

# Motivational Interviewing: Techniques for Supporting our Clients through COVID-19

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# Motivational Interviewing: What is it?

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is an evidence-based<sup>1</sup>, client-centered counseling technique.

- Clients are the experts in their own lives and have the answers
- Conversational, not interrogative
- Directive, not authoritative

Our job is to *guide* our clients through the decision-making process.

<sup>1</sup>Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

# Using MI with COVID-Vulnerable Populations

- Increased risks for (1) individuals having substance use disorders, (2) people with chronic respiratory conditions, (3) older individuals, (4) people not residing in permanent settings, (5) incarcerated persons, (6) individuals in unstable marital relationships, and (7) health care workers
- Many of the above individuals lack access to health care resources and social support which further increases the health care risks.

# The “Dilemma” Exercise

Imagine you are having a dilemma about something (real or otherwise) that you have been mulling over for days or weeks or months.

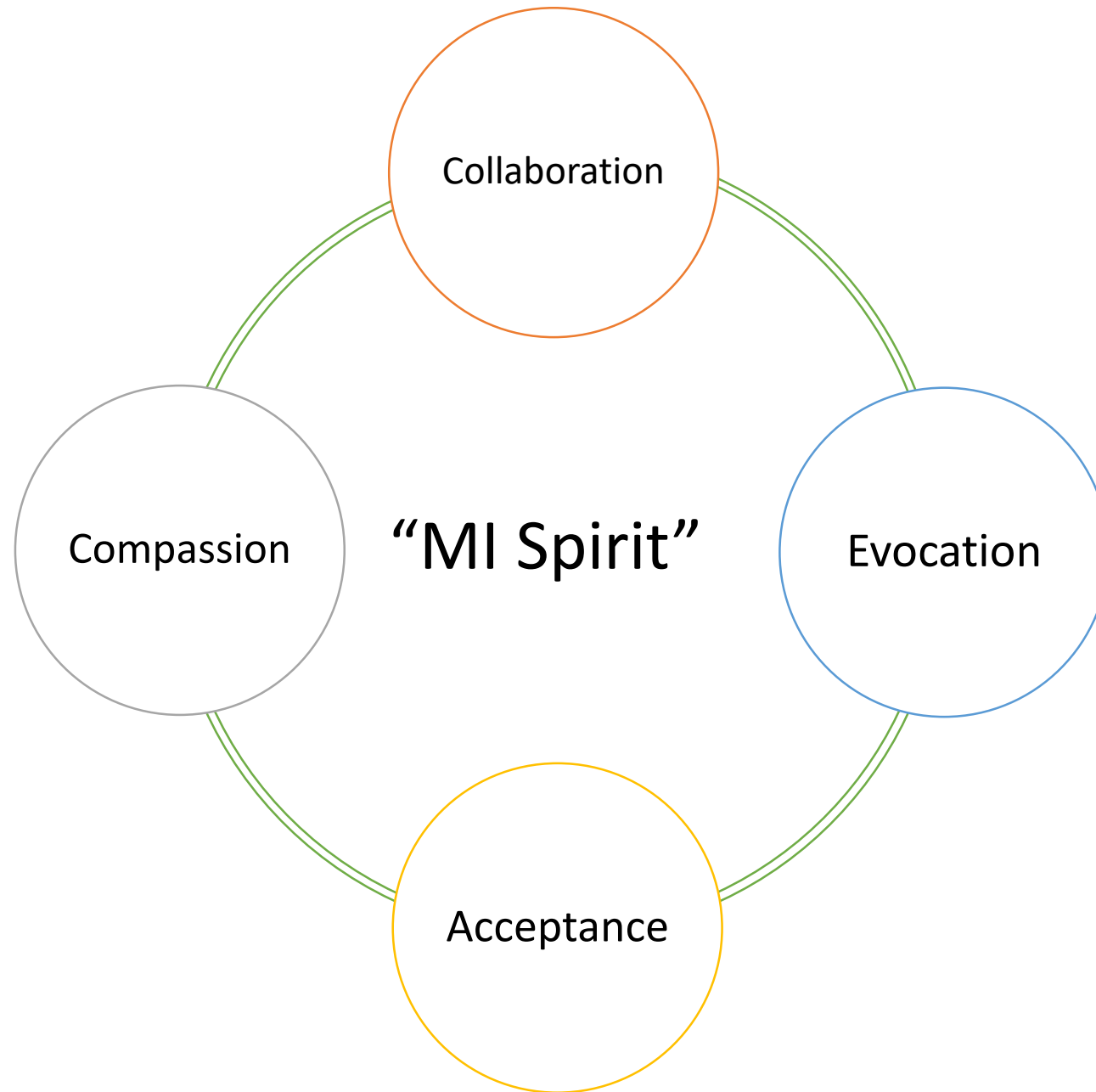
You are feeling stuck and you decide to meet with a friend to discuss your dilemma.



# Using the chat box...

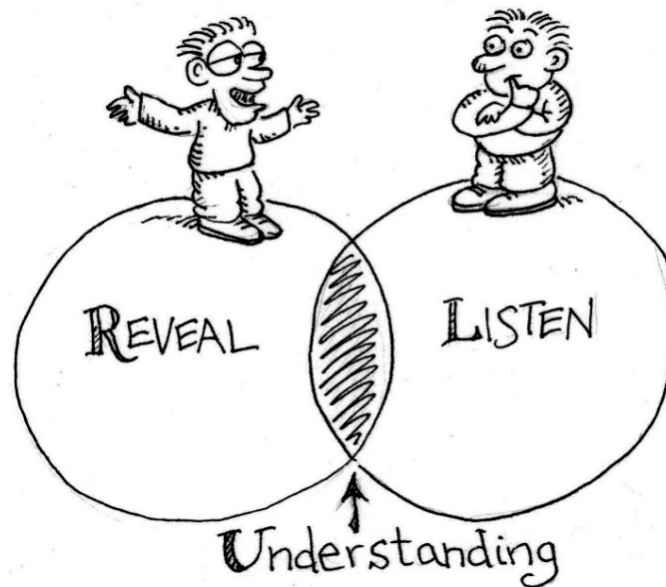
...tell us the characteristics of the person with whom you would like to discuss your dilemma.





# “Asking: What Matters?”

How do we communicate to a person that we are listening, and show an understanding of the meaning of the person’s words?



# The Short Answer: Reflections!

- Reflections are *statements* that capture the essence or an understanding of the message being communicated behind a person's words
- They are used *in place of* questions
  - Questions can work against creating positive ties between the parties involved. Why?

Reflections communicate your understanding and are crucial to relationship-building, evoking clients' self-efficacy and determining *from them* what is important.



# “Doing What Matters”: E.A.R.S



- ✓ **Elaborate**: “tell me more about;” encourages more details, intentions, elaboration, and about advantages and disadvantages
  - ✓ Looking back and looking forward
  - ✓ Scaling question
- ✓ **Affirm**: reinforce it; encourage and support it; comment favorably on it (without sounding patronizing or judgmental)
- ✓ **Reflect**: restate it; accept it, acknowledge it, continue the paragraph.
- ✓ **Summarize**: collecting bouquets of change talk; gather the change statements offered and ask him/her to affirm and reaffirm his/her commitment

# Delilah's Dilemma

- Delilah is in trouble...
  - Danielle and Elba will demonstrate both an MI-consistent and an MI-inconsistent response to the dilemma
- Take note of the differences between the interactions
  - How does Delilah act in scenario one versus scenario two?
  - How productive is the dialogue?
  - Is Delilah better off as a result of the conversation?

# Questions? Comments?

“In the realm of culture in America, white European culture has held the floor for centuries; just as with any one-sided conversation, a balance can only be achieved if the speaker who has dominated speaks less and listens more.”

-David Mura

Thank you!

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