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## THE SPIRIT OF MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

The easiest way to understand the spirit of motivational interviewing, is to think about a personal health issue that you need to discuss with a health professional. Think of a health issue about which you feel embarrassed or uncomfortable. Now imagine you are about to see the health professional - what is it you would need from the health professional to help you to talk about your issue?

I would need the health professional to...

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**Now read the definitions of the four aspects of MI Spirit in the box on the right.**

**Sound familiar?**

*In our own experiences of health care, we know what it is like to have health professionals tell before they listen, to judge without compassion, and to dismiss our values, preferences and priorities.*

*The spirit of motivational interviewing is to truly embrace a way of being with patients that is collaborative, compassionate, accepting, and evocative of their own strengths and abilities to change and grow.*

**In short, we need to work with the patient's perspective.**

Counselling microskills, or OARS, are used to reflect MI spirit in conversations with people you help and support, particularly conversations about change:

**O – Open questions** about change.

**A – Affirmations** of strengths, skills, qualities.

**R – Reflections** to demonstrate empathy and understanding

**S – Summaries** to help people see the whole picture and support making decisions

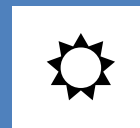
See the information sheet *Microskills for MI* for more information.

### THE FOUR ASPECTS OF MI SPIRIT



#### PARTNERSHIP

*Work together as equals.*



#### ACCEPTANCE

*Honour the person's worth and autonomy with accurate empathy and affirmation.*



#### COMPASSION

*Work in the person's best interest.*



#### EMPOWERMENT

*Help people to see and use their strengths and abilities in support of their goals.*