefully to the answers to these questions, give back a short summary of what you heard about the person's motivation for change. Then ask one more question: So what do you think you'll do? Then listen with interest to the answer.

After people have had about 5 minutes to role play, ask them to write down how they felt about this interaction without discussing how they are feeling.

Together, discuss participants' experience.

How does the second way of supporting a person compare to the first conversation?

What was the difference?

How did you feel after each experience?

Which situation would better support you to make a health change and why?

