Motivational Interviewing is a collaborative conversation to strengthen a person’s inner desire for change and progress toward life goals.

Defining Motivational Interviewing

The definition of Motivational Interviewing has been refined since it was first developed by William R. Miller in 1983. Since that time, this method has been applied and tested in various settings and proven effective for treating those with substance use disorders. Motivational Interviewing focuses on exploring and resolving ambivalence and centers on motivational processes within each individual to facilitate change. In contrast to other methods, it’s not “coercive,” and there aren’t external forces imposing change on the patient. Instead, it’s change that comes from within. It’s collaborative, with MI being used as a guide to elicit and strengthen and individual’s dedication to his or her own goals.

A Well-Rounded Treatment Program

Motivational Interviewing should be just one component of a diverse and varied treatment plan. While in treatment, patients may have the opportunity to participate in some or all of the following:

- Individual therapy with an expert mental health professional
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)
- Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)
- Group therapy and support
- Family therapy
- Relapse prevention and life skills groups
- Specialty treatment for trauma and other issues

MI can help those in treatment for co-occurring disorders see positive results.
Personalized Plans and a Stages-of-Change Approach

A variety of techniques are used in both residential and outpatient treatment for substance abuse. Motivational Interviewing (also known as Motivational Enhancement Therapy) uses a stages-of-change approach that has been proven effective in treating drug and alcohol addiction. Motivational Interviewing also allows plans to be individualized to the person, creating an approach that is the polar opposite of other one-size-fits-all methods.

Motivational Interviewing allows therapists to embrace all the issues people bring to treatment and to address them, meeting individuals where they are and moving through the process with them. This research-based approach to patient-centered care successfully helps patients confront their issues and create the lives they want to live instead of having a set path dictated to them. A skillful MI practitioner is attuned to the patient’s levels of ambivalence and can sense that person’s readiness for change, thoughtfully utilizing techniques and strategies that will meet that person where he or she is at the moment.

Foundations Recovery Network utilizes Motivational Interviewing to help patients discover their inner motivation to change and to meet their personal goals.

The Three Essential Elements of Motivational Interviewing

Motivational Interviewing can be defined through a few essential elements. First, it is a particular kind of conversation about change that takes place during counseling, therapy or consultation. Second, Motivational Interviewing is collaborative. It is a person-centered partnership between a therapist and a patient rather than a process of education passed from an expert to a recipient. Lastly, Motivational Interviewing is an evocative form of therapy. It seeks to bring out a person’s own motivation and commitment.

About Foundations Recovery Network

Foundations Recovery Network is recognized as the premier leader in integrated treatment for co-occurring addiction and mental health concerns. Our award-winning model combines evidence-based addiction treatment with innovative therapies for emotional and mental health to address a Dual Diagnosis effectively. Results demonstrate that FRN patients are twice as likely to maintain sobriety one year post-treatment compared to those who attend traditional programs.