

## Ten Strategies for Evoking Change Talk

### 1. Ask Evocative Questions – Use Open-Ended Questions

*Examples:*

- Why would you want to make this change? (Desire)
- How might you go about it, in order to succeed? (Ability)
- What are the three best reasons for you to do it? (Reasons)
- How important is it for you to make this change? (Need)
- So what do you think you'll do? (Commitment)

### 2. Ask for Elaboration

*When a change talk theme emerges, ask for more detail:*

- In what ways?
- How do you see this happening?
- What have you changed in the past that you can relate to this issue?

### 3. Ask for Examples

*When a change talk theme emerges, ask for specific examples.*

- When was the last time that happened?
- Describe a specific example of when this happens.
- What else?

### 4. Looking Back

*Ask about a time before the current concern emerged:*

- How have things been better in the past?
- What past events can you recall when things were different?

### 5. Look Forward

*Ask about how the future is viewed:*

- What may happen if things continue as they are (status quo).
- If you were 100% successful in making the changes you want, what would be different?
- How would you like your life to be in the future?

### 6. Query Extremes

*Ask about the best and worst case scenarios to elicit additional information:*

- What are the worst things that might happen if you don't make this change?
- What are the best things that might happen if you do make this change?

### 7. Use Change Rulers

*Ask open questions about where the client sees themselves on a scale from 0 – 10.*

- On a scale where one is not at all important, and ten is extremely important, how important (need) is it to you to change \_\_\_\_\_?
  - Follow up: Explain why you are at a \_\_\_ and not (lower number)?

## Motivational Interviewing Handout

- What might happen that could move you from \_\_\_\_ to a \_\_\_\_ [higher number]?
- How much you want (desire),
- How confident you are that you could (ability),
- How committed are you to \_\_\_\_ (commitment).

### 8. Explore Goals and Values

*Ask what the person's guiding values are.*

- What do they want in life?
- What values are most important to you? (Using a values card sort can be helpful here).
- How does this behavior fit into your value system?
- What ways does \_\_\_\_\_ (the behavior) conflict with your value system

### 9. Come Alongside

*Explicitly side with the negative (status quo) side of ambivalence.*

- Perhaps \_\_\_\_\_ is so important to you that you won't give it up, no matter what the cost.
- It may not be the main area that you need to focus on in our work together.

### 10. Best Case- Worst Case Scenario

Worst-case scenario

- “What’s the worst thing that might happen if you keep up your drinking?”

Best-case scenario

- “What’s the best situation you can imagine for yourself if you quit drinking?”