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Program Evaluation and Research Unit

POLAR*S

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Training Objectives

After this training, staff will be able to:



Explain the **spirit of motivational interviewing**



Identify the **components** of POLAR*S



Demonstrate the use of POLAR*S skills in **work with clients**



Build skills to use POLAR*S in your work



Recognize the **difference** between POLAR*S and motivational interviewing



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Motivational Interviewing



What is Motivational Interviewing (MI)?

“Motivational interviewing is a **collaborative conversation style** for **strengthening** a person’s **own motivation** and **commitment to change.**”

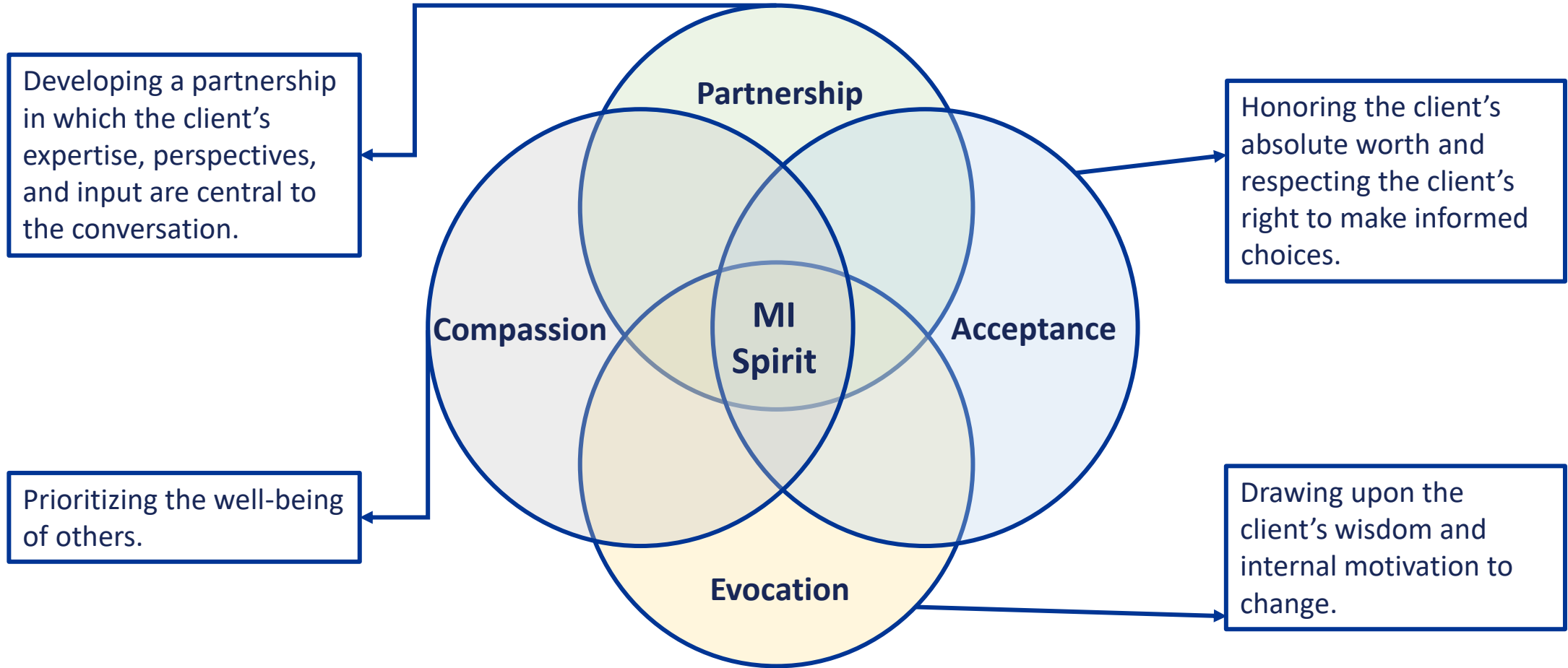


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Spirit of MI



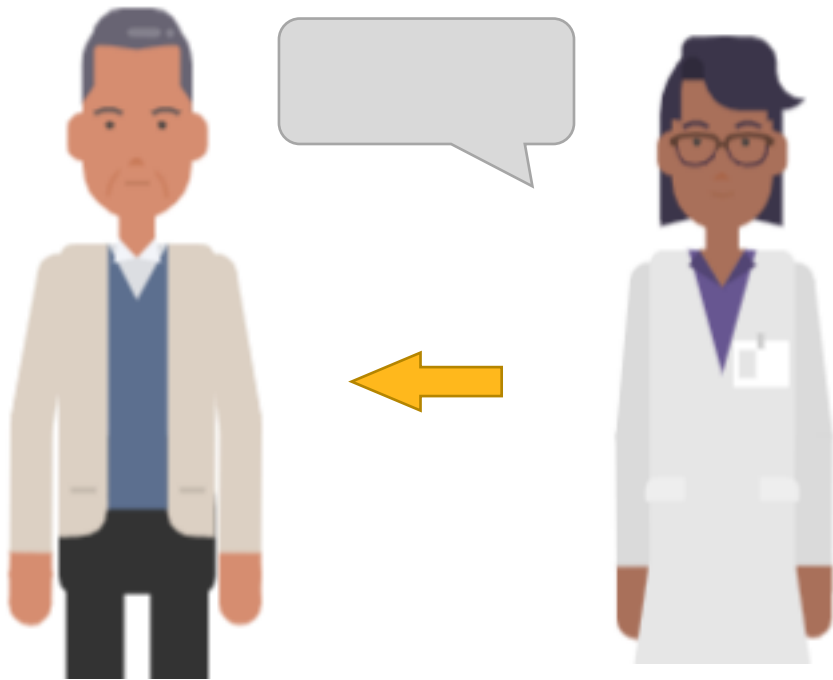
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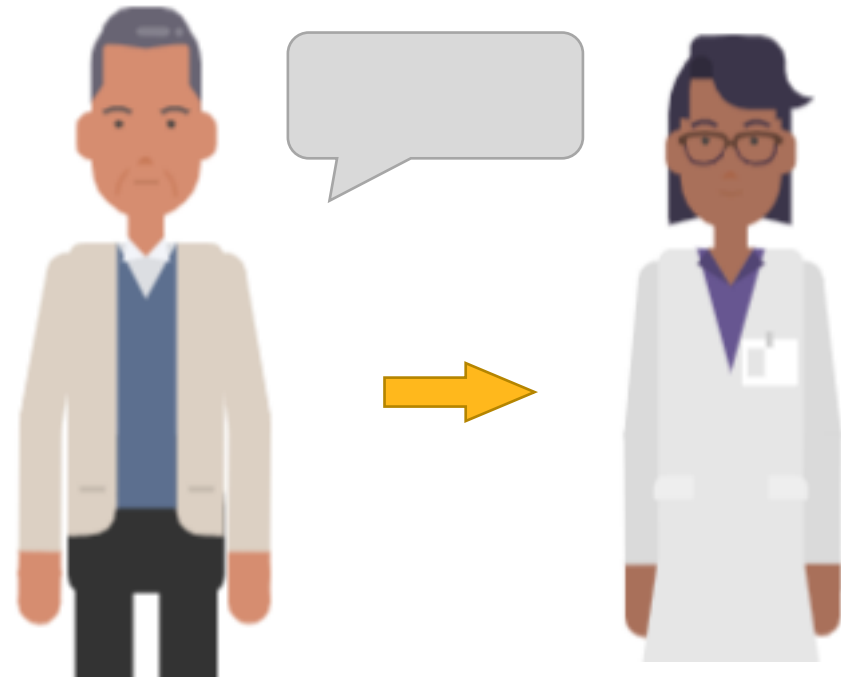
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Role Adjustment

Instead of simply giving advice to the person....



...the facilitator sees the person as the expert on their own health.



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Ambivalence

Ambivalence happens as a natural part of the change process when someone **values both the old behavior and the new behavior.**



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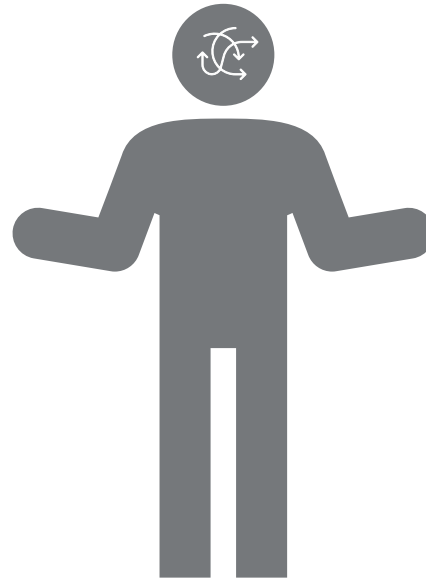
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Ambivalence

Ambivalence happens as a natural part of the change process when someone **values both the old behavior and the new behavior.**

I enjoy the way it makes me feel...



...but it would be nice to not get in trouble anymore.



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Sustain vs. Change Talk



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POLAR*S



What is POLAR*S?

Communication **tool** that embraces the **spirit of MI** for interactions with others in which the possibility of **change** exists.



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POLAR*S Acronym



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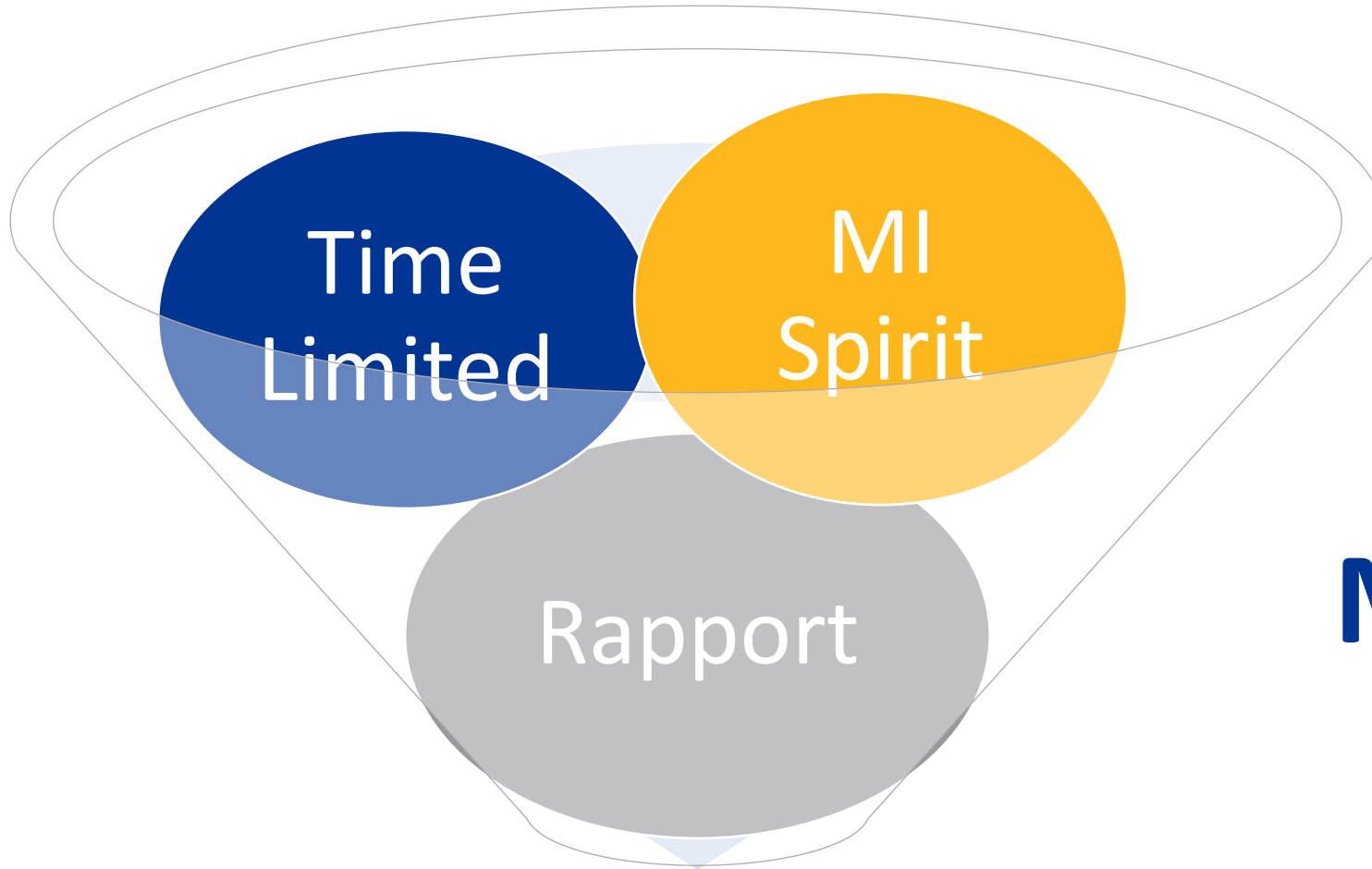
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POLAR*S and MI

“It would not be long enough time to perform a great concerto, but of course one can play an instrument or **practice the style of MI** in whatever amount of time is available.”





POLAR*S

MI Style Tool



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P = Permission

Respect

Focus on
Client

Engage

Collaborate

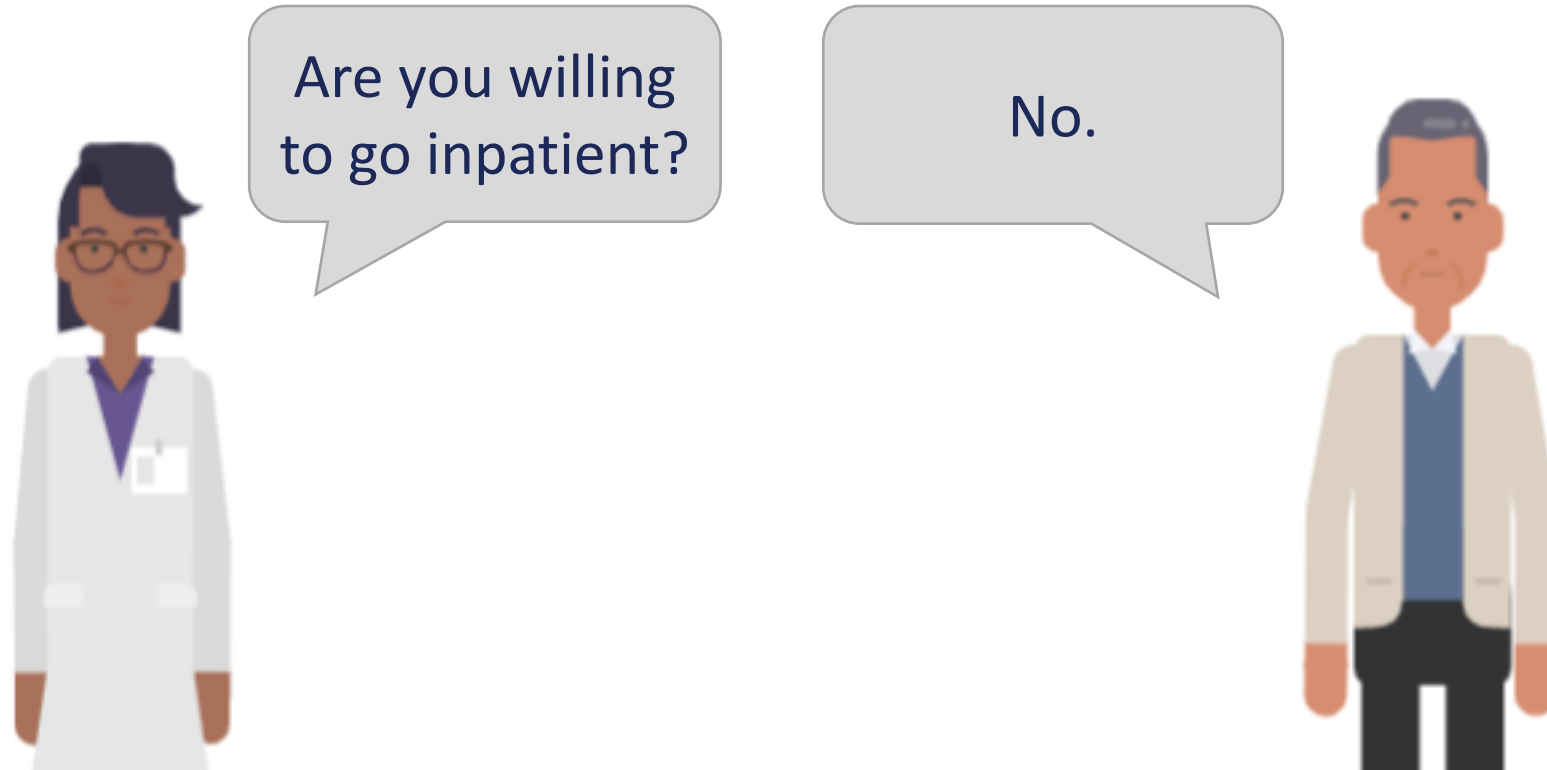


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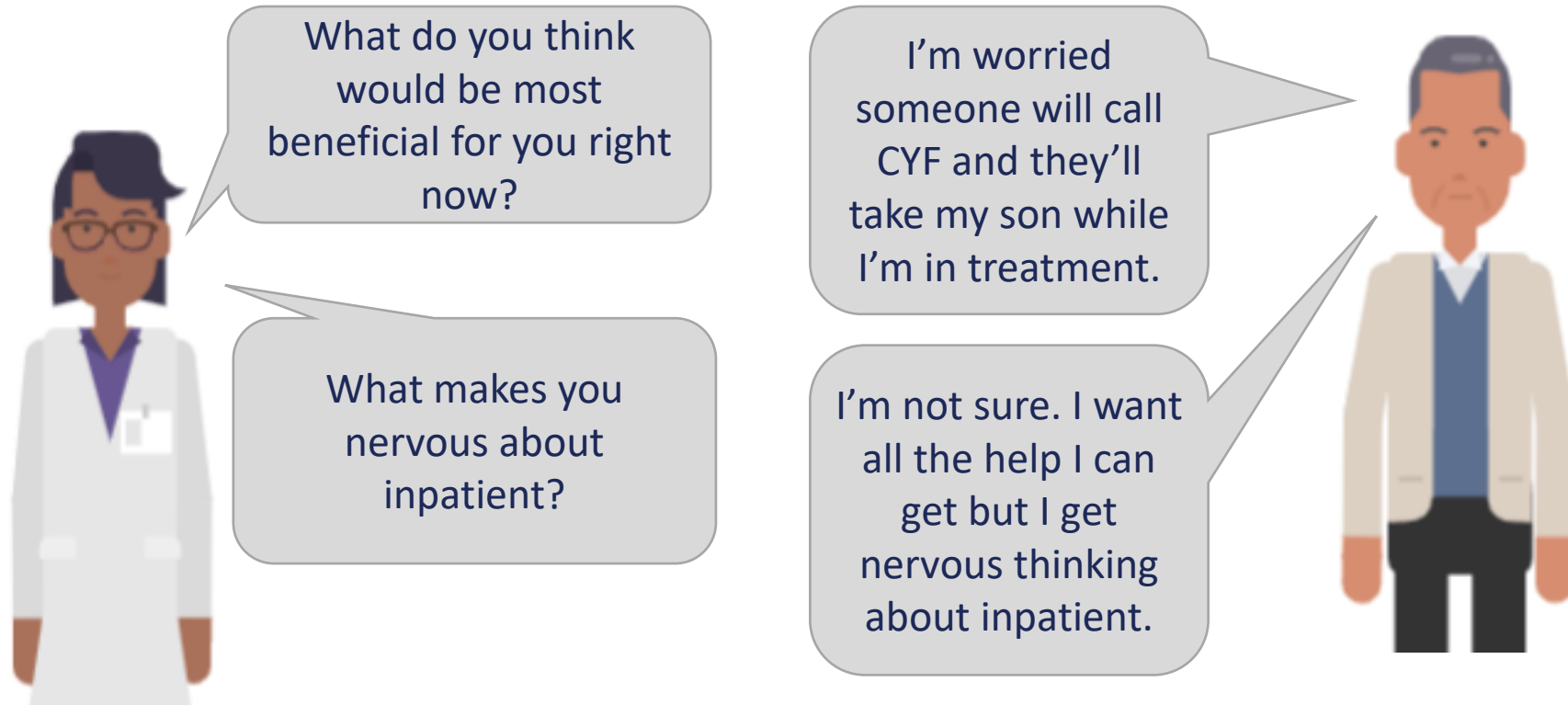
O = Open-Ended Questions (NOT Closed-Ended)



Closed-ended questions put a **close** to the conversation.



O = Open-Ended Questions



Open-ended questions elicit **ongoing** discussion.



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Practice

Let's walk through the next two steps of the POLAR*S process with a client.



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Permission

Open-ended
Questions

Listening
Reflectively

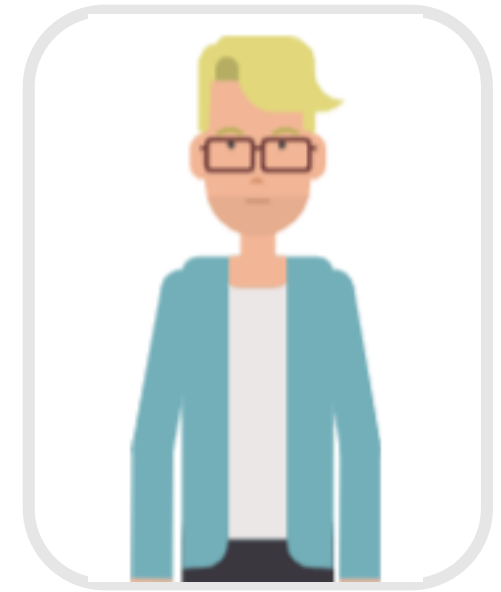
Affirmation

Rolling with
Ambivalence

Summary

Bill

- 20 years old
- Court-ordered ASAM LOC assessment and comply with recommendation
- Denies any problem with substances, this is just a waste of time
- Recently released from jail after arrested for possession of heroin



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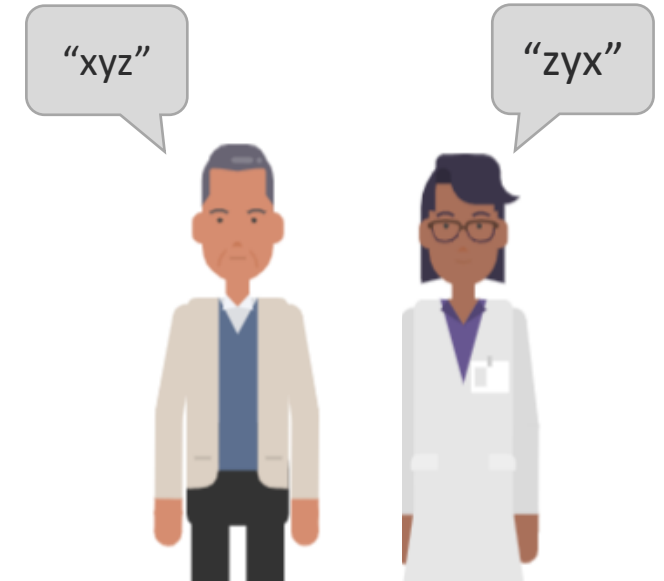
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L = Listening Reflectively

- Use the individual's own words
- Think of each reflection as a summary of what is happening in the moment
- Offer reflections as statements – this puts clients at ease and opens communication

Listening
Reflectively



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Two Types of Listening Reflectively

Listening
Reflectively

Single

- “From what you’ve shared, it seems...”
- “It sounds like you feel...”
- “You are....(emotion)”

Complex

- “On the one hand you see... and on the other hand you see....”
- “You are...(emotion) and you are...(conflicting emotion)”



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Complex Reflections

Listening
Reflectively

Old + New

“On the one hand, you like how you feel when you smoke marijuana **AND** on the other hand, you know that your grades are suffering because of it.”



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Why use reflective listening?

- People do things for **their own** reasons, not for **yours**
- Reflective listening is a way of **checking** rather than assuming that you **know** what is meant
- Reflective listening **strengthens relationships**

Listening
Reflectively



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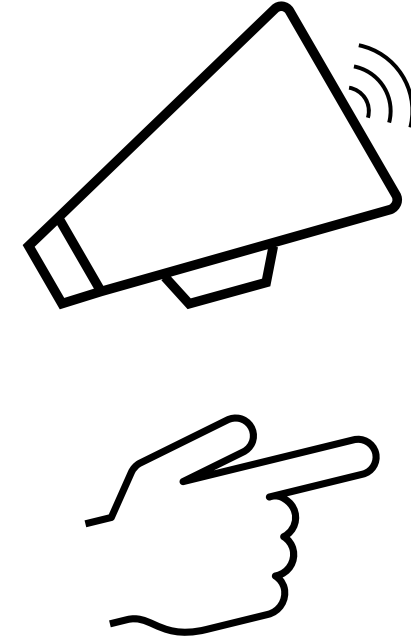
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NOT Reflective Listening

- Ordering or **directing**
- Giving **advice**, making **suggestions** or providing solutions
- Persuading with **logic**
- Agreeing, approving, or praising
- Interpreting or **analyzing**
- Reassuring, **sympathizing**, or consoling
- **Humoring**, or changing the subject

Listening
Reflectively



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A = Affirmation



- **Accept** the person's experience
Does **not** mean **endorse** it
- Affirm that **change is possible**
- **Support** positive behavior change with **evidence**



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Practice

Let's walk through the next two steps of the POLAR*S process with a client.



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Permission

Open-ended
Questions

Listening
Reflectively

Affirmation

Rolling with
Ambivalence

Summary

Emily

- Assigned to your colleague who is on vacation
- 33 years old, two children (2 and 7)
- Crisis: recurrence of use and is being kicked out of her aunt's house where she had been living with her kids



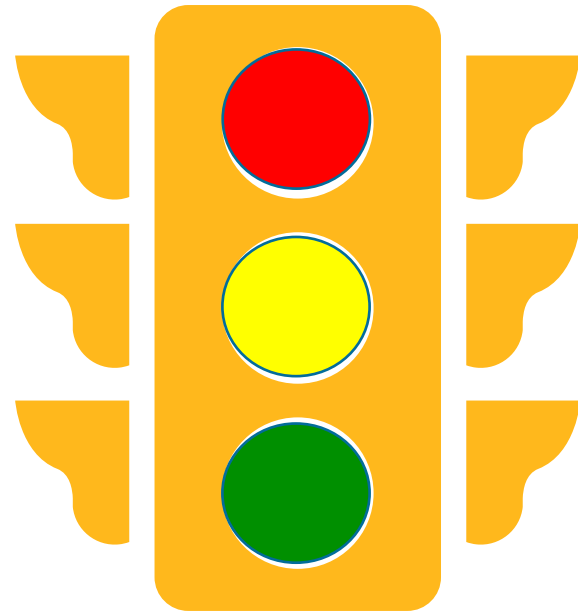
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Emily



R = Roll with Ambivalence

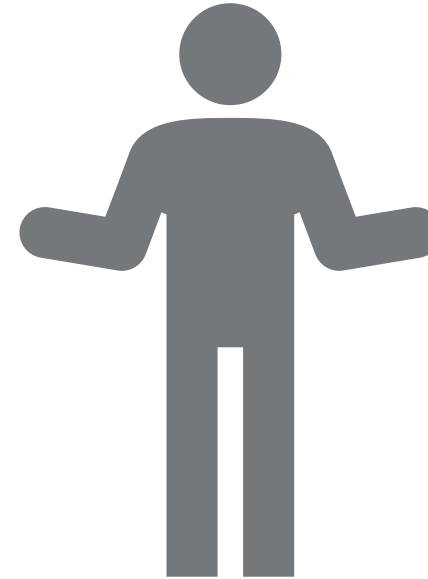
Rolling with
Ambivalence

"I'm not ready..."

"I don't want to..."

"No..."

Stay the same



Try something
new



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Signs of Ambivalent Behavior



- Negating, blaming, disagreeing, excusing, minimizing, claiming impunity, pessimism, reluctance, unwillingness to change
- Arguing challenging, discounting, hostility
- Interrupting
- Ignoring



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R = Roll with Ambivalence

- Meet ambivalence with:
 - **Empathic** response
 - Reflective listening
 - Providing **choice**
 - **Non-defensive** response
- Avoid confrontation/direct persuasion

Rolling with
Ambivalence



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Types of Reflective Listening to Deflect Ambivalence

Amplified reflection

Double-sided reflection

Coming alongside



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Practice

Let's walk through rolling with ambivalence with a client.



Rolling with
Ambivalence



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Open-ended
Questions

Listening
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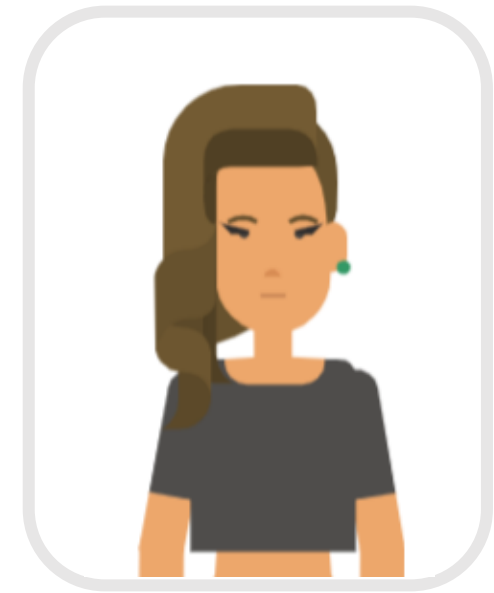
Affirmation

Rolling with
Ambivalence

Summary

Mikayla

- Intake appointment
- Started using approximately 6 months ago
- Parents “sent” them to rehab 2 months ago, recurrence of use immediately after discharge
- Wants help, knows can’t quit “cold turkey,” demonstrates some ambivalence
- Good fit for MOUD, unsure if that will be of interest to Mikayla



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Open-ended Questions

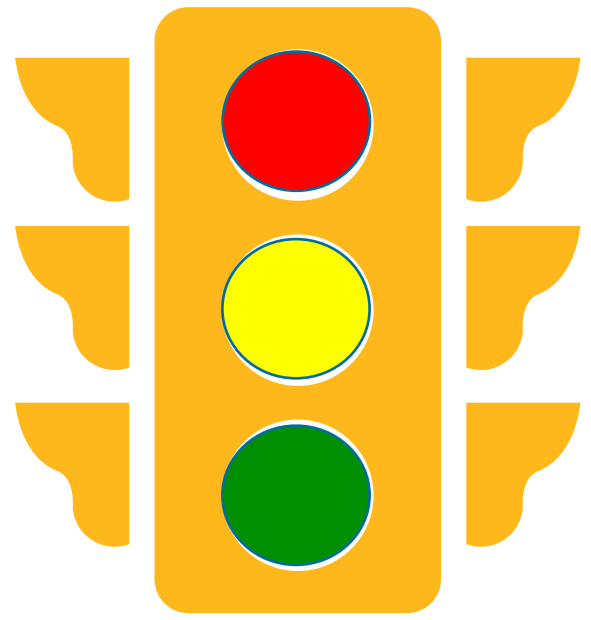
Listening Reflectively

Affirmation

Rolling with Ambivalence

Summary

MIKAYLA



S = SUMMARY

Summary

Points of
agreement

To be revisited

Decisions
made

Next steps



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Practice

Let's walk through all the POLAR*S steps with a client.



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Listening
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Rolling with
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Summary

Alex

- 50 years old, requesting services
- Intake appointment
- Previous period of recovery (10 years) prior to COVID-19
- COVID-19: Lost job, recurrence of use for one weekend – opioids from relative's medicine cabinet
- Significant shame and self-blame for recurrence of use



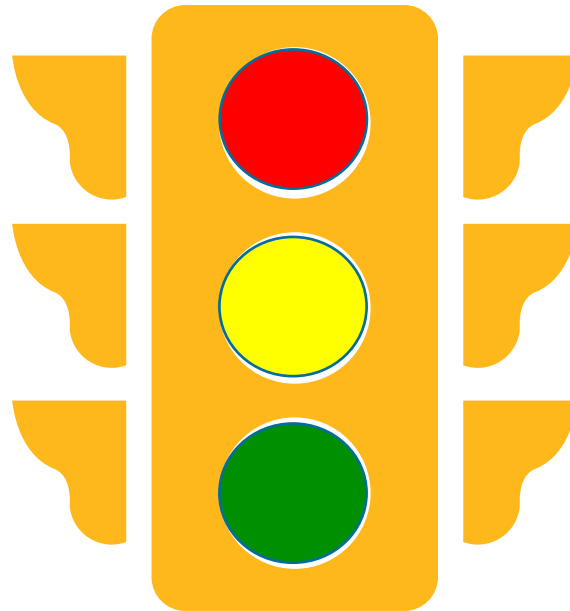
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Alex



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POLAR*S and You

Respect the client throughout the discussion

Allow the client to **have their say**

Guide the client, avoid direction or force

Maintain a **positive** attitude

Affirm change is possible

Demonstrate **empathy**



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Questions?



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References

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- Rollnick, S., Miller, W.R., & Butler, C.C. (2008). Motivational Interviewing in Health Care: Helping clients Change Behavior. New York, NY, US: Guilford Press.



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