



Asking Helpful Questions for Clinicians

QUESTIONS GENERATED BY CLINICIANS IN MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING WORKSHOPS

These questions have been generated in workshops by Allied Health clinicians from Ballarat Health Services, using the framework outlined in McKenzie, Pierce and Gunn (2018) for asking open questions to support behaviour change. The questions are organised by areas of clinical practice or behaviour change. You will see that some questions are useful across different areas of practice; the questions are offered as ideas to increase your repertoire of open questions to support you to use MI in your practice, or to seek and engage with the views, strengths, skills and knowledge of the people with whom you work.

GENERAL

Initial assessment

- What's your understanding of why you're here?
- What's your understanding of your diagnosis?
- If you had a magic wand, what would be different for you?

Awareness, understanding and insight into own behaviour

- What do you do when...
- What's your role in (the situation)?
- What do you think might be happening?

Giving information

- What do you already know about...
- What have you already tried?

Planning and goal-setting

- What are your goals?
- What's important to you? How important is it to you to...?
- How confident are you that you can ...?

ADJUSTMENT TO ILLNESS, AND MOOD AND ANXIETY

Adjustment to illness or injury

- What part of what you used to do would you like to start working on?
- You can't put weight on this leg for a while, so what ideas do you have to manage that?
- What are some of the things you used to do that are difficult for you now?
- What kinds of changes have you noticed in your body?
- What kinds of things would you like to be able to do?

Health anxiety

- How does your family's medical history affect your worry about your own health?
- What do you notice in yourself when X happens?

Improving mood / anxiety

- What have you found to be helpful in the past?
- Tell me about life when you're not depressed?

COGNITIVE CHANGES

Acquired Brain Injury

- What do you think the steps are to working some longer days at work?

Cognitive changes

- What thinking changes have you noticed?

ENGAGING IN REHABILITATION

- What are you able to do at the moment?
- Why is it important to you to... eg get back on your feet?
- What are your goals for doing this rehab program?
- How do you think completing your rehab program will benefit you?
- How important is it to you to do your rehab program?

HEALTH PROMOTING BEHAVIOUR - PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Home exercise

- Why is it important to you to work on your fitness?
- What are some of the reasons for doing this exercise? Why is it important?
- What are you willing to do now? How can you build on it?
- What have you done to start your home exercises?
- Tell me about times of the day you feel you could do exercises?
- What has helped you to do your exercise / rehab program?
- What might increasing your strength mean for you?
- Tell me why you think strength exercises are important?
- What do you think would support you to do your home program?

Increased physical activity

- What type of exercise do you enjoy?
- What are your reasons for increasing your physical activity?
- How can you increase your physical activity?
- What would you like to be able to do?
- What would you like to achieve?
- Tell me about the best time of day for you to do exercise?

Move more

- Tell me about some opportunities you have to add more movement into your day?
- What can you do to move more?
- How can you move more?
- What ideas do you have to increase your movement throughout the day?
- What do you think you could add into your day that involves some more movement?

Walk more

- How important is it for you to walk more?
- Why would you like to walk more?
- What makes walking a good option for you?
- Tell me about the places that you've previously enjoyed walking around?
- What do you notice in your body when you do walk more?
- What do you see as the benefits of walking?
- What could motivate you to enjoy walking? / What would make walking more enjoyable?
- How could you incorporate walking into your everyday?
- How would walking have an impact for you?

OTHER HEALTH-PROMOTING BEHAVIOURS

Checking blood glucose levels

- What are some of the benefits of checking your BGLs regularly?
- Why is it important to check your BGLs?
- Tell me some of the ways that might help you to remember to check your BGLs?
- What has been helpful in the past to remind you to do things?

Reducing drinking

- Tell me some of the reasons you're here today?
- Why do *you* want to reduce your drinking?
- How do you think you would feel if you reduced your drinking?
- What have you tried before to reduce your drinking?
- Who do you think could help you with this?

Reducing intake of junk food

- Tell me about some strategies you could use?
- How do you think you could achieve this?
- Tell me about what you're hoping to achieve?
- What are some alternative snack choices you could make?
- What do you know about the benefits of reducing your sugar intake?

Smoking cessation

- Why would you ever like to stop smoking?
- If you were to stop smoking in the future, what do you think your reasons might be?

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS

Engaging in or increasing social/enjoyable activities

- What social activities do you enjoy?
- What are the reasons for you to...? What interests you about that?
- Tell me about an activity that you like to do?
- What have you enjoyed doing in the past?
- Why is it important for you to be more sociable?
- Why do you want to increase your social interaction?
- Why is it important to you to engage in more social activities?

Reduced aggression

- How would you like people to interact with you?
- What would it be like if...?
- Why is it important for you to stay calmer?
- How confident do you feel in your ability to stay calm?

Scheduling activities

- Why is it important to you to have more structure in your day?
- What have you already done to develop structure in your day?
- Why is it important to have a schedule?
- What's one thing you can do to put more structure in your day?

SPECIFIC DIAGNOSTIC GROUPS

Amputees

- Why do you think stopping smoking is important?
- What are some things you want to do that you can't do in a wheelchair?
- What sort of activities have you enjoyed in the past?
- Tell me about what you'd be willing to do to optimise your health?

Orthopaedic

- What do you want to be able to do?
- How important is it to you to get back to this? (i.e. a sport)
- What are the steps in your recovery?
- Tell me about what you can currently do?
- How will it feel to have recovered from this injury?

Oncology

- What are your thoughts or concerns about the diagnosis?
- How would you like to be able to think about it..?

Pain / Thoughts about pain

- How are you feeling today?
- What would you like to get back to/be able to do? How do you intend to get there?
 - What do you need to change?
 - How do you get started?
- How will you get there?
- What have you done that has helped in the past?
- What do you think would help manage your pain?
- What are you able to do now?
- What are your reasons for looking for different strategies to manage your pain?

Stroke

- Tell me about the reasons you have for wanting to improve your mood.
- What would you be willing to try to get back to community activities?
- How could you improve on taking medication?
- Why is it important for you to walk without a gait aid?
- Tell me about your willingness to try:
 - An alternative communication aid
 - A walking stick
 - Modified cutlery

WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Paediatrics

- Tell me about what has worked before with XX's behaviour?
- How is XX's eating when you do all sit at the table?
- What would help you be able to do 4 practice sessions at home each week?
- Tell me about why it's important for XX to go back to school?
- What would be the most valuable thing about coming to this service? (engagement in service)
- Tell me about a good day with feeding?
- Tell me about X's transition from kinder to primary school?

Engaging families in paediatric rehabilitation / treatment

- What would make easier for you?

WORKING WITH OLDER PEOPLE

Dementia

- Tell me about a time when your mum has preferred to stay inside?
- What are the things that would engage your mum inside?
- What have you started to do to keep your mum engaged in the task at hand?

Transition to Care

- What do you need to make a place feel like home?
- What would make you ready to move in to the "nursing home"?

Working with older people

- What is it about your memory that brought you to this service?
- Tell me about what you would like to achieve/be able to do?
- What do you think you're capable of achieving?
- What are some of the strategies you have already put in place to help with your memory?