

Motivational Interviewing for Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) Service Providers

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Claire Hopkins (CH): Hello, everyone. Welcome to our webinar today, Motivational Interviewing for Unaccompanied Refugee Minor, or URM Service Providers. My name is Claire Hopkins. I'm a Switchboard training officer. Prior to joining Switchboard, I worked in refugee resettlement for nearly four years, leading recruitment and retention of foster parents for URMs and unaccompanied children. Prior to that, I led volunteer and community outreach efforts, provided short-term crisis support and advocacy for survivors of teen dating, domestic, and sexual violence.

I hold a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Grand Valley State University. By the end of our session together today, we hope that you'll be able to describe the guiding spirit and principles of motivational interviewing, or MI, and how they can support client-centered conversation with unaccompanied refugee minors. Recognize how MI compliments trauma-informed, strength-based service delivery and URM programs. Finally, apply MI principles to support URMs in overcoming ambivalence and aligning choices with their independent living goals.

Before we get started, a quick note on today's session. This webinar is focused on practical but non-clinical strategies for working with URMs. We noticed your registration, there were some awesome questions about motivational interviewing with personality disorders and some of those more clinical-based questions. While that's outside of scope for today's session, we're going to be dropping in the chat a resource called PESI, which offers trainings that explore motivational interviewing across varying diagnoses, populations.

We also invite you to stay tuned for our upcoming certificate course, which will be held in June, which is called Project MIRACLE, and stands for Motivational Interviewing for Resettlement, Adaption, Coping, and Life Empowerment, where you would be able to use what you've learned today and gain additional tools to empower clients and advance evidence-based practices in resettlement. For today, let's begin learning.

Describing the Guiding Support and Principles of MI:

Let's start off with our first one here, describing the guiding support and principles of MI and how they can support client-centered conversations with URMs. Before we go into that, I want to ground us in your real communication experiences with a Slido. If you've ever been to our webinars before or worked with Switchboard training officers, et cetera, we love Slido. We'll be using that today to get engagement and enhance learning for you all. Take out your smartphones and scan the QR code, or you can head to slido.com and put in the code 2242949. I'd love to hear from you.

In your conversations with youth, what moments feel challenging, make you unsure what to say next, or make it harder to stay client-centered?

CH: A few folks typing, that's always a good sign. [silence] When they are resistant and unwilling to engage. Noticing an attitude when they disclose sexual abuse. Language barriers. When you notice that their story is depressing. Personal

questions about families. Cultural barriers. These are coming in hot. I can't keep up with all the great ones. Reviewing mental health. Noticing anger. When they've shared past traumatic experiences. Combative. Shut down. When they're shy. That resistance kicking in there. Lack of motivation. Disassociation. The fawning fear reaction. Suicide ideation.

These answers are really right in line. They make so much sense. They're really these exact moments that we can notice and give us a signal that conversations might start to drift away from being truly client-centered. What I mean by that is often when these things come up that you've put in, we might feel that pressure to fix, or to change, or to solve the solution for youth when they pull back or shut down, or when the dynamic gets a little tense, which you all have named, it's easy to lose the connection that we're aiming for. Thank you so much for your responses. Let's see how client-centered case management supports us in these difficult moments, and maybe what it invites us to do differently.

We're starting here, before jumping into motivational interviewing, because client-centered practice is really the foundation of it. We're focusing on a conversational approach that helps people explore mixed feelings about change and strengthening their own motivation. We'll talk a little bit more about what that means soon. You might see URMs really want to make positive change, like attending classes, finding work, and just really getting to know people better. You might see URMs really want to make positive change, like attending classes, finding work, engaging in program services, while also holding feelings of being overwhelmed, uncertain, frustrated, or stuck.

Client-centered case management helps create the trust and the conditions where change can become possible. It means that we are assessing client needs, goals, and uniqueness. It means that we're honoring and respecting autonomy, emphasizing choice and control, engaging rather than prescribing. It avoids approaches that increase resistance or shutdown, meaning that if we don't really truly see the clients as the experts in their own lives, if we don't have this foundation of client-centered, motivational interviewing won't be effective. That's why we're beginning here. Let's learn a little bit more about those conversational barriers in that last bullet point on the next slide here.

We know that communication is central in this practice, but it's not just what we know. It's how we show up in the conversations. When clients do feel stuck or unsure about change, sometimes we can fall into these conversational barriers of persuading or trying to solve. In these responses, it's important to notice that they do come from a place of care, but they can replicate a feeling of one-sided or even coerciveness, especially for URMs who may have experienced systems making decisions for them.

With this client-centered framework and how it parallels with motivational interviewing, it encourages us to notice these common behaviors like persuading, "You need to focus on school." Or ordering, "You have to attend counseling." Criticizing, saying or thinking, "You're not taking this seriously," or giving unsolicited advice like, "You could make friends if you just joined the club." The goal here from this is not that I'm telling you all to strive for perfection. It's about having awareness of the words that we're using in conversations. While well-intended, these barriers

can increase that resistance that youth may already be having and then cause them to shut down even further.

Now we get to see how motivational interviewing offers another way, another mindset. Before we talk about what motivational interviewing is and isn't, we first need to understand the mindset behind the approach. As I said in the beginning, for today's webinar, we're going to stay focused on the conversation and the mindset. You're going to hear me say that a lot. It's important to keep reflecting on because that's what the lens of motivational interviewing offers. As a reminder, if you're looking for a deeper dive, stay tuned for that certificate course. I know we put it in the chat. The best way to find that is on our website and then also in our newsletter.

All right. We've talked about client-centered practice and common communication barriers. This brings us to the next step, the guiding spirit of MI. If client-centered practice is the foundation, the spirit of MI is the mindset that helps that foundation come to life in conversation. We can think about it, if motivational interviewing is the walking, the guiding spirit is the crawling. We can't walk until we crawl, right? Before we can effectively use MI, we need to be grounded in the values that the spirit holds. Let's get into it. The spirit shifts us away from that fixing reflex and towards a more collaborative, respectful way of supporting change. At its core, the spirit is grounded in these four elements.

First being partnership, meaning we work with URMs, not for them or ahead of them. We walk alongside and acknowledge that they are in the driver's seat. Acceptance means that we're using non-judgmental understanding. We're not agreeing with where they're at, but we're respecting the space and where they're at. When youth or URMs feel accepted, defensiveness decreases. When defensiveness decreases, that's where that motivation can emerge. Acceptance also tells us and includes absolute worth, meaning we see value in them just as they are before any of the change happens.

Accurate empathy is about working to understand their experience, not just from the outside, but from their point of view. Autonomy support reminds us it's their choice and their path, and we respect that. Affirmation means we actively name and celebrate the strengths they bring and the effort they're making, even if they or we haven't seen the results yet. The next one that we'll review here is compassion. Compassion means we're centering their well-being. It's not our agenda. We're focusing on what's best for them, yes, but that also means that we're slowing down with them if needed. We're sitting in discomfort.

The final element here is empowerment. This one's big, and you're going to see all of these come up as we continue to go through our learning today. Empowerment tells us that-- it reminds us to pause when we feel like giving advice or rushing. Our role is actually to draw out the youth's own reason for change. We reflect in conversation with them on their values that they have, their hopes, their motivations. Because when change comes from within, it's far more powerful when it's pushed from the outside. That's certainly true for myself. In practice, this looks like validating experiences, meeting them where they're at, like I said.

When we do this, we reduce any power dynamics, we ask permission before giving advice, and provide opportunities to connect with community and grow skills, but

we're not prescribing it. We're saying, "Here's what is available. How does this sound to you? Where would you like to start?" When we use these elements, and when they all come together, URMs then aren't being managed, they aren't being persuaded, they're being understood, they're being told that they're valued, their thought process, the way they move through life is value, and they are invited to lead their own strength.

Now that we have the spirit, which was that mindset, the crawling, we've done the crawling, now we're ready to walk. Shifting away and moving into this walking phase, remember that motivational interviewing is not a replacement for case management. It's a conversational tool that fits in with the existing work or support that you're already doing. As we look at what MI is, you'll see how it strengthens this client-centered conversations that I'm certain many of you are already having with URMs, and supports that shift from managing change to partnering in change.

Motivational interviewing is an evidence-based approach that supports change and growth. It provides a flexible structure for the conversations that we've been talking about that strengthen a young person's own experience and motivation. Motivational interviewing is also a client-centered approach, see, used to explore and resolve ambivalence, helping youth work towards mixed feelings about change. It creates space to pause rather than rush or shut the youth down. At its core, it helps youth feel heard and empowered. The power of feeling heard is so important to pause and sit with.

When they lead their own decisions, change becomes something that they own. This aligns with what we talked about with client-centered, honoring autonomy, offering choices, engaging clients as partners. Finally, MI is a communication style that's grounded in empathy and collaboration. Here's where that walking alongside youth and supporting the natural capacity for growth that they have. We talked about change. You've heard me say this a lot of times now and common barriers, but now let's name what that is [clears throat] and what is often happening underneath.

This term of ambivalence. Many of us know this feeling personally, where we want to make change, but we're also super nervous or hesitant about something. For myself, I moved out of state for the first time as a grown adult and I was terrified. I knew I wanted to do it. I was doing it, but I was so scared and had this push-pull effect of talking myself out of it to where I just froze. It's a normal part of human being. I'm sure you can think of your own examples. Because we can do that and recognize it in ourselves, it helps us recognize it when we're talking and working with URMs as well.

Ambivalence is not resistance. It's holding mixed feelings about a choice. Youth may want independence, but they fear failure. They may want connection, but feeling nervous about what that might bring. What it actually is telling us is that the person is capable of holding two things at once, which is challenging. They're also weighing out the options of each side. When using motivational interviewing to address ambivalence, we actually accept it. We sit in that pause with them and explore it with curiosity rather than pushing for change. Change happens when youth identify their own reasons for doing something different, not through that persuasion, but through their own internal motivation.

I think about when I was working with foster parents, and they would tell me, "I have a youth in care who is really looking for a connection. I think they're feeling lonely." We would set them up with a mentor, and then the youth would not show for the first mentor meeting. This is not a sign of non-compliance or even non-interest, it's where that ambivalence is showing up. Talking with them through that helped myself and others notice that they want connection, but they also feel unsure and they feel anxious. We've covered a lot so far. Let's pause and reflect on what motivational interviewing is not.

Before we do this, we need to remember that MI helps us move through those real messy parts of life that everyone experiences, even when change feels slow, complicated, or uncertain. What motivational interviewing is not is a way to trick or manipulate youth. It's genuine. It's not a specific model or intervention. It's that mindset. It's not always easy or a quick fix, which can be hard, but it's a conversation and it doesn't guarantee change, but it does explore possibilities. Your role is not to push or fix anything. It's to explore, to understand, to say, "I see you," and support youth as they navigate their own ambivalence and choices.

That's why even though that youth didn't show up for the mentoring meeting, motivational interviewing gives us the tools to not give up. To walk alongside them and to see a different path that we can take to get to the same ending. It's not a guarantee, but it's movement. It's walking. It's the crawling and the walking. Quick, brief, and honest note here is that I think it's natural to want to have an answer to everything, to be the expert. I feel that in my current role when providers come to me with great questions about what they can do in practice, and I'm like, "Shoot, I'm supposed to be the expert, but I don't have an A plus B to C answer for you, but I can sit with you in it."

That's what motivational interviewing is. It's a reminder and it takes the pressure off us that your role is to be a guide, not an expert. Let's take a look at how active listening helps build that kind of conversation. [clears throat] Excuse me. Active listening helps keep us in the motivational interviewing mindset, curious, non-judgmental, and focused on youth's internal world rather than our own assessments and assumptions. It's the foundation for how we can have those conversations. One way that motivational interviewing puts active listening into practice is through this OARS framework.

Open-ended questions invites youth to reflect and elaborate, helping them do the thinking. "How would you go about doing that?" Affirmations highlights the strengths and efforts youth may not fully recognize. "You know what? You're really good at advocating for yourself." Reflections is the heart of MI. They show understanding, meaning. They're not just words, which can deepen insight and reduce defensiveness. That might sound like, "You're thinking that having dinner with your friends tonight might help you relax." Summaries pulls together what matters most and gently guides the conversation without taking control.

Together, this OARS framework provides a structure that keeps us in that MI spirit that we've been talking about. Turning the control back over to y'all again, I want to hear from you with a Slido. This one is asking you to think about how might you want a youth to feel during conversations with you? Go ahead and scan that QR code again, or you can join at [slido.com](https://www.slido.com). Safe, yes, absolutely. Safe and heard. Safe,

growing, growing. Confident. Comfortable. Relaxed. Multiple people putting in comfortable and safe. Accountable. Supported. Trustworthy. Empathy, positive. Comfortable, lots of people. You're seeing some themes here, which is great. This is how we want to show up in our conversations.

These are not outcomes of giving good advice. They're outcomes of how we communicate. This is you using OARS in practice. It's that structure that helps us create the safe experience, the comfortable experience. It's the structure that allows youth to be heard, validated, and understood. Let's take a moment to walk through OARS here. Here are a couple more examples that you might be able to either resonate with, maybe pull from your own experiences.

The first letter in the acronym here, so open-ended questions. A youth might say, "I want to graduate and get a job, but sometimes I skip school. I feel like no one really gets me here." Using an open-ended response might sound like, "What would graduating mean to you?" "How do you feel when you go to school now?" "What's been happening to make you feel like no one really gets you at school?" These questions invite URMs to reflect on what matters to them, not just what's wrong, and it shows that you're curious, that you're involved in the conversation, and it's not a lecture or a correction.

Next, we'll look at the A here being affirmations. Here, a youth might say, "I signed up for a career fair after school next week." Your response could sound like, "That shows initiative. You took a step toward your goal." "You're putting yourself out there, and that takes courage." These affirmations recognize their initiative, even if it's a small step. Sometimes we need to be reminded the things that we do are positive, and they deserve that affirming reaction. Even if it's something that you think, "Oh, they already know that," highlighting it is really important to reinforce that their actions reflect their strengths, like courage, persistence, planning, et cetera. It helps show them that they're capable.

Next, we have reflections. Here, when a youth says, "I keep getting in trouble at the group home for dumb stuff, like not coming back right at curfew. The other guys there always lie and say I'm mean to them. They treat me like I'm a little kid, and I don't think I can stay there much longer." There's a few ways that you can respond using reflections. The first is repeating back to them. This is more of a simple response. "You're getting in trouble and feel like others aren't being honest." This is reflecting back the key words or the main idea closely related to what the youth shared, but not adding any interpretation of your own.

Or you could rephrase it by saying, "The rules feel strict and you're frustrated with how you're being treated, and that's making it hard to stay." Again, you're restating what the person said, but in your own words to show you are actually processing what they're saying, not just repeating back. Or you might paraphrase, which is a more complex way of responding. "You're trying to manage a tough situation where you feel misunderstood by staff and blamed by others. It's wearing you down, and you're not sure how much longer you can take it." Reflecting both the message and the underlying feelings and themes or concerns is what's taking place in this paraphrase option.

This can really help the youth feel understood and can reveal more about what's beneath the surface, especially when someone's feeling overwhelmed, misunderstood, or stuck in their thought process. Then finally, summarizing. Here, if a youth says something like, [clears throat] "Lately, I've been smoking more. It just helps me to stop thinking about everything. I know it's not great, but it calms me down. I haven't been sleeping much or showing up to school, and I keep getting in trouble with staff."

To summarize back to them, this could sound like, "So far, I've heard that you're feeling overwhelmed, and smoking helps you cope, even if you're not proud of it. You haven't been sleeping or going to school much, and that's caused tension at home. You're trying to manage a lot, and even though things are tough, you're still willing to talk about it." Here, you've summarized the ambivalence, the coping versus the consequences. You've affirmed the willingness to open up and share this. It kept the tone empathetic and non-judgmental, which are all things grounded in motivational interviewing.

Let's keep learning together and talk about this next offering of motivational interviewing here, which is the guiding principles of MI. We'll walk through each one now, and then our final learning objective will help apply them. The first is expressing empathy. Understanding the youth's perspective through reflective listening and validation. The next is guiding principle being developing discrepancy. Helping the youth explore the gap between where they are and where they want to be.

The next is rolling with resistance. This might be my favorite. Responding to resistance with curiosity rather than pressure or argument. It says that sometimes you just got to sit in it phase, and supporting self-efficacy. Strengthening belief that change is possible by highlighting strengths and past successes. These principles all are reflected and happen using the OARS framework, so asking open-ended questions is exploring discrepancy. Affirmations is building confidence. Reflections is expressing empathy and reducing resistance. Summaries is reinforcing progress and direction.

Before we close out this learning objective, let's quick connect everything we've covered. We started with client-centered case management, focusing on the use, goals, and needs. Then we explored the MI spirit and principles, which helped bring those values into practice. To wrap us up, let's hear from you one more time for this learning objective. How might the motivational interview principles help you keep conversations with youth client-centered? Again, scanning QR code, heading to slido.com. [silence] It puts them in charge. I love that. It's centering them. [clears throat] [silence] It should feel like a natural flow. They feel empowered.

They are the expert. They help remind us that they are the experts. They're in control. Focuses on hearing them. Builds confidence. Yes, you all got it. I apologize. I'm going to cut this one a little bit short to keep us rolling through, but I super appreciate these themes that are coming through, and you're nailing it. With a solid grounding of these motivational interviewing mindsets and principles, we're now ready to explore Learning Objective 2. We can tie this in, just like we've done with client-centered case management, to two additional foundations, trauma-informed approaches and strength-based approaches.

Hopefully, you didn't put your phone down because we're going to start with you again. With what we've learned so far, I am curious to see where you might already see alignment between motivational interviewing and trauma-informed care and strength-based approaches. This is pulling on asking you to think through what you're already doing. How might you see some alignment here?

CH: Moving at the client's pace. Yes. Absolutely. Letting them guide the conversation. That's that guide, not expert. Doesn't push where they aren't ready to go. Trusting them. Absolutely. Engaging the client. They're the expert of their own lives. When we think about trauma-informed approaches, I'm seeing a lot of themes coming through in these responses of trust-building, safety. Awesome. You all have set this next part up of learning objective quite well. We're going to briefly revisit trauma-informed approaches and see the alignment and talk about it in a little bit more depth here.

A trauma-informed approach and motivational interviewing complement each other well, as I've said. We think of them as partners. Understanding that trauma-informed approach helps us understand the impact of trauma, while MI helps us communicate it in ways that are responses to that impact. A trauma-informed approach reminds us that trauma can affect a youth's physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. It helps us recognize trauma signs and behaviors, relationships, and decision-making.

A trauma-informed approach emphasizes building positive, restorative relationships grounded in trust. MI supports that through collaboration and reflective listening and autonomy. It prioritizes safety and trust. The way that we communicate through OARS naturally strengthens that relational safety. It calls us to take a holistic view of youth, so understanding that things like school engagement, substance use, family responsibility, identity, these are all interconnected. Motivational interviewing supports that lens by helping youth explore what matters most to them.

Then finally, our trauma-informed care approach reminds us to minimize re-traumatization and avoiding triggers. Together, a trauma-informed approach helps us understand the context, and motivational interviewing gives us the method. One explains the why, and the other provides the how. The benefits of putting these together shows us how MI and trauma-informed can reinforce each other as those complementary mindsets that we've reviewed so far. It improves engagement outcomes, helps understand how trauma affects behavior, and MI helps us respond. Creates safer environments.

We talked about how safety is relational, not just physical. MI supports safety by reducing the power struggles. It also supports staff wellness. I think this is a huge one. A trauma-informed lens helps us not personalize behavior. Motivational interviewing shifts us from fixing problems and guiding change, which also reduces frustration and burnout.

You see how they pair quite well using trauma-informed. Let's look at the strength-based approach now. This work carries that same mindset forward by helping us focus on what's strong rather than what's wrong. Starting with trust, trust is the foundation for any meaningful engagement. In motivational interviewing, building trust connects directly to our goal of collaborating rather than directing. Next, we look at cultural assets and personal strengths. Motivational interviewing supports this

through a curiosity and inviting clients to share about their traditions, values, and lived experiences.

Recognize:

A strength-based approach helps us strengthen supportive networks and community resilience. MI isn't just about individual change but understanding the context. Finally, this approach supports goal-oriented progress. Motivational interviewing gives the tools to guide the clients in identifying small, achievable steps towards their goals. Now that we've explored how MI naturally complements trauma-informed and strength-based approaches in URM programs, let's turn the lens back to your own work. On the next slide, I want you to start thinking about how might motivational interviewing support your service delivery with youth in the URM program?

Another Slido here, hearing back from you. Scanning the QR code or heading to slido.com. I know we have both foster parents and service providers on the call. I'd love to see just different perspectives and impact with those different types of supports offered. I also want to give you credit, too, because some of the other Slidos have been building upon this and might feel like I answered that. This is just to nail down that you all are doing this already and to provide a space and encouragement to implement the conversational support and strategies that MI offers. Cool.

It provides stronger sense of security for youth to be heard. It improves quality of service. I love this. Builds relationships, offers consistency, centers the client's goals. Great. You've got it. Let's tie this and see it on this slide here. You shared great examples, but really, this just brings us to our key point that MI strengthens trauma-informed and strength-based work you're already doing. It improves access and engagement. It helps navigate that ambivalence like we chatted about. Bridges goals and values, which helps reduce those power dynamics. Builds trust and honors strength, which many of you submitted.

It strengthens internal motivation which helps build that resilience. Now that we've explored this complementing part of your work, I encourage you to keep thinking through when might it be useful to intentionally lean into MI? Hearing back from you all on the next slide here, when might you notice in yourself or in URM clients that would signal it could be helpful to pause and use MI? What might you notice that's happening in yourself or with youth that could remind you? Feeling overwhelmed. Body language. Suggestions from others just don't seem right. I like that. There's lots of opinions, and supporting URMs is a whole network.

So much uniqueness there. Lots of people involved. When you feel the urge to fix the problem, yes. When I'm forcing my own goal on them. Some of these things can be challenging to reflect on. Again, this isn't a right or wrong or reaching perfection, but just noticing the cues, what you all are naming are cues, and they're moments when our usual approach of giving information, reinforcing expectations, or problem-solving just might not be landing. Let's check out a couple of maybe common things that you've either seen while supporting URMs, or you may come across, and see how MI supports that.

A couple of common scenarios with youth where MI might be helpful is language barriers or feeling unwelcome at school. In a situation like this, you might notice if the

youth is withdrawing, giving you short answers. Substance use affecting decision. Here you might listen for ambivalence. You may hear both sides, like we talked about in our example, wanting to stay out of trouble, but also naming that the substance is helpful for coping. Pressure to support family while in school. In this scenario, you might look at what values or goals could be underneath this behavior, which could be the desire to work, which may reflect loyalty.

Avoiding meetings, appointments, or delaying a driver's license. This might be a moment to use empowerment by reflecting on strengths, past successes. This is where you would think about the spirit of MI. Conflict with foster parents or group home rules. If you wanted to pull from the OARS perspective, you might think about resistance may reflect that need for independence, and you might affirm by saying you care a lot about having more independence. These examples are just a few, and I encourage you to think through your own service delivery or support.

Just remind yourselves that it helps us slow down. This creates emotional safety for yourself and others involved, and the youth, and it helps us recognize and remember that youth have values, strengths, and motivation. Let's go into our final learning objective. Make sure you have those phones ready. They're going to practice applying here. I think the main goal for all of us that we share is we want youth to move forward in the life they have. Here in this learning objective, when we say choices, we're really talking about the day-to-day choices youth make on their path to independence.

Showing up for appointments, following through on goals, reaching out for support. Let's take a moment to reset and review what we've covered so far, and then we'll shift into applying them into the URM program. First, we started with the guiding spirit, which is partnership, acceptance, compassion, and empowerment. Then we moved into active listening supported by the OARS framework, open-ended questions, affirmations, reflections, and summaries. The guiding principles of expressing empathy. Developing discrepancy, ruling with resistance, and supporting self-efficacy.

Then we reviewed what motivational interviewing is not, meaning it's not manipulative, it's not an intervention, a quick fix, or a guaranteed change. Then we just reviewed how it might show up in URM programming, building trust, honoring autonomy, supporting those youth-led goals, and aligning with the trauma-informed and strength-based practices that you are all already doing. I said we would come back and practice applying these guiding principles. We'll show you them here one more time just to refresh your memory and to keep you thinking through how they might show up.

To recap, expressing empathy, we do through active listening, reflective listening, developing discrepancy through open-ended questions and strategic reflections, rolling with resistance by reflecting rather than arguing or giving up, and supporting self-advocacy by affirming strengths and summarizing progress. All of this together is motivational interviewing. We're going to go ahead and introduce Miguel to help us think through this. This section is going to walk through how you may see motivational interviewing in practice.

Through this, you may be reminded of youth that you've worked with or supported, and I highly encourage that. To help us out in our training time today, we'll meet Miguel. He's a 17-year-old from Guatemala. You are his caseworker and have been talking through his independent living goals, which include finishing school, finding work, and supporting family. Then, of course, any barriers or challenges that make it in his way. We'll start with that MI principle of expressing empathy. Imagine you're meeting with Miguel to review his independent living goals. You ask how things were going with school and finding a job.

Miguel replies to you, "I try to go to school, but I don't understand everything. Teachers talk fast, and I just don't want to go at all." Hearing from you to practice applying this skill, which of these responses might demonstrate expressing empathy. We have, you need to try harder if you want to succeed. It sounds like you're overwhelmed by the pace. Why don't you ask the teacher to slow down, and skipping school doesn't help you get a job. Y'all got it. Yes, of course. It sounds like you're overwhelmed by the pace of the classes, and you're really trying, even though it feels like it's tough to keep up.

These ones reflect Miguel's experiences without judgment. They show that you're listening, and they name the feeling. It also acknowledges the effort and validates the struggle. These are core elements of expressing empathy. We'll move into the next principle now. You ask what Miguel wants his life to look like in two years. He responds to you, "I want to be making my own money, helping my family, and living on my own with a car." To use the MI principle of developing discrepancy here, it might sound like, "How does your current spending fit with the goal of buying a car?"

This kind of question helps Miguel explore the gap between where he is and where he wants to be without blame, pressure, or advice. It's an invitation to look at both sides of that ambivalence. If it's not, why haven't you started saving yet? This is where I want to normalize, that thought might happen for us, but to effectively engage in conversation and to use developing discrepancy, this helps connect youth to their day-to-day choices with their long-term goals. It's a key part of resolving ambivalence and moving towards that independent living success.

The principle of rolling with resistance, at your next meeting, you learn Miguel has missed several days of school. When you ask him about it, he says, "I don't know, school just doesn't seem like it's working for me. I tried for a while, but I still don't understand the teacher, and I don't feel welcome. I just want to do what I know I'm good at, working." Here to roll with resistance, you might lean into something that sounds like, "You gave it a really good shot, and it's frustrating you didn't see results. What's been the hardest part?" versus a reply of, "You're being irresponsible, and I can't help you if you won't help yourself. Why aren't you following through on your own goals?"

Here ruling with resistance means we're avoiding confrontation, we're staying away from arguing, and we're exploring what the youth's own reasons are for feeling stuck or pulled in different directions. Remember here, resistance is not a barrier, it's information. This final one here is supporting self-efficacy. Two weeks later you meet again and you're excited to hear that Miguel has taken a step forward. He says to you, "Last week I went to school every day. I also talked to the classmate about the job fair. I know I missed the last one, but he said he would go to the next one with

me. We asked our teacher, and the school is hosting one next week, so I will be back to the house later than usual next Wednesday."

Applying:

For this last principle, you get to close us out here by thinking through and applying supporting self-efficacy through using affirmations. We've got another slide for you. After you scan the QR code or join online, the question is what strength-based affirmation could you offer Miguel here? Courage. Absolutely. Telling him, "That sounds courageous." Good job. Yes, of course. Not a trick question here. Pulling on some of those natural responses is awesome. "That seems like a really responsible way to handle the situation. Wow, you are so proactive. You should be proud of yourself. That's wonderful, Miguel.

You're taking a big step and owning your responsibility. I'm proud of you for moving towards your goals." You are responding not only with affirmations, but also with all of these mindsets of MI. Even in your response, you're stamping those affirmations. You're expressing empathy. You're highlighting his ability to move through change. That was great. "How does it feel to move toward your goal?" I love that. That's keeping that conversation going, getting him to think in more depth about this. Awesome. Thank you all so much for responding to the Slidos here and practicing applying these guiding principles.

We'll go ahead, and we'll reflect on this case together. You've already named these things, but to really stamp them, to reflect on Miguel's case, you've used the guiding spirit and principles to build trust with him, reflected ambivalence, helped him reconnect his day-to-day choices with his self-directed independent living goals. You've encouraged his progress without pressure. You can really see how these spirit and principles of motivational interviewing work together in a natural way.

As we put it all together, when MI is used consistently, it supports youth-led decision-making, self-efficacy goals, trauma-informed and strength-based relationships, service provider or foster parent confidence and retention, and also reducing service providers' stress and workload. Remember, you're not the expert. You don't have to do everything for or have all the answers. This really shines through here. One thing I wanted to highlight here, too, that we're going to pop in the chat. To support this last bullet point, we have a public webinar, Supporting Others and Supporting Yourself, that was recently published. Feel free to take a peek at that. Watch that on your own time.

Then, finally, a moment to pause. We're a little bit ahead of time. Taking a moment to sit through all this information that we've covered. We've gone through the principles, conversational barriers, active listening. We've gone through case scenarios and practiced applying it. I'd love to hear what some takeaways are, one takeaway you have today that you might apply into your own service delivery. Reminder that I don't have to have all of the answers. That's right. Rolling with resistance with curiosity. Your role is to be a guide, not an expert. I have that written down on a sticky note in front of me. I love not being an expert on someone's life. Yes.

Taking a pause, accepting silence. That's so important. Sometimes I feel like we preach in our fields that silence is great, and we can sit in it. Then, when there's a

pause, I find myself being like, "Oh, I have to actually practice what I preach here." Client knows best. Just being willing to listen is incredibly powerful. Remembering that the minor is in control. You don't have to have the answer. Lots of folks saying on this theme of not being the expert. Refocusing on trying to understand their experience. I also want to say, too, that these things they're not super easy.

These are coming up in very real-world challenges that you're navigating with youth. The same things that you're putting in these responses of being open-minded, silence, not having to be the expert, those also apply to ourselves. We can take a moment to pause. We can take a moment to regulate ourselves. We can model that. We can say, you can be thinking like, "Oh, I am going to roll with resistance, but to be able to effectively do that, I need to take a little walk," or "I need to take a moment to breathe." Communicating that with the youth in a way that's not shameful, but saying, "This is how I'm going to model regulating myself so that we can roll through this together."

Remembering not to judge our clients' choices, but rather sitting with them on what their choices are doing for them. I love this. Giving clients space to share their story in their own way. There's so much we can get into, too. We can think about language. We can think about norms. Just because we're seeing something and are applying it for how we might have experience in life, it might be a completely different story. Asking them, "Hey, this is what I heard." Reflecting back. Listening more than doing all the talking. I'm tired of talking and repeating myself. This was a reminder why.

Thank you for sharing that and sitting and reflecting. I really appreciate those responses here. Prioritizing safety and trust. Being compassionate. Stop assuming. I think one thing that I missed saying as well is, or maybe I did say it and I'll re-stamp it here, but these are all things that we learn. We don't wake up and activate our, I'm going to assume things today. This is all through learning in our lives, in our professional, in our personal lives. Something I was reflecting on, too, with this motivational interviewing is, what are we hearing other clients, staff, foster parents, supporters, friends, how are they talking about the youth or the situations that you all are involved in?

Just taking a moment to recognize that the more you model this approach, the more others are going to as well. It's okay to say to a coworker, "Hey, we may have both had that thought, but let's find a different way to not say that out loud and to pause and think about what's happening behind this behavior." Thinking about what might come next if it's not in the alignment of the way that you had planned. Thank you all so much. I appreciate the time to pause on this last Slido together. We'll go ahead, and we'll turn it to questions. If you have any questions, please go ahead and type them in the Q&A. I'll give folks a moment.

CH One of the questions that came through in the registration, there was a couple of people had asked about using this skill for their own interviews. As you've probably seen throughout and heard throughout the presentation, that wasn't the direction of this. I just wanted to acknowledge that that comparison happened. There are plenty of things that we covered today that you can use to feel more confident and grounded in your own interviewing as well, because it's conversation. I did want to make sure that that was brought up.

Seeing some questions about what exact step to help Miguel go from I don't go to school every day.

This is a great question, and thanks for pointing that out. We didn't walk through the whole scenario. This was something to help think through specific cases. This was just an example, and it didn't have that resolution stated in the presentation here. You didn't miss that. To encourage that, it was that you were sitting with him. You were noticing the progress that he did have. He missed that first job fair, but he went to the next one. There was a plethora of things that could have happened in between that time. The goal was that through using these motivational interviewing skills, that you could apply that in that situation.

Seeing some questions about general URM resources. Yes, I have worked with a lot of URMs, and there are resources available to them. We'll have some at the end of this slide deck, recommended resources, and also encourage you to fill out a training and technical assistance request. I'd love to meet with you one-on-one to go over anything specific that you have.

CH: Okay, folks. Thank you so much for submitting questions. If we didn't get to them, like I said, we do have training and technical assistance requests that you'll see put out on these ending slides here.

CH: To close out our time together, we'll go back to these learning objectives. Now you should be able to describe the guiding spirit and principles of motivational interviewing, and how they can support client-centered conversations, with unaccompanied refugee minors, recognize how motivational interviewing complements trauma-informed, strengths-based, service-based, and URM programs, and applying motivational interviewing principles to support URMs in overcoming ambivalence and aligning choices with their independent living goals.

Here are some of those recommended resources. We have a wonderful accompanying resource as a blog to this motivational interviewing public webinar. You'll see that we also have a podcast, different formats to support working with youth and families, and URMs. Then we also have linked the *Building Motivational Interviewing Skills*, a practitioner workbook. You can find many more resources on our resource library on our website as well, or by reaching out directly to us. One of the important parts of closing us out is asking you all to help us help you through filling out our feedback survey.

Scanning the QR code or clicking on the link that has just been dropped in the chat. We'd love for you to take a task off your plate and complete this right now. We've got time for it. It's four questions, takes 60 seconds, and it really helps us improve future training and technical assistance.

CH: Great. Thank you, everyone, for filling that out. Thank you so much for being with us today. We hope that you stay connected. Through email, you can reach out to us, LinkedIn, checking out our website, and then here on YouTube as well. Scanning the QR code is a great way to stay connected as well. I appreciate you all. Thank you for being here. Hope to stay in touch soon. Thank you for what you do to support URMs. Have a great day.

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