

MI Strategy: Explore Discrepancy

Exploring discrepancy is a Motivational Interviewing technique that can be useful with a patient/client who may not be expressing a desire or willingness to change. The goal is to engage the client/patient in making sense of “discrepant information” about who they say they are and who they say they want to be. For example, a client may report valuing her family yet spending lots of time away from them because she spends more time trying to obtain her drug of choice. It is important to point out that discrepancies should be explored using a non-judgmental or non-confrontational approach.

Sample Questions for Exploring Discrepancy:

- ❖ *“How do you think your life would be different now if you were not drinking/using [alcohol/drug of choice]?”*
- ❖ *“What do you think your life would be like in 5 years if you don’t make changes and continue to use? How about in 10 years?”*
- ❖ *“On the one hand you say that your health is important to you, yet you continue to use, help me to understand this....”*