MI Spirit Embodiment

Partnership, Acceptance, Compassion & Evocation

Intensives Library · Clinical Practice & Treatment

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Part 1 · Overview

MI Spirit Embodiment

Motivational Interviewing is not a technique — it is a spirit. The four elements of MI Spirit (Partnership, Acceptance, Compassion, Evocation) represent a fundamental way of relating to clients that, when genuinely embodied, transforms clinical encounters. This intensive builds authentic MI Spirit rather than surface-level skill performance.

Learning Slides

Deep exploration of PACE elements with clinical applications and self-reflective exercises.

Mind Map

Visual framework for understanding and integrating MI Spirit into clinical practice.

Self-Assessment

Evaluate the authentic embodiment of each MI Spirit element in your practice.

Worksheet

Self-reflection exercises for deepening genuine MI Spirit practice beyond technique.

The PACE Elements

P

PartnershipCollaborative, not expert-to-recipient relationship

A

AcceptanceAbsolute worth, autonomy, accurate empathy, affirmation

C

CompassionActively promoting client wellbeing as the priority

E

EvocationDrawing out client's own motivation and resources

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Part 2 · Slides

INTRODUCTION

The Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

Mastering MI Spirit in SUD Treatment

The Spirit of MI represents one of the most transformative aspects of therapeutic excellence, where authentic partnership, acceptance, compassion, and evocation create conditions where genuine change motivation emerges from within clients.

- MI Spirit transcends techniques to encompass a fundamental way of being with clients
- Sustainable change emerges from internal motivation rather than external pressure
- Clients possess inherent wisdom needing support to access their own reasons for change
- MI creates environments where clients feel heard, understood, and empowered
- The spirit honors client expertise while providing professional support

CORE ELEMENTS

The Four Core Elements of MI Spirit

Partnership, Acceptance, Compassion, Evocation

MI Spirit comprises four interconnected elements that transform potential therapeutic confrontation into collaborative exploration, creating conditions for authentic motivation to emerge.

- Partnership: Recognizing clients as experts on their own experience
- Acceptance: Maintaining non-judgmental stance while expressing authentic care
- Compassion: Understanding struggle and ambivalence as normal, not pathological
- Evocation: Drawing out client motivations rather than providing external reasons
- Together these create therapeutic environments where change talk naturally emerges

PARTNERSHIP

Partnership Excellence

Creating Genuine Collaboration

Partnership involves creating genuine collaboration where clients feel heard and valued as experts on their own experience while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries and expertise.

- Recognize client expertise while sharing professional knowledge appropriately
- Create environments where clients feel empowered rather than directed
- Maintain collaborative stance even during crisis situations
- Balance client autonomy with professional responsibility

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- Transform therapeutic hierarchy into authentic collaboration

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ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance and Non-Judgment

Separating Behavior from Worth

Acceptance encompasses maintaining non-judgmental stance toward client behavior and choices while expressing authentic care and concern about harmful patterns.

- Separate client behavior from client worth
- Respond to concerning decisions with curiosity rather than confrontation
- Support client dignity even when disagreeing with their choices
- Acceptance differs from agreement—you can accept without agreeing
- Create therapeutic safety that allows honest communication

COMPASSION

Compassion and Empathic Understanding

Understanding Struggle as Normal

Compassion includes understanding client struggle and ambivalence as normal aspects of change processes rather than pathological resistance requiring correction.

- Maintain empathy for client experience without over-involvement
- Express genuine care without pity or condescension
- Respond to setbacks with understanding rather than frustration
- Avoid the righting reflex—the urge to fix or correct
- Create warmth and understanding that supports client dignity

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EVOCATION

Evocation and Client Wisdom

Drawing Out Rather Than Putting In

Evocation involves drawing out client insights, motivations, and strengths rather than providing external answers or solutions that may create dependence or resistance.

- Ask questions that help clients discover their own reasons for change
- Recognize and reflect client wisdom even when it differs from your assessment
- Support client self-discovery rather than imposing therapeutic insights
- Help clients access their own values and connect them to change
- Create empowerment through discovery rather than direction

RESISTANCE

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Understanding Resistance

Information, Not Pathology

In MI, resistance is understood as indicating need for approach adjustment rather than client pathology or lack of motivation. It provides valuable information about the therapeutic relationship.

- Resistance signals something isn't working in the approach
- Respond with curiosity about what needs to change
- Explore both sides of ambivalence without pushing
- Avoid argumentative cycles that strengthen resistance
- Roll with resistance rather than confronting it

AMBIVALENCE

Exploring Ambivalence

Normal and Valuable

Ambivalence—simultaneously wanting and not wanting to change—is a normal part of the change process, not a problem to quickly resolve or eliminate.

- Ambivalence is expected in all change processes
- Help clients examine both sides without predetermined conclusions
- Sustain talk (reasons not to change) deserves exploration, not argument
- Change talk emerges naturally when ambivalence is explored safely
- Resolution of ambivalence comes from within, not from pressure

---

CHANGE TALK

Eliciting and Strengthening Change Talk

The Language of Motivation

Change talk—client statements favoring change—is the language of motivation. MI practitioners strategically elicit, recognize, and strengthen change talk while handling sustain talk skillfully.

- DARN: Desire, Ability, Reasons, Need for change
- CAT: Commitment, Activation, Taking steps
- Reflect and amplify change talk when you hear it
- Respond to sustain talk without becoming argumentative
- Weight your reflections gently toward change language

AUTONOMY

Autonomy Support

Choice and Self-Direction

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Autonomy support emphasizes client choice and responsibility while providing appropriate support and information. Paradoxically, supporting autonomy is more persuasive than overt persuasion.

- Emphasize that change is the client's choice
- Support decision-making even when you'd prefer different choices
- Provide information with permission, not prescription
- Balance autonomy with appropriate professional concern
- Self-direction enhances commitment and follow-through

VALUES

Values Exploration

Connecting Change to What Matters Most

Values exploration helps clients connect potential change goals to their deepest personal values, creating intrinsic motivation that is more sustainable than external pressure.

- Help clients articulate what matters most to them
- Explore discrepancy between current behavior and important values
- Honor client values even when they differ from yours
- Connect change goals to personal meaning and purpose
- Values-aligned change has stronger motivation and persistence

---

SELF-EFFICACY

Building Self-Efficacy

Confidence in Capacity for Change

Self-efficacy—belief in one's capacity to succeed—is essential for change. MI practitioners actively strengthen client confidence through recognition of past successes and current strengths.

- Recognize and reflect client strengths and past successes
- Avoid focusing primarily on deficits and problems
- Support realistic goal-setting that builds on success
- Celebrate small steps and progress
- Confidence grows through acknowledged capability

INTEGRATION

Maintaining MI Spirit Consistently

Across All Situations and Presentations

MI Spirit mastery involves maintaining the spirit consistently across different client presentations, crisis situations, and treatment phases, while integrating with other therapeutic approaches.

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- Maintain spirit during crises when directive urges are strongest
- Recognize when you've slipped from spirit and return to it
- Integrate MI with other modalities while preserving spirit
- Spirit consistency builds client trust over time
- Self-monitoring and supervision support consistent practice

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CONCLUSION

The MI Spirit Journey

More Than Technique—A Way of Being

MI Spirit represents more than therapeutic technique—it constitutes a fundamental approach to human relationship that honors individual autonomy and the natural capacity for positive change within every person.

- Spirit cannot be faked—it emerges from genuine respect
- Clients feel respected, empowered, and supported rather than pressured
- Authentic engagement leads to internally motivated change
- Continuous development enhances both effectiveness and satisfaction
- MI Spirit honors human capacity for growth and transformation

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Part 3 · Mind Map

MI Spirit Embodiment Mind Map

Map Your Motivational Interviewing Spirit Patterns

Create a personalized map of your MI Spirit patterns—partnership, acceptance, compassion, evocation, and resistance response. This helps identify specific development priorities for enhancing your motivational interviewing practice.

Remember: MI Spirit cannot be faked—it emerges from genuine respect for client autonomy and wisdom. Authentic embodiment creates therapeutic environments where clients feel respected, empowered, and supported.

Partnership Patterns

Creating genuine collaboration with clients

Partnership Strengths

When does your therapeutic relationship feel genuinely collaborative?
Examples: Treatment planning; Goal setting; Exploring options

Your specific patterns...

Directive Tendencies

When do you slip into expert or directive mode?
Examples: Crisis situations; Client ambivalence; Time pressure

Your specific patterns...

Client Response

How do clients respond differently to partnership versus direction?
Examples: Engagement levels; Openness; Follow-through

Your specific patterns...

Acceptance Patterns

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Maintaining non-judgmental stance

Acceptance Strengths

When do you maintain genuine acceptance regardless of client choices?
Examples: Different values; Slow progress; Repeated setbacks

Your specific patterns...

Judgment Triggers

What triggers judgmental responses in you?
Examples: Certain behaviors; Value conflicts; Frustration with pace

Your specific patterns...

Managing Judgment

How do you return to acceptance when judgment arises?
Examples: Self-awareness; Perspective-taking; Supervision

Your specific patterns...

Compassion Patterns

Genuine empathy and understanding

Compassion Strengths

When does your compassion feel most authentic and effective?
Examples: Difficult disclosures; Client suffering; Small wins

Your specific patterns...

Compassion Challenges

What diminishes your capacity for authentic compassion?

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Examples: Burnout; Repeated relapses; Emotional overload

Your specific patterns...

Sustaining Compassion

What helps you maintain compassion over time?
Examples: Self-care; Supervision; Meaning in work

Your specific patterns...

Evocation Patterns

Drawing out client wisdom and motivation

Evocation Strengths

When do you successfully evoke client insights rather than provide answers?
Examples: Values exploration; Change talk elicitation; Strength recognition

Your specific patterns...

Telling Tendencies

When do you tend to tell rather than evoke?
Examples: Psychoeducation; Problem-solving; Advice-giving urges

Your specific patterns...

Effective Questions

What questions most effectively evoke client wisdom?

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Examples: Open questions; Importance/confidence rulers; Values questions

Your specific patterns...

Resistance Response Patterns

How you respond to client resistance

Rolling With Resistance

When do you successfully roll with resistance rather than confronting it?
Examples: Reflecting ambivalence; Amplified reflections; Shifting focus

Your specific patterns...

Confrontation Triggers

What leads you to confront or argue with resistance?
Examples: Urgency; Frustration; Concern for safety

Your specific patterns...

Resistance as Information

How do you use resistance as information about your approach?
Examples: Adjusting strategy; Exploring differently; Backing off

Your specific patterns...

Autonomy Support Patterns

Honoring client choice and self-direction

Autonomy Strengths

When do you effectively support client autonomy and choice?

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Examples: Decision-making; Goal ownership; Pace respect

Your specific patterns...

Control Tendencies

When do you struggle to let clients lead?
Examples: Safety concerns; Better outcomes visible; Time pressure

Your specific patterns...

Paradox of Autonomy

How does supporting autonomy actually increase motivation?
Examples: Reduced resistance; Ownership of goals; Internal motivation

Your specific patterns...

Action Planning for MI Spirit Development

What is one key shift you can make to better embody the spirit of MI?

One specific behavior or mindset change...

What specific actions will you take in the next 30 days?

List concrete actions...

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How will you seek feedback and supervision for your MI development?

Supervision, peer feedback, recording review...

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Part 4 · Assessment

Part 1: Core MI Spirit Self-Assessment

0 of 10 questions answered

The Classical MI Spirit Elements

I avoid argumentative dialogue and meet resistance with acceptance.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I adjust to the client's pace and motivation level in the change process.

○

Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

My conversations guide clients to voice their own reasons for change.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I make efforts to understand the client's perspectives and experiences.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I create a dialogue of mutual trust, honesty and compassionate partnership.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I emphasize the client's free choice, responsibility and self-direction.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I strengthen the client's confidence and self-efficacy for successful change.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I strategically balance open exploration with judicious focusing and direction.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I elicit the client's own motivations for change rather than insisting on it.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I am more persuasive by supporting autonomy than by overt persuasion tactics.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

Part 2: Understanding Your Current MI Spirit Awareness

0 of 25 questions answered

Partnership and Collaboration Recognition

I recognize when my therapeutic relationship feels genuinely collaborative versus directive.

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Never

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Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I notice how clients respond to partnership approaches versus traditional authority dynamics.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I understand the difference between supporting client autonomy and abandoning guidance.

○

Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

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I see patterns in what creates authentic collaboration versus superficial client-centered language.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I acknowledge both collaborative and directive aspects of my current therapeutic approach.

○

Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

Acceptance and Non-Judgment Assessment

I recognize when I am maintaining genuine acceptance versus when judgment affects my presence.

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Never

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Rarely

○

Sometimes

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○

Often

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Always

I notice my internal responses to client choices that I might personally disagree with.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I understand how acceptance differs from agreement and maintain relationship despite differences.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I see patterns in what triggers judgmental responses versus sustained acceptance.

○

Never

○

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I acknowledge both accepting and judgmental aspects of my therapeutic responses.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

Compassion and Empathy Recognition

I recognize when my responses reflect genuine compassion versus going through motions.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

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I notice how compassion affects both client engagement and my own therapeutic satisfaction.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I understand how to maintain compassion even when clients make concerning choices.

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I see patterns in what enhances versus diminishes my capacity for authentic compassion.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I acknowledge both compassionate and emotionally detached aspects of my therapeutic presence.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

Evocation and Client Wisdom Assessment

I recognize when I am successfully drawing out client insights versus providing answers.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I notice opportunities to evoke client strengths rather than focusing on deficits.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I understand how to ask questions that help clients discover their own wisdom.

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I see patterns in what enables client self-discovery versus creating dependence.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I acknowledge both evocative and interpretive aspects of my therapeutic communication.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

Resistance and Ambivalence Response Recognition

I recognize when client resistance indicates my approach needs adjustment.

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I notice how my responses to resistance either increase or decrease client defensiveness.

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I understand ambivalence as normal rather than something to quickly resolve.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I see patterns in what reduces resistance versus what strengthens it through confrontation.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I acknowledge both resistance-reducing and resistance-provoking aspects of my responses.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

Part 3: Developing MI Spirit Mastery

0 of 60 questions answered

Partnership Excellence

I actively create genuine partnership where clients feel heard and valued as experts.

○

Never

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Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I develop skills for sharing expertise without imposing solutions.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I build capacity for maintaining collaborative stance during crisis situations.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I create partnership approaches that enhance both client empowerment and professional responsibility.

○

Never

○

Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I practice collaborative relationship building that serves therapeutic goals and client autonomy.

○

Never

○

Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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○

Always

Acceptance and Non-Judgment Excellence

I actively maintain acceptance of clients regardless of their choices or pace.

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Never

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Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I develop capacity for separating client behavior from client worth.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I build skills for responding to concerning decisions with acceptance rather than judgment.

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Never

○

Rarely

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○

Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I create acceptance approaches that enhance both therapeutic safety and client respect.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I practice non-judgmental presence that serves both client dignity and appropriate boundaries.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

Compassion and Empathic Understanding Mastery

I actively express genuine compassion while avoiding pity or over-involvement.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I develop deep empathic understanding of client ambivalence and change complexity.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I build capacity for maintaining compassion during repeated setbacks.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I create compassionate approaches that enhance therapeutic relationship and professional boundaries.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I practice empathic response that serves both client experience and therapeutic effectiveness.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

Evocation and Client Wisdom Excellence

I actively draw out client insights and strengths rather than providing external solutions.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I develop expertise in asking questions that help clients discover their own reasons for change.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I build capacity for recognizing client wisdom even when it differs from my assessment.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I create evocative approaches that enhance both client self-discovery and professional guidance.

○

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Never

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Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I practice wisdom evocation that serves both client empowerment and therapeutic expertise.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

Resistance Navigation and Ambivalence Exploration

I actively respond to resistance with curiosity rather than confrontation.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I develop skills for exploring ambivalence as normal and valuable.

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I build capacity for helping clients examine both sides without pushing conclusions.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I create resistance approaches that enhance both engagement and change motivation.

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Never

○

Rarely

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Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I practice ambivalence exploration that serves both client autonomy and change consideration.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

Motivation Enhancement and Self-Efficacy Building

I actively strengthen client confidence and belief in their capacity for change.

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Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I develop expertise in recognizing and amplifying client change talk.

○

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Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I build capacity for supporting self-efficacy through recognition of past successes.

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Never

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Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I create motivation approaches that enhance both client confidence and change commitment.

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Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I practice self-efficacy building that serves both empowerment and realistic goal setting.

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Never

○

Rarely

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Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

Autonomy Support and Self-Direction Excellence

I actively emphasize client choice and responsibility while providing appropriate support.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I develop skills for supporting client decision-making even when I'd prefer different choices.

○

Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I build capacity for balancing autonomy support with professional concern.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I create autonomy approaches that enhance both client empowerment and professional responsibility.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I practice self-direction support that serves both independence and appropriate guidance.

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Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

Strategic Focus and Direction Balance

I actively balance open exploration with appropriate focusing based on client needs.

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Never

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Rarely

○

Sometimes

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Often

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Always

I develop expertise in knowing when to explore broadly versus focus specifically.

○

Never

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Rarely

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Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I build capacity for providing gentle direction while maintaining client leadership.

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Never

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Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

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Always

I create focusing approaches that enhance both therapeutic progress and client autonomy.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I practice directional balance that serves both therapeutic efficiency and collaborative exploration.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

Change Talk Elicitation and Sustain Talk Response

I actively elicit and strengthen client expressions of motivation and need for change.

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Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I develop skills for responding to sustain talk without becoming argumentative.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I build capacity for reflecting both change talk and sustain talk while weighting toward change.

○

Never

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○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I create elicitation approaches that enhance both natural motivation and change consideration.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I practice change talk enhancement that serves both client exploration and commitment.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

Values Exploration and Goal Alignment

I actively help clients explore personal values and connect them to change goals.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I develop expertise in helping clients identify discrepancies between behavior and values.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I build capacity for honoring client values even when they differ from mine.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

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○

Often

○

Always

I create values approaches that enhance both personal meaning and change motivation.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I practice values alignment that serves both client priorities and therapeutic direction.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

MI Spirit Integration and Consistency

I actively maintain MI spirit consistently across different situations and treatment phases.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I develop skills for returning to MI spirit when I notice myself becoming directive.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I build capacity for integrating MI with other therapeutic interventions.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I create integration approaches that enhance both MI fidelity and therapeutic flexibility.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I practice spirit consistency that serves both authenticity and methodological integrity.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

Professional Development and Team Culture

I actively seek feedback and supervision regarding my MI spirit development.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

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○

Often

○

Always

I develop ongoing learning practices that enhance both understanding and application.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I build capacity for self-monitoring my adherence to MI spirit.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I create development approaches that enhance both skill building and clinical effectiveness.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

I practice MI growth that serves both professional competence and client care excellence.

○

Never

○

Rarely

○

Sometimes

○

Often

○

Always

Scoring guide

MI Spirit Embodiment Assessment

Mastering the Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

Part 1: Core MI Spirit Self-Assessment

The Classical MI Spirit Elements

Part 2: Understanding Your Current MI Spirit Awareness

Partnership and Collaboration Recognition

Acceptance and Non-Judgment Assessment

Compassion and Empathy Recognition

Evocation and Client Wisdom Assessment

Resistance and Ambivalence Response Recognition

Part 3: Developing MI Spirit Mastery

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Partnership Excellence

Acceptance and Non-Judgment Excellence

Compassion and Empathic Understanding Mastery

Evocation and Client Wisdom Excellence

Resistance Navigation and Ambivalence Exploration

Motivation Enhancement and Self-Efficacy Building

Autonomy Support and Self-Direction Excellence

Strategic Focus and Direction Balance

Change Talk Elicitation and Sustain Talk Response

Values Exploration and Goal Alignment

MI Spirit Integration and Consistency

Professional Development and Team Culture

Exemplifies the Spirit of MI

Score: 45 and above

You demonstrate well-developed MI skills and consistently embody the core spirit in your therapeutic relationships.

Applies MI Principles Effectively

Score: 35 and above

You effectively apply MI principles with some room to strengthen your approach in specific areas.

Could Benefit from More Intentional MI Adoption

Score: 25 and above

You show beginning understanding of MI principles but could benefit from more intentional adoption.

Significant Potential for Enhancement

Score: below the band above

Consider focused MI training and supervision to develop fundamental skills in partnership, acceptance, compassion, and evocation.

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Part 5 · Worksheet

MI Spirit Embodiment Worksheet

Mastering the Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

This worksheet helps you reflect on your embodiment of MI Spirit—partnership, acceptance, compassion, and evocation—and develop concrete plans for enhancing your motivational interviewing practice.

Reflection on MI Spirit Strengths

What is your biggest motivational interviewing strength currently?

Which MI spirit elements (partnership, acceptance, compassion, evocation) feel most natural to you?

What aspects of MI practice do clients seem to respond to most positively?

Where do you feel most confident and authentic in your MI approach?

Areas for Development

Which MI principle or skill could use the most development?

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Which spirit element challenges you most consistently?

What situations or client presentations make it hardest to maintain MI spirit?

Which specific skills (evocation, handling resistance, autonomy support) need focused attention?

Partnership and Collaboration

How do you recognize when your therapeutic relationship feels genuinely collaborative versus directive?

What helps you maintain partnership even during crisis situations?

How do you balance supporting client autonomy with appropriate professional guidance?

Acceptance and Non-Judgment

How do you recognize when judgment or frustration affects your therapeutic presence?

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What triggers judgmental responses in you, and how do you manage them?

How do you maintain therapeutic relationship despite value differences with clients?

Compassion and Empathy

How do you maintain compassion even when clients make repeated concerning choices?

What enhances versus diminishes your capacity for authentic therapeutic compassion?

How do you avoid the 'righting reflex'—the urge to fix or correct?

Evocation and Client Wisdom

How do you recognize opportunities to evoke client strengths rather than focusing on deficits?

What helps you ask questions that support client self-discovery rather than leading to conclusions?

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How do you recognize and reflect client wisdom even when it differs from your assessment?

Resistance and Ambivalence

How do you recognize when client resistance indicates your approach needs adjustment?

What patterns do you see in what reduces resistance versus what strengthens it?

How do you help clients examine both sides of ambivalence without pushing toward conclusions?

MI Spirit Development Map

Track your journey toward MI Spirit mastery

Directive to Genuinely Collaborative

From expert-focused to authentic partnership

Where I was

Past patterns...

Where I am now

Current state...

Where I'm heading

Future goals...

Judgmental to Accepting

From judging choices to maintaining non-judgmental stance

Where I was

Past patterns...

Where I am now

Current state...

Where I'm heading

Future goals...

Emotionally Detached to Compassionate

From going through motions to genuine empathy

Where I was

Past patterns...

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Where I am now

Current state...

Where I'm heading

Future goals...

Telling to Evoking

From providing answers to drawing out client wisdom

Where I was

Past patterns...

Where I am now

Current state...

Where I'm heading

Future goals...

Confronting to Rolling With Resistance

From arguing to curiosity about resistance

Where I was

Past patterns...

Where I am now

Current state...

Where I'm heading

Future goals...

Pressuring to Autonomy Supporting

From pushing change to honoring client choice

Where I was

Past patterns...

Where I am now

Current state...

Where I'm heading

Future goals...

Controlling to Client-Led

From directing to supporting client leadership

Where I was

Past patterns...

Where I am now

Current state...

Where I'm heading

Future goals...

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