

Motivational Interviewing Demonstration (Part 1)

Background: This session highlights the application of MI in crisis services. In this 20 minute segment, the Interviewer (I) works with “Melinda” (M) in a role play to explore suicidal and self-harming thoughts. The processes of Engaging, Focusing, and Evoking are demonstrated. (Part 2 will demonstrate Planning.)

Instructions: Using the space provided, please note how the Interviewer demonstrates MI spirit (collaboration, evocation, support autonomy, empathy, acceptance, compassion) and OARS skills (Open question, Affirmation, Reflection, Summary). Also, underline or note any specific change talk (DARN CAT) heard from Melinda.

1	I: Well, Melinda, thank you for coming in to crisis services, and tell me about what’s going on for you.	Begin Engaging.
2	M: Well, the holidays are always really difficult for me. A lot has happened in my life. When I was 13 my dad died on December 14 th so the holidays have just kinda been a difficult time. And this year is my first year back in the workforce – I’ve been on disability for like the last 17 years – so I was excited but I had a week of vacation time to burn because I didn’t take it during the year. So I took it the week before Christmas and now I’ve been off and it’s been a really difficult couple of days with the holidays coming. I have been feeling really alone and not knowing who to talk to or what to do or just feeling like I don’t have any connection to anybody right now. My sister’s been going out and doing things with mutual friends and not involving me and I just start to have some thoughts about dying, wanting to die, feeling like I didn’t belong in the world anymore, and feeling like I have no purpose and that nobody really wants me around. And so I used to do a lot of cutting. I do a lot of crafts and crocheting and I’ve been doing some of that stuff and doing some sewing and – my mom died last year in October – and so I’m making memory pillows with her clothes. And so I’ve been doing a lot of sewing and the scissors is sitting there and I’m thinking how easy it would be to just use the scissors to cut myself and go back to using self-injury to just try to figure...let some of the pain go. And I don’t want to do that because it’s been 10 years since I did that the last time and I’m very proud of being able to cope with stuff – until now – without using it. And now I’m dealing with the holidays and the loss and just a lot of stuff. And in someways wanting to be with my mom and dad. And there’s an easy way to get there. Ya know?	
3	I: So this is a tough time of year and it has been for a long time since your dad died and with your mom’s passing, the grief is even more strong right now.	
4	M: Yeah.	
5	I: And just feeling like you’re all by yourself.	
6	M: Yes. Very much so. Just feeling really like there’s no one who really cares anymore. And I know that there are people who do, it’s just being lonely is hard. I’ve worked so hard to get off of disability and get back working and being a peer specialist is so rewarding but I feel like I’m a role model. People look at me and look to me. They’ve told me that they admire how far I’ve come and they want to be like me. That’s a lot of weight. People look up to you and it’s not like you choose it – it chooses you. But at the same time, I feel a responsibility to be responsible. So that’s why I’m here today cause I know that I need to take care of myself.	

7	I: And you want to get through this difficult period in a way that is consistent with what you value in recovery.	
8	M: Absolutely.	
9	I: And you've proven for years now you're a strong person. You reach out for help with great courage, just like you are now.	
10	M: I try. Sometimes I don't feel like I'm all that courageous, but you know, it's not always the easiest thing to ask for help.	
11	I: It's not easy having this conversation.	
12	M: No, not at all. It's very difficult	
13	I: And with, you know, having some time off - that kind of week of time off - it's kinda taken you by surprise. You usually have a little more structure, a little more activity, a little more contact with people. So, you're a little surprised that you're flooded with all of these thoughts.	
14	M: Yes, I am very surprised. I didn't expect it. I thought vacations are supposed to be fun and relaxing and you do things that are good for yourself. You are taking care of yourself which we preach where I work. I even got a massage which I have never done before and it went really great and I felt really good but the next day, I started having this depression kick in. That's when the thoughts started to happen.	
15	I: Even though it makes sense and this is a hard time of year anyway, and even though it's kind of thrown you for loop here - these thoughts, right there kinda weighing on you, plus all of the expectations you have of yourself - nonetheless, you are clearly really ready to take some kind of action on your behalf. Melinda, whatever you choose to do following from our meeting here, is really going to be up to you. [Agenda Map shown] You mentioned several different things that was kinda on your mind: the thoughts of self-harm, joining your parents; you talked about structure and activities; and work, time off from work; and also loneliness. Of these different areas, what would you like to really focus in on in our conversation here?	Transition into Focusing .
16	M: Well, the thing that really scares me the most is the self-harm thoughts. It scared me a lot. It felt like - I can't describe it, because it was really frightening that I was even thinking about it, let alone thinking about a plan. That really kinda scared me.	
17	I: Right, working on these beautiful pillows in memory of your mom you got all these sharp materials right around. Yeah, there are the thoughts and there are the scissors. Yeah, so from your point of view, that's really the pressing concern here to really hone in on. And, what are you hoping for with this time here together, with this consultation here?	
18	M: I guess I'm looking to figure out how to stop the thoughts when they... before they get to the point and looking at the scissors and thinking that is a good idea. Because that's where I was.	
19	I: So you're like: okay the thoughts are here, now what to do with them. Yeah.	
20	M: Yeah, I mean cause I really struggle when I get to that point figuring out how to turn that off and I start to get down on myself and I tell myself that I'm horrible, and I'm ugly, and I'm fat and I'm stupid and all of that stuff. That, while other people tell me it is not true, it doesn't feel that way to me.	

21	I: And then when you have those thoughts, it doesn't make that moment any easier.	
22	M: No, because it reinforces the fact that ending my life is a good idea because I am all of those bad things.	
23	I: Yeah, yeah. And then those thoughts of ending your life take on even a little bit more real estate in your mind. So you know yourself so well; you know this cycle. And, you know, taking a look at, Melinda, the importance for kinda of breaking this cycle of the very hard thoughts on yourself and the high expectations you have and then the stress and those thoughts about harming yourself and possibly ending your life - [Importance Ruler shown] how important is it for you to break the cycle and to kinda intervene here, a 0 not at all important, 10 being very important, where would you put your importance of intervening on this right now?	Begin Evoking to explore Melinda's motivation for change.
24	M: I would say 10, it is very important.	
25	I: Okay.	
26	M: Like I said earlier, I love my job and I love what I do and I don't want this from prevent me, or land me back on disability or even dead. I don't want to die. I just want the thoughts to stop. I want to feel like I'm part of the real world and there is a reason for me to be here.	
27	I: Like, not only do you want to live but you want to have a full life in recovery.	
28	M: Yes.	
29	I: And to live the kind of life you want to have. If these thoughts were to kind of disappear, what would that be like for you?	
30	M: It would be, I think it would be awesome. I think there would be less fear and anxiety around whether I'm going to be able to be successful, or again, being a role model is very important to me and letting people to know it's okay to ask for help when you need it. Reach out and even when you don't feel like you want to, you-know-you-need-to kind of thing. I think it would make myself proud of seeking help and I knowing that I can control those thoughts and when I'm having a bad day and I start to go down that path, I can fix it. There is something I can do to make it stop.	
31	I: It's like, in a sense, by getting through this you would be kinda reclaiming your power to live the kind of life that you want to live, without fear, without worry, without these intrusive thoughts kinda weighing you down. What, Melinda, what would be some other benefits or some other good things that would happen by letting go of these thoughts?	
32	M: I think maybe some of the depression would go away. I could celebrate my parents' life rather than, and show them that I'm living a good life and that I am doing good things.	
33	I: So getting through this in a sense is honoring their memory.	
34	M: Yeah, absolutely, because I want them to be proud of me. I didn't get off of disability until after my mom died and so she wasn't here when that happened. I always felt like I was a disappointment to her. But by getting through this and not letting it overwhelm me, maybe she and my dad would be proud of my accomplishments.	

35	I: They would be celebrating with you.	
36	M: Yes. Yeah. So I think if I can work this it would be very helpful and make me feel like I wasn't a disappointment.	
37	I: It's like celebrating all of the changes that you have made and continuing the celebration by getting through this rough patch.	
38	M: Yeah.	
39	I: Yeah. If you were - and clearly have a past where you have overcome great challenges, personal and otherwise - and if you were to get through this rough patch, how might you be able to do it?	
40	M: I think I need to find some activities to do, even though I am not at work. I'm on break and vacation and we have holidays coming up. Just having some things to do. Like, I went to the massage and that was really helpful to me. Maybe go see some movies, or I don't know. Things to do. It's the holidays and I don't have a ton of money so shopping and doing that kind of stuff is probably not a good idea, but just getting out and being around other people.	
41	I: Some kind of... like something to look forward to. When you think of something to look forward to, like people come to mind - friends and family.	
42	M: We always do a big celebration for Christmas and my nephew, my godson, is coming home from Nebraska. So I'm excited to see him. I don't get to see him very often and he means a lot to me. And so there's that. Spending some time with my other nieces and nephews and all of that is important to me.	
43	I: You're looking forward to spending some time with them.	
44	M: Yeah, absolutely.	
45	I: So, that's a way that you can imagine getting through this rough patch is by having some activities – enjoyable, relaxing like the massage for example – but also people; people who you are looking forward to seeing: your family, the younger generation of your family. So let me just summarize where it seems like we might be at here, Melinda. You are coming in here and it's been a real rough patch in terms of just a lot of grief and then that compounded by some pretty strong thoughts about harming yourself and even possibly ending your life. And although, ultimately, you get to decide whether you live or whether you don't live, you're really kinda landing on the side of this of, hey, you want to live. You have a history of recovery, of celebrating life, a lot of meaning in your life. And even though the depression has really kicked up - those intrusive thoughts right along with it – your, it's a top priority to get through this. And you mentioned you have lots of reasons to get through this: you're a role model; now you've got the younger generation whose looking at you but you've also got your peers; you've got the memory of your parents and honoring that; and also even though you don't want to, sometimes you just gotta do what you gotta do in terms of just getting through tough times.	Summary which pulls together change talk and motivations heard during Evoking .
46	M: Yeah.	
47	I: So given all that and kinda where we're at here, does it make sense to look ahead to the next couple of days or the next couple of weeks – does it make sense to come up with a plan for how to get through this holiday period?	"Testing the water" for Planning .
48	M: Yeah, I think so. I think it would be very helpful to me.	

End time = 20:33