

Change Talk

vs.

Sustain Talk

# Learning Objectives

- Define and differentiate change talk and sustain talk
- Recognize the importance of change AND sustain talk in the motivational interviewing process

# What is change talk?

Statements by a client that  
reveal motivation or  
consideration for change

“A pathway to achieve  
change”



# Why is identifying Change Talk important?

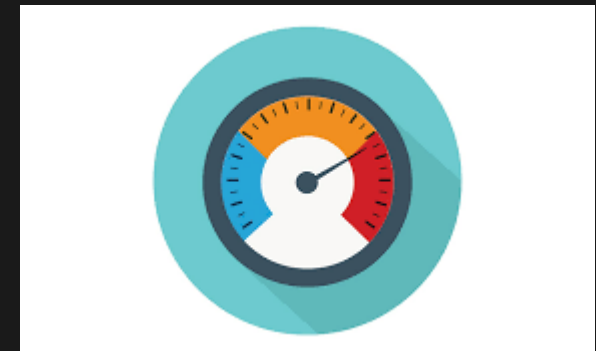
- Opportunity to capitalize on a client's personal motivation
- Thoughts about change
- Beliefs about change
- Ideas about change

## What is sustain talk?

- Manifestations of a client's ambivalence to change
- Expression of a client's desire for the way things are
  - Reasons why things should stay the same
  - Natural response to the change process

# Why is identifying Sustain Talk important?

- One way to measure/gauge a client's motivation about change
- Provides insight to the client's current state



# Discord—what is it?

- Resistance to the process, not the change
- Behaviors that reflect *dissonance* in the interpersonal relationship between client and clinician-
  - Verbal and Non-verbal

Sustain Talk

Change Talk



Ambivalence



## Change Talk

"I know drinking less  
could benefit my  
family"

## Sustain Talk

"There is nothing wrong  
with the way I drink"

## Ambivalence

"I know I should cut  
down on drinking, but I  
like the way it makes me  
feel"

# Types of Change Talk

Desire

Ability

Reasons

Need

Commitment

Activation

Taking steps



# Desire

- I want to...
- I'd really like to...
- I wish...

# Ability

- I would...
- I can...
- I am able to...
- I could...

# Reason

- There are good reasons to...
- This is important...



Need

- I really need...

# Commitment

- I intent to...
- I will...
- I plan to...

# Activation

- I'm doing this today...
- I'm starting this now...



# Taking Steps

- I went to my first group...



**PRACTICE TIME!**

# Change or Sustain?

“This have been the worst experience of my whole life, you will never see me back in this court room again”

# Change or Sustain?

“I really want to quit drinking but sometimes I enjoy it”

# Change or Sustain?

“I work hard during the week and deserve to blow off some steam on the weekend”

# Change or Sustain?

"I don't see what the big deal is"

# Change or Sustain?

“I don't have time to think about this right now”

# Change or Sustain?

"I don't drink any more than what my friends do"



# Change or Sustain?

“I’ve thought about stopping and I will someday”

# Change or Sustain?

"I would if everyone would stop hassling me about it"



WHICH STEP HAVE YOU REACHED TODAY?