

OARS: Basic Skills of Motivational Interviewing

Open Questions

- Gather information (vs. facts)
- Create open, non-judgmental tone
- Demonstrate genuine interest, respect
- Invite reflection and elaboration
- Affirm autonomy, self-direction

Closed Questions

- Invite brief, limited responses
- Useful to get basic facts
- Keep conversation superficial
- Focus on what interviewer wants to know
- Feel interrogative when used repeatedly

Closed questions sound like...

Do/did you...? Could/can we...?
Have/has there...? Will/would you...?
Are/is there...? Were you...?
How many...? When did...?
How often...?

Open questions sound like...

Tell me...
What...
How...
Why...

Open questions sound like...

What would you like me to know about yourself?
What's most important to you?
What would you like to focus on today?
What concerns, if any, do you have about taking these meds? How might they help?
How do you know when your diabetes is and is not well controlled?
What does meth do for you? What are the downsides?

Open questions sound like...

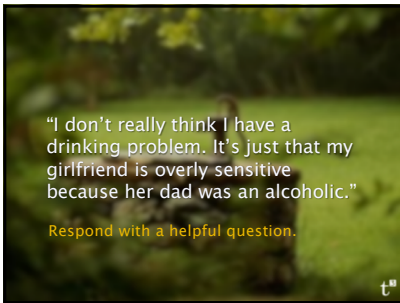
What strengths do you bring to this situation?
What will you lose if you give up drinking?
If you were to exercise more, what would be your reasons to do that? Your best reason?
What ideas do you have to succeed in meeting your goal?
What do you think you'll do next?
How can I, or others, be of help?

Open or Closed?

What do you already know about depression?
Don't you think it would help if you took your meds every day?
What does drinking do for you?
What would be some reasons to cut back your cannabis use?
How would you go about getting more involved in the community?
How's it going? Did you keep your appointment?

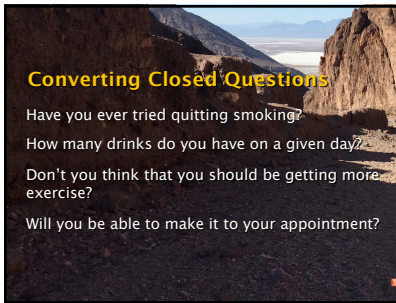
"I'd like to get a part-time job to have some extra money in my pocket, but who's gonna hire somebody like me?"

Respond with a helpful question.



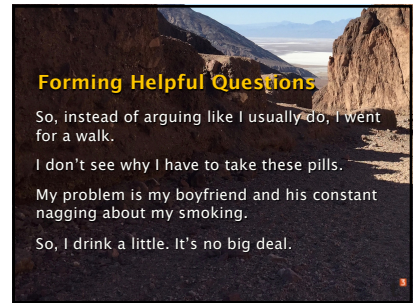
"I don't really think I have a drinking problem. It's just that my girlfriend is overly sensitive because her dad was an alcoholic."

Respond with a helpful question.



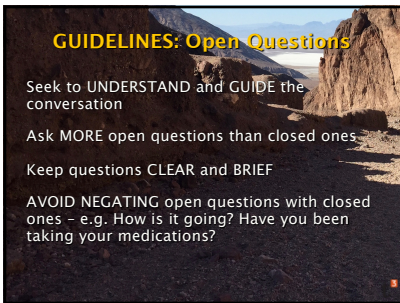
Converting Closed Questions

Have you ever tried quitting smoking?
 How many drinks do you have on a given day?
 Don't you think that you should be getting more exercise?
 Will you be able to make it to your appointment?



Forming Helpful Questions

So, instead of arguing like I usually do, I went for a walk.
 I don't see why I have to take these pills.
 My problem is my boyfriend and his constant nagging about my smoking.
 So, I drink a little. It's no big deal.



GUIDELINES: Open Questions

Seek to UNDERSTAND and GUIDE the conversation

Ask MORE open questions than closed ones

Keep questions CLEAR and BRIEF

AVOID NEGATING open questions with closed ones – e.g. How is it going? Have you been taking your medications?



Affirmations



Affirmations

- Strengthen engagement
- Reduce defensiveness
- Increase confidence in a person's ability to change
- Build hope



Affirmations

- Shine a light on what's good about a person
- Must be genuine
- Different from praise



Affirmations focus on...

- Intentions and actions
- Reframing actions or situations in a positive light
- Positive traits or skills
- Prizing of the person in general



What are examples of strengths?

Examples of Strengths

Organized	Care about your health
Goal-oriented	Have a support system
Persistent	Focused
Keep commitments	Integrity
Courageous	Optimistic
Confident	Resilient
Planner	Positive attitude
Persistent	Hopeful
Know yourself well	Don't give up
Know what works	Can see possibilities
Value professional advice	Creative

Sound like...

You are very skillful at...
 I noticed that you...
 You showed a lot of patience...
 You are a courageous person...
 You really value...
 You are very knowledgeable about...
 That took a lot of persistence to...
 Thank you for...

Activity

Trudy smokes two packs of cigarettes a day. She knows it isn't good for her and is fed up with people reminding her of it. At some point, she will stop, but just not yet. With everything else going on in her life, this is one area she feels is her own.

Trudy's strengths include...

Trudy smokes two packs of cigarettes a day. She knows it isn't good for her and is fed up with people reminding her of it. At some point, she will stop, but just not yet. With everything else going on in her life, this is one area she feels is her own.

An affirmation would sound like...

Trudy smokes two packs of cigarettes a day. She knows it isn't good for her and is fed up with people reminding her of it. At some point, she will stop, but just not yet. With everything else going on in her life, this is one area she feels is her own.

Examples

You're clear about what you want/need.
 You have clear boundaries.
 You know your mind.
 You know what your priorities are.
 You don't let others easily influence you.
 You're aware of the benefits and negatives of smoking.
 You have a plan to stop smoking.