

## Introduction to Motivational Interviewing

### What is Motivational Interviewing?

Motivational Interviewing is a Behaviour Change Model, used widely in a number of health & social care settings with over 750 randomised controlled trials now evidencing a significant impact around behaviour change. Essentially it is a style of conversation, with some distinctive key elements and processes which can improve a person's likelihood of making a change. The main approach is to elicit and strengthen a person's own motivations for change.

### How might it be useful to me as a Carer?

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is not something just aimed at academics! Whilst some of the ways to apply MI can be more complex, the basis of MI is straightforward and generally not difficult to understand. Mastering the skills is definitely something that requires time and practice but there will be plenty of time for this in the session (and when you go home!) You should certainly be able to leave the training with some new ideas and approaches.

It can be a challenge to use MI within depression and psychosis. There are definitely some limitations to MI, however as I tried to use some of the skills with the person I cared for I discovered that MI is an effective tool. I felt it gave me something to say when I didn't know what else to do, I felt that I was finally able to 'do something helpful' for myself and them. I found it was a way of reducing tension and arguments and also reducing my own stress by learning to step back and facilitate someone else's thinking rather than feel responsible for 'persuading' or 'convincing' the person I cared for to make certain changes. My relationship with that person improved and my methods of supporting change became a lot more effective.

### Who is the trainer & training organisation?

My name is Suzanne Bardsley and I work for the National Centre for Behaviour Change and have been delivering Motivational Interviewing training for some time. I am also a carer myself and it was through using some of the approaches within my conversations with the person I care for that I began to realise how certain elements of MI may be useful to other carers.

### What are the expectations within the training session?

Just that you come with an 'open' mind, looking to see what you might be able to find that is useful to take away. There are occasions when MI may not be the best approach to use and so it can be easy to focus on when it may not work rather than when it may work/be useful. It's helpful to evaluate, question ideas and consider the application of approaches, as this is how we learn (and we welcome that in the session), but if we can do that in a positive and helpful way then we can all learn whilst enjoying the day. It's much better when we can have an interactive session with lots of positive discussion and feedback; keeping things constructive and on-task is something that all of us need to focus on together to benefit everyone.

It's important to me that you walk away from the training feeling inspired, thoughtful, more skilled and excited about trying out your new tool kit! Please also bear in mind the others in the group as well as yourself, being sensitive and considerate to others who may have different viewpoints, and

compassionate to yourself if you find certain topics difficult. Please only share what you feel you would want to and if you need to step out if you're finding any topics difficult then of course that's completely fine; we will do our best to support you as much as you need.

MI is a practical tool and as such we will need to take time to practice the skills within the session. Please try to be brave and have a go, everyone is learning and there is no expectation that you won't make mistakes. We can all learn as we go along in a supportive atmosphere and have fun as we practice. Although you can opt-out of activities if you need to, we'd really like it if you can get involved and get stuck in as much as possible as this is the best way to learn and you are most likely to make progress if you get involved.

Ultimately we want our training session to take place in a warm and nurturing atmosphere with everyone demonstrating respect and kindness to one-another. It is our hope that you will be glad you came and feel that the two days are enjoyable and useful and it is my hope that your new skills may change the way you have your conversations in the future.

**Thank you for taking time to read this and I'm looking forward to meeting you,  
With Best Wishes, Suzanne**

*If you have any questions or need further information please don't hesitate to contact me on: [suzanne@ncbc-uk.com](mailto:suzanne@ncbc-uk.com)*

### **Comments from previous carers who attended the Introduction to MI:**

*"Motivational Interviewing is a tool which allows supporters use of skills to work with stuck and negative behaviours without the use of control or trying to fix. Supporters...rarely have the opportunity to learn a skill that, with practice, can be used in their everyday life. Loved it, more please"*

*"Thank you...I really found value in it and will put some of what I have learnt into everyday practice now"*

*"I feel very privileged to have been able to attend this course. It has allowed me to refresh my skills and has inspired me to be more mindful of how I communicate with my cared for person, giving me skills and confidence to take a more compassionate and constructive approach to encouraging change and moving towards recovery."*

*"I have found the shared learning experience particularly helpful. It has helped me also to feel valued myself as a carer, as it feels like an investment in improving my ability to deal with some difficult situations. I have really loved spending time talking with other carers too".*

*"Learning the basics of this approach feels like such an important skill which would be life changing. Very grateful for this opportunity"*

*"MI has given me so many skills/tools to help me care for my mum. I wish I had these tools many years ago, I believe that these skills will help my mum and myself to live a more settled life, without me pulling and pushing and not understanding! More MI would be fantastic!"*

*"I have enjoyed this course immensely, so pleased that I have had the privilege to be part of the group - there is so much I have learnt and I am sure without a doubt, I'll be able to handle complex situations much better and in a more positive way. Thank you...it has been a joy".*