

Motivational Interviewing Workshop

Types of Reflections

Simple Reflections

1. Repeat: Adds little or no meaning or emphasis to what the client said.

Client: "I want to start taking my medication again."

Helper: "You want start taking your medication again."

2. Rephrase: Slightly alter what a client says.

Client: "I really want to start taking my medication again."

Helper: "Taking your medication is very important to you."

Complex Reflections

3. Amplified: Reflect what the client has said in an exaggerated way (over or under). This encourages the client to argue less, and can elicit the other side of the client's ambivalence.

Client: "I'm here because my girlfriend made me come here."

Helper: "That's the *only* reason why you're here."

4. Come Alongside: Use just a bit of amplification to join with the person.

Client: "I've tried this AA thing a million times and it doesn't work for me. How can other people with drinking problems tell *me* what to do? Plus, I just get *too* nervous. I get too scared to open up, then I just clam up. It's not for me."

Helper: "It really may be too difficult for you. AA is not the best fit for everyone, even though it's effective. Being a part of the group means making your contribution and it might not be worth the discomfort. Perhaps it's better to stay as-is."

5. Double-sided: Reflect both sides of the client's ambivalence.

Client: "I don't like what smoking crack does to my health, but it really reduces my stress."

Helper: "On the one hand, crack brings you relief, and on the other hand you're concerned about how smoking crack affects your health."

Complex Reflections

6. Metaphor: Painting a picture that can clarify the client's position.

Client: "I can't take too much more of this anxiety"

Helper: "You want to be in a better space."

7. Shifting Focus: Provide understanding for the client's situation and diffuse discord.

Client: "What do you know about being in recovery? You probably never had a drug problem."

Helper: "It's hard to imagine how I could possibly understand."

8. Reframing: Putting another frame around the client's story.

Client: "I've tried to quit drinking so many times and I always relapse."

Helper: "You are persistent, even in the face of discouragement. This change must be really important to you."

9. Agreeing with a Twist: The impact of a reframe may be increased by prefacing it with a reflection that sides with what the person is saying.

a. Client: "I can't imagine myself not drinking. It's a part of who I am, it's how I escape, and it helps me get through the day."

b. Helper: "You can't live your life without drinking. It's such a part of who you are that you will keep drinking no matter what the cost."

10. Emphasize Personal Choice: Reflect the client's autonomy, control and ability to make his/her own decisions.

a. Client: "I really want to stop smoking weed, but I'm not ready yet."

b. Helper: "Stopping is really important to you. You'll stop when you're ready."

11. Siding with the Negative: Landing on one side of the ambivalence elicits the other side of the client's ambivalence.

a. Client: "My drinking isn't that bad."

b. Helper: "There's no reason for you to be concerned about your drinking."

Complex Reflections, continued

12. Reflection of Feeling: The deepest form of reflection.

- a. Client: "If I don't stop drinking, I won't be able to qualify for a transplant, and I could die."
- b. Helper: "You're worried that your drinking is a matter of life and death for you."