

# MODULE 4: COACHING

## Motivational Interviewing: A Structured Approach to Eliciting Change

### LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY

#### Objective n° 2

##### EXPLORE TECHNIQUES TO EVOKE INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

Help participants practice MI techniques that resolve ambivalence and empower clients to commit to positive change in their recovery journey.

#### Objective n° 1

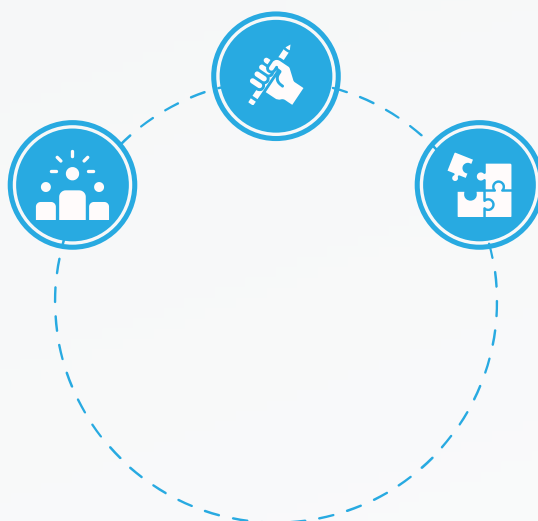
##### UNDERSTAND THE CORE COMPONENTS OF MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING (MI)

Introduce participants to the fundamental elements of MI, including Open-Ended Questions, Affirmations, Reflections, and Summaries (OARS) as key tools for eliciting change.

#### Objective n° 3

##### STRENGTHEN PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF MI STRATEGIES

Guide participants through real-life scenarios and role-playing exercises to develop confidence in applying MI techniques with clients.



# MODULE 4: COACHING

## Motivational Interviewing: A Structured Approach to Eliciting Change



### ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION AND MATERIALS

#### Activity description

1. Target group – Recovery mentors, adult educators, and social workers
2. Time – 2 hours.

1. OARS Technique Handout (Open-ended questions, Affirmations, Reflections, Summaries)
2. Motivational Interviewing Self-Assessment Worksheet
3. Case study handouts featuring client ambivalence
4. Role-play scenario sheets
5. Whiteboard for group discussions and brainstorming

#### Materials

## METHODOLOGY USED FOR THIS ACTIVITY



#### CONSTRUCTIVIST LEARNING

Participants actively engage in discussions and exercises that build their understanding of MI principles.



#### PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING

Participants analyze real-life client interactions to apply MI techniques effectively.



#### LEARNING FROM PEERS

Participants share experiences in using (or struggling with) MI techniques, gaining feedback and insights from others.



#### EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Through live role-play, participants practice MI techniques in a controlled setting, receiving feedback and making adjustments.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## MODULE 4: COACHING

# Motivational Interviewing: A Structured Approach to Eliciting Change

## BREAKDOWN OF MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING (MI) COMPONENTS

MI consists of four core techniques, often abbreviated as **OARS**:

**1. Open-Ended Questions (O)** – Encouraging clients to explore their thoughts rather than giving simple “yes” or “no” answers.

*“What concerns you the most about your current situation?”*

**2. Affirmations (A)** – Recognizing a client’s strengths and positive efforts to build confidence.

*“It’s impressive that you’ve taken the step to attend this session.”*

**3. Reflections (R)** – Repeating or paraphrasing what the client says to show understanding and deepen conversation.

*“It sounds like you feel torn between wanting change and fearing failure.”*

**4. Summaries (S)** – Reinforcing key points of the conversation to ensure clarity and direction.

*“So far, you’ve expressed that quitting is important to you, but you’re struggling with the fear of relapsing. Let’s explore what might help.”*

## ACTIVITY 1: PRACTICING THE OARS TECHNIQUE

Participants will pair up and engage in a structured MI conversation, taking turns as the recovery mentor and the client. Using the OARS framework, they will practice guiding their partner through a conversation that explores motivation for change.

Key Points:

- Encourage curiosity and avoid leading questions.
- Focus on strengths-based affirmations to build self-efficacy.
- Use reflections to deepen the conversation and reinforce client statements.
- Summarize key themes and elicit change talk.

## ACTIVITY 2: ROLE-PLAY – WORKING THROUGH AMBIVALENCE

Each participant will receive a case study featuring a client struggling with ambivalence about change (e.g., wanting to quit substance use but fearing withdrawal). Participants will practice evoking motivation for change using MI techniques, while the group provides feedback.

Key Points:

- Recognize ambivalence as a natural stage in behavior change.
- Use “change talk” strategies (e.g., “What would be different if you made this change?”).
- Help clients resolve resistance without imposing solutions.



# MODULE 4: COACHING

## Motivational Interviewing: A Structured Approach to Eliciting Change

### OARS TECHNIQUE QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Technique	Purpose	Example
Open-Ended Questions	Encourage discussion	<i>"What has worked for you in the past when dealing with stress?"</i>
Affirmations	Reinforce strengths	<i>"You've shown a lot of determination by coming here today."</i>
Reflections	Show understanding	<i>"You feel stuck because change is scary."</i>
Summaries	Reinforce key points	<i>"So far, you've shared that you want to quit, but you're unsure about the first steps."</i>

#### Motivational Interviewing Self-Assessment Worksheet

Rate yourself on how often you use the following MI skills in coaching sessions (1 = Rarely, 5 = Always).

MI Skill	Rating (1-5)
I ask open-ended questions to explore client concerns.	
I use affirmations to reinforce client strengths.	
I reflect client statements to deepen the conversation.	
I summarize key points to provide clarity and direction.	
I help clients explore their reasons for change without imposing solutions.	
I avoid judgmental or confrontational language.	

#### Reflection Questions:

- What areas of MI do I feel most confident in?
- Which MI skill do I need to improve?
- How can I incorporate more MI techniques into my daily coaching?



## MODULE 4: COACHING

# Motivational Interviewing: A Structured Approach to Eliciting Change

## EXAMPLE CLIENT PROFILES AND SCENARIOS FOR MI ROLE-PLAY

### Anna – Fear of Failure

Anna, a 28-year-old in early recovery, wants to quit but fears relapse. Anna expresses, *"I want to stop, but I always fail, so what's the point?"*

Use reflections to acknowledge Anna's fear.  
Ask open-ended questions to explore past successes.  
Provide affirmations for her effort in seeking help.

### Michael – Stuck in Ambivalence

Michael, a 35-year-old with alcohol dependency, is unsure if he wants to quit drinking. Michael says, *"I know drinking is bad for me, but I enjoy it and don't see a reason to stop."*

Use summaries to highlight his mixed feelings.  
Elicit change talk by asking, *"What do you think life would be like without alcohol?"*  
Avoid confrontation—help Michael explore his own reasons for change.

### James – Seeking External Motivation

James, a 40-year-old in recovery, stays sober when people encourage him but struggles when alone. James says, *"If my family is happy, I stay sober, but if they don't care, I just relapse."*

Explore internal motivation with open-ended questions.  
Use affirmations to highlight his own strength in making progress.  
Reflect on how self-driven motivation could support long-term recovery.