

Explore



Decide



Prepare



Bridge of Reasons

Motivational Interviewing Checklist: A self-help tool

Introduction

This activity is designed to help you identify the benefits you will get from making a change and boost your motivation.

It is based on Motivational Interviewing (MI) which is a widely used and well researched approach devised by William R Miller in the 1980s (Rollnick et al., 2016, pp. 9, 21).

The main idea is simple: change comes from within. Change takes place when the person themselves wants to change. MI uses a range of techniques to help people find their own meaningful reasons to change. Reflective questions are central to creating a readiness to change as these move us from one state to another across the 'Bridge of Reasons'.

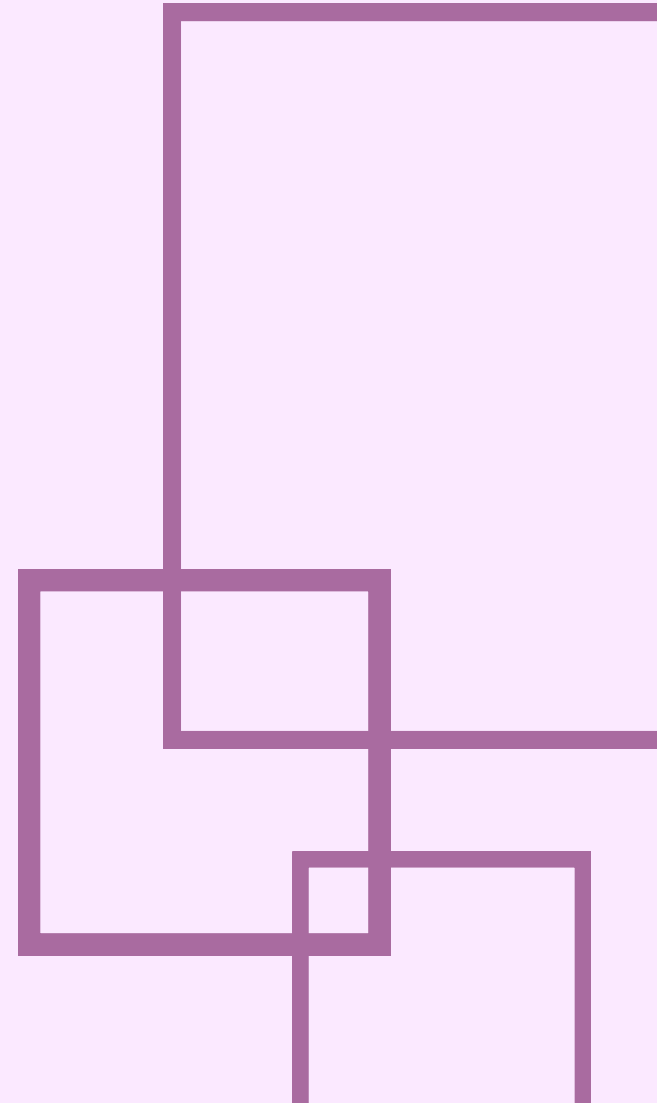


This tool is designed to...

- Help you be clear what a change can do for you.
- Motivate yourself to do something.
- Identify what steps you are actually prepared to take.

Consider using this tool if you...

- Lack motivation.
- Are unsure why you might want to do something.
- Need to identify realistic changes you might make.



How to use this tool

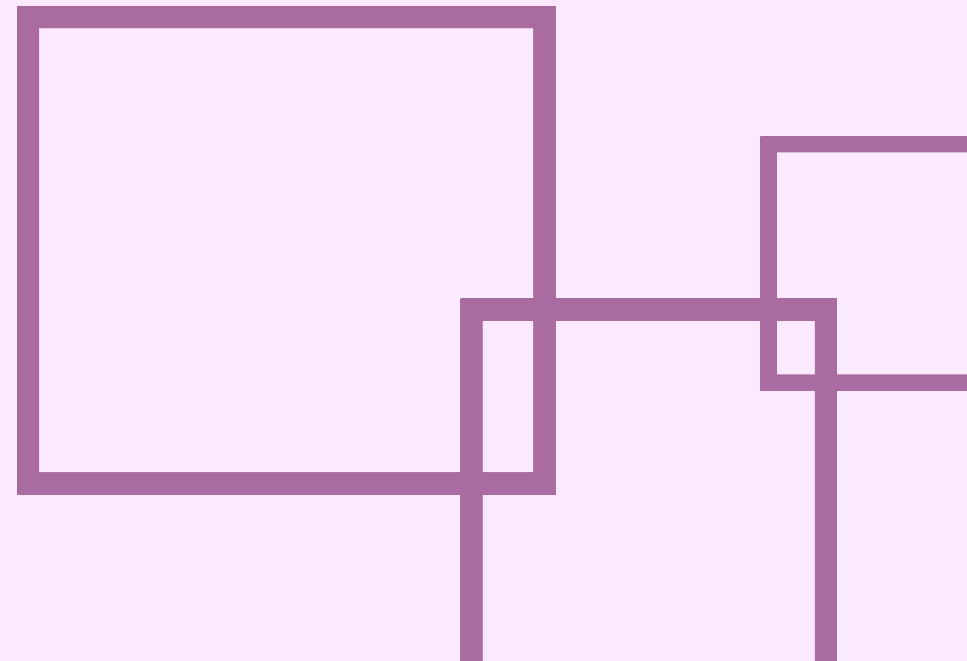
Look at each of the questions below. Spend a few minutes answering each. Try to answer as fully as you can. Think of as many benefits as possible. Be as concrete and specific about what these benefits will be. Make them real. Don't forget others who will indirectly benefit from the changes you will make and how this will, in turn, benefit you. When you have finished, you may want to go back and see if you have further points to add.

Use these questions to consider how changing yourself or your situation might benefit you.

- What makes me feel that I need to change?
- What will happen if I don't change?
- What will be different if I change?
- What are the good things about changing?
- What are the bad things about not changing?
- What is the BEST thing I could imagine from changing?
- What is the WORST thing I could imagine happening if I don't change?
- 'If I change how would my life be different from what it is today?' (Sobel and Sobel, 2019, p.4)

It is natural to have some mixed feelings about change, as even good changes can bring challenges. Motivational Interviewing encourages you to rate your readiness to change on a scale of 1 – 10 where 10 is being completely ready to fully change (few people will get as high as this by the way).

You might rate the whole change or specific actions that lead to a bigger change. Use this technique to see the small but significant steps you are prepared to take. Look for the areas where YOU have higher scores. This indicates the steps you are most ready to take. Remember, a score of 10 is unusual and isn't necessary. You don't need a really high score to try make a change. All you need is a readiness to have a go.



Pause, Reflect, Act

- Which benefits stood out as being most powerful for you?
- What values or higher purposes do they connect with for you?
- What can you learn from this?
- What practically do you want to do now to take forward the insights from this exercise?
- Who could help you with this?
- Which other self-help tools would you like to look at next?

NB: Because everyone is different and no one solution on its own is necessary a magic bullet, please look at our other self-help Tools as well and use the ones that work best for you.

References and Resources

- Herman, K. C., Reinke, W. M., Frey, A., & Shepard, S. (2014;2013;). *Motivational interviewing in schools: Strategies for engaging parents, teachers, and students*. Springer Publishing Company, LLC.
- Rollnick, S., Kaplan, S. G., & Rutschman, R. (2016). *Motivational interviewing in schools: Conversations to improve behavior and learning*. Guilford Press.
- Sobel, L. C., & and Sobel , M. (2013). *Motivational Techniques and Skills for Health and Mental Health Coaching/Counseling*. [Document]. Retrieved 28th November 2022 from <https://www.nova.edu/qsc/forms/mi-techniques-skills.pdf>
- Souders, B. (2019, November 5). 17 Motivational Interviewing Questions and Skills. *Positive Psychology*. Retrieved 28th November 2022 from: <https://positivepsychology.com/motivational-interviewing/#questions>

If you are a member of staff from another educational organisation and want to use a limited number of our self-help tools with your students, we'd love to hear from you and share good practice. We'd ask that you retain references to University of Huddersfield as a matter of courtesy and acknowledge the other sources we've used. Thank you.