The Power of Groups: using Motivational Interviewing

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Biography

Stephen R. Andrew, LCSW, LADC, CCS, CGP

“story teller”, trainer, therapist, author...

Chief Energizing Officer of Health Education & Training Institute (HETI), member of MINT (Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers) since 2003. MIA-STEP trainer for ATTC New England since 2007.. Trained Motivational Interviewing internationally in 12 countries..

He been a substance abuse counselor in a school system, the Executive Director of an adolescent prevention/treatment...

The co-founder of the Men’s Resource Center of Southern Maine USA. Stephen maintains a compassion-focused private practice in Portland, Maine and facilitates men’s, co-ed and caregivers groups.

He is the co-author of the book: “Game Plan: A man’s guide to achieving emotional fitness” with 2 friends.

Stephen lives with his sweet wife, Hilary, and is the proud father of eighteen year-old Sebastian, in Portland, Maine.

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Guidelines for the Training...

Ask lots of questions.. Please make this relevant to your work..

• Letting me coach you or not?
• Be mindful of each other. “Be kind” ...

Attitudes:

“What the Heck !!”, Jump into the experience....
Take a few risks..
Make Mistakes, “OOPS!”....
Confidentiality, make the training your experience...

Real play not Role play...

Please resist the “fixing” impulse...
Introductions

• Your name…
• A sentence about your work…
• One thing most people don’t know about you…
• Meet as many people you can in the room over the next 10 minutes.
Meet and Greet.... (4min.)

- What are the *challenges* of group work, working with clients, patients, consumers?
- What are you ‘good’ at as a facilitator?
- What are some of your “WOW” moments for you working in groups?
- What is a simple idea you taken away from working in groups and/or individuals?
“PEOPLE WHO WERE HURT BY THE CROWD WILL BE HEALED BY THE CROWD”…

• THEIR PARTICIPATION IN GROUP IS A TRANSFERRENCE OF HOW THEY WERE TREATED BY THEIR FAMILIES, FRIENDS & COMMUNITY…

• History and experience may dictate their ability to participate…
The nature of the conversation is critical

What we say - and how we say it - and how it lands largely determines what the client says and what happens next...

goal of groups:

Increase Empathy & Compassion
Motivates change through resolving ambivalence & listening for “Change Talk”

Balances client-centered and directive elements moving through the 4 phases

Uses OARS & other MI Strategies

Avoids MI Non-adherent worker behaviors

Balances focusing and staying open
Individual & Group Motivational Interviewing Differences

- Facilitating vs. interviewing
- Group dynamics
  - Managing floor time
  - Managing different styles and beliefs across members
  - Eliciting group energy for change
  - Working with group members’ “righting reflexes”
Motivational Interviewing Groups
the Possible Benefits

- Universality
- Inspiration
- Peer support
- Group momentum
- Cost efficiency
- Altruism
- Cohesion…
Quiz Show!

Savage Chickens

Pop Quiz!

Is there more to life?

☐ Yes
☐ No

DAMMIT, I SHOULDN'T KNOW THIS...

© 2007 by Doug Savage

www.savagechickens.com
Quiz show tiles

- **QO** = Open (minded) question
- **QC** = Closed question
- **A** = Affirmation
- **RS** = Simple reflection
- **RC** = Complex reflection
- **S** = Summary
At the heart of Motivational Interviewing spirit

- Partnership - collaboration, coming along side.

- Acceptance - unconditional regard, belief in the other’s right and the ability to make good choices for oneself, accurate empathic reflection, affirmation.

- Evocation - Listen and Elicit; the client is the expert on him/herself...

- Compassion - The desire to be with the suffering of the client, patient and/or consumer...

- “The worker is responsible for the intervention, not the outcome!”
OARS (Engagement)

Skills

♥ O: open-ended questions... to elaborate

♥ A: affirm, notice the strengths of the member, see the motivation in what they are doing ...hear their values...

♥ R: reflection, use empathy, simple and complex, 2 to 1 statements to questions

♥ S: summarize the group as a whole themes..(5-15 minutes)...
Complex Reflections

• **Emotion/ Affective:** “You are feeling …”
• **Values:** “It is important to you ….”
• **Amplification:** “This (behavior) doesn’t cause you *any* problems…”
• **Minimization:** When the client is in “catastrophe” mode: “Right now, you are having a little difficulty…”
• **Double-sided:** “On the one hand... and on the other hand...” (two ideas that are in conflict with each other, present behavior and hopes, dreams, desire)...
• **Metaphor:** “It is as if…”
• **Continuing Paragraph:** “You are upset about being here and you want…”
What kind of groups are you running?

- Psycho-educational
- Process (interpersonal)
- Therapeutic support groups

Each require a different leader’s style
Forces

Clarity of purpose a. for leader b. for members
Relevance of purpose to the members’ needs.
Size of the group....
Length of each session
Adequacy of the setting
Time of the day ...a. for leader b. for members
Leader’s energy and attitude
Group Work Cohesion

★ Regular, punctual attendance
★ Standard process for people to join the group, “Saying Hello”
★ Attraction and warmth between group members
★ Active participation by each member
★ Self-disclosure and trust
★ Risk taking of new behavior
★ Tolerance of tension and ambiguity?
★ Shared belief about the purpose and norms
★ Spontaneous participation
★ Confidentiality
★ Termination/celebration process of members, “Saying Good bye”
★ SAFETY...
Group Work Skills

- Sessional Tuning In.
- Sessional Contracting.
- Elaborating: Making The Story Fuller, Fatter.
- Empathic Reflections for other Members.
- Evoke Mutual Feelings from Members.
- Demand For “Change Talk.”
- Pointing Out Strengths & Obstacles.
- Sharing Information with Permission.
- Beginnings, Endings And Transitions..

Group work 1
Building Rituals
Practice 1 (15 minutes)

- Skills – Eliciting/Facilitating, OARS, Expressing Empathic Reflection, Agenda Setting- FOCUS
- Group Skills – Guidelines, Initiating, Orienting, Building group identity through linking
- Orientation – 2-4 minutes per participant..
  - Purpose, contract, plan agenda, affirm participation,
  - Focus on “Something you’d like to change and do not seem to OR How might you like things to be different” ...... “Saying hello...”
- LINK with REFLECTIONS on THEMES, FEELINGS, IMPORTANCE & CONFIDENCE, PAIRS ETC.
- “Meet people where they dream”
ask permission:
May I share with you some of my thoughts on what I experienced?

• What did they (Leaders) do well? Observe: Motivational Interviewing; the spirit, structure & skills.
Group facilitation

Facilitator communications

Rounds
Engagement Phase

Facilitator: **one to one** communications
Reflects on pairs, group as a whole..
Heighten Ambivalence

Facilitator

Increased empathy & compassion in intragroup communications
Listen for the conflict in the individual & group as a whole....
Empowerment Phase
Listen for the “Change Talk”

Facilitator

High levels of autonomy & support

Intragroup communications strong without Leader
little or no advise, direction, judgements..
Lack of RIGHT positions…
Group Interventions

- Provide specific Information with permission applicable to members’ lives about the focus of the group...
- Involve everyone...
- Keep the group moving; be careful about letting members dominate and/or silence...
- Know that you are the conductor of anxiety...
- Invite laughter into the group...
- Be assertive about wanting people to come to group...
Group Interventions

- Share support and help people solve their own patterns...
- Develop “rituals” ...
  - opening
  - closing
  - go rounds
  - Serenity Prayer...
- Hold 5 elements in your mind...
  - individual members’ needs
  - Link pairs in themes and similarities
  - cohesiveness of the group as a whole: feelings, themes, affection, empathy...
  - authority Issues: welcome them....
  - encourage empowerment (Change Talk)...
  - “REMEMBER NO ONE IS BROKEN”
What do you think are the strengths of the self protective patterns

- Domineering
- Vindictive
- Cold
- Socially Avoidant
- Exploitable
- Overly Nurturing
- Intrusive
Practice 2 (15 minutes)

- MI Skills – OARS & LINKING, Eliciting Change Talk, Focusing on Present and Future

- Group Skills – Deepening emotional connection, deepening group cohesion through linking to others. *What is the ambivalence?*

- Theme – Values sorting sheet... Values exploration as related to “issues”
  - What are some important values for you as a person?
  - What are important desires, hopes to you as a person?
  - How could your values guide you in relation to your desires, hopes you choose & similar future situations
ask permission:
May I share with you some of my thoughts on what I experienced?
The *Power* of Groups

- sharing, having a voice
- dialectical process
- universality
- mutual support
- mutual demand
- individual empowerment
- evoking of hope through empathy
- strength in numbers, confidence
- skill of listening deeply
- encouragement of autonomy
- notion that no one is *broken*
Exercise

• Groups of three -
• A - Teach one peer what you say to yourself to stay the same
• B - Teach the other peer what do you tell yourself to change
• C - Both peers argue your positions
• D - what was that like?
Processes

1. ENGAGE.. **Express Accurate Empathy**
   (radical acceptance, compassion—understands the person’s competent world view)

2. HEIGHTEN AMBIVALENCE..
   *Develop the Discrepancy.*
   (Change is motivated by perceived conflict between present behavior and desired intentions, dreams)

3. EMPOWERMENT.. **Support Self-Efficacy**
   (worker believes in and listens for change talk and/or commitment language)

Stay focused on the target issue....
Plan an activity

- The General Wellness group has 8-10 minutes to plan a group activity to take place in a week from today...

  - **ROLES in groups**

    - **Stoner** (Lone wolf)
    - **Nerd** (Orphan)
    - Filler...(talker) ..
    - Princess (I am the focus.)
    - ___????________________
    - **Clown**
    - **Brain** (Cute kid)
    - **Hood** (Self-hater)
    - **Leader** (Rock of Gibraltar)
    - **Music Student** (Star)
Process of a Conversation
Individual, pair and group as a whole
“Structure”

Develop Discrepancy/
Amplify Ambivalence

OARS
Express Empathy
Target/purpose

Change Talk/
“Change Theory”

Plan
Commitment
Language
Responding to discord

**Part one: (small groups of 6)**
- Each participant writes two or three resistant/sustain “talk” statements that s/he has heard or might hear from his/her group member..

**Part two:**
- One participant (the “client) reads his/her statement.
- The participant next to him/her responds attempting to reduce the discord in the group
  - The “client” replies and says whether it reduced, increased or didn’t affect his/her discord ...(one to five)
- The next person.... and the next.. so on ..
Rolling with group challenges

“may this be in the service of compassion and acceptance”

• What do you hear from group that challenge your authority?
• How do you handle this?
  – Empathic reflection
  – Radical humility
  – Check needs
  – Encourage/empower....
What People Can Get From Group

• Learn to be in the here and now. Make contact with and tolerate feelings.
• Get feedback.
• Learn to take risks.
• Be honest and tell their stories.
• Become more sensitive to other people.
• Learn about closeness, warmth, and intimacy.
• Learn and experiment with new skills of relating to the world.
I’m afraid if people see my insides they’ll see how sour I am

I feel that something is eating away inside me

I’d like to pull back my skin and show my true self

I’m afraid I’m going to be pulled apart

FRUIT GROUP THERAPY

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Practice 3 (15 minutes)

- MI Skills/structure- O/EARS, wondering what members will do with the discord, EVOCATION and PLAN
- Theme - *What do you want to do with this one wild precious life?*
**Possible Group Work Topics**

- Introduction to Group
- Ambivalence or Action
- Looking Forward, *Dreams*
- Advantage of staying the same or changing....
- Exploring Values.. What is important? Value sort cards

• Supporting Self Efficacy: Change Success Stories
• Supporting Self-Efficacy: Exploring Strengths
• Planning for Change
• Importance, Confidence for Change
Statements ??
Questions ??
Concerns ??
Comments ?? Cries of outrage ??
Bad Jokes ??
One thing I liked was....

One thing I learned...

One thing I relearned...

One thing I might try is....
References
Thank You!

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References

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• Calling the Circle: The First and Future Culture, Christina Baldwin


Websites

www.motivationalinterviewing.org
www.hetimaine.org

Website of Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) HETI is located in beautiful Portland, Maine and is run by Stephen Andrew, an incredibly effective and enjoyable trainer. and sweet 5 person MITI coding/coaching Lab..


