

Motivational Interviewing

April 17, 2025



Health and
Human Services



Goals



Understand the WHY
behind Motivational
Interviewing (MI)



Learn about the
importance of
evidence-based
practices



Review how MI
techniques make a
difference



Leave with one thing
you can use tomorrow

Poll

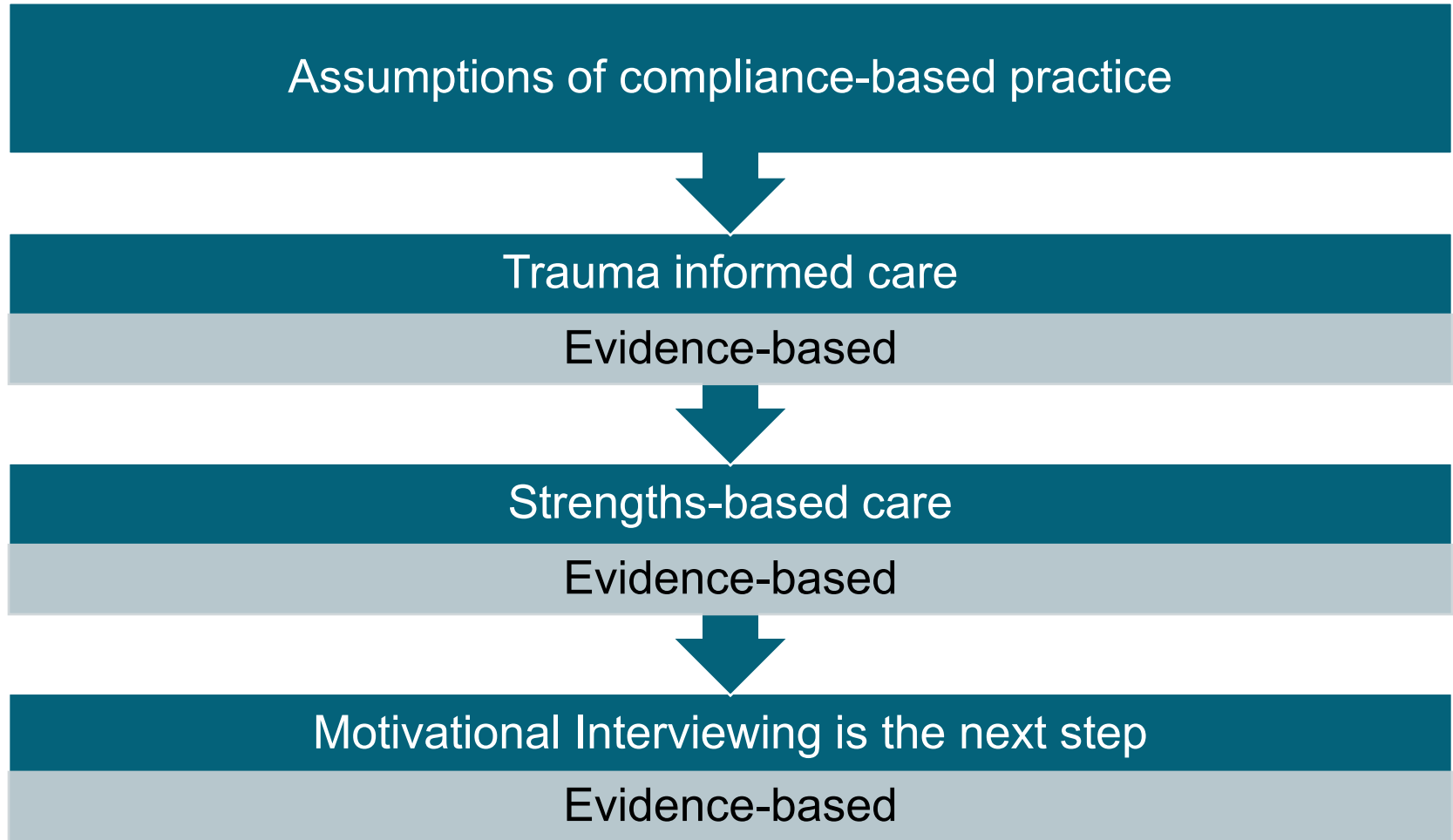
How comfortable are you
with using MI in your
everyday practice?

1 (not comfortable) – 5 (very comfortable)

Poll

How often do you use MI techniques in your everyday practice?

Progression of Practices



Importance of Evidence-Based Practices (EBP)



We know it works



Confident that we are using the best tools



Positive impact

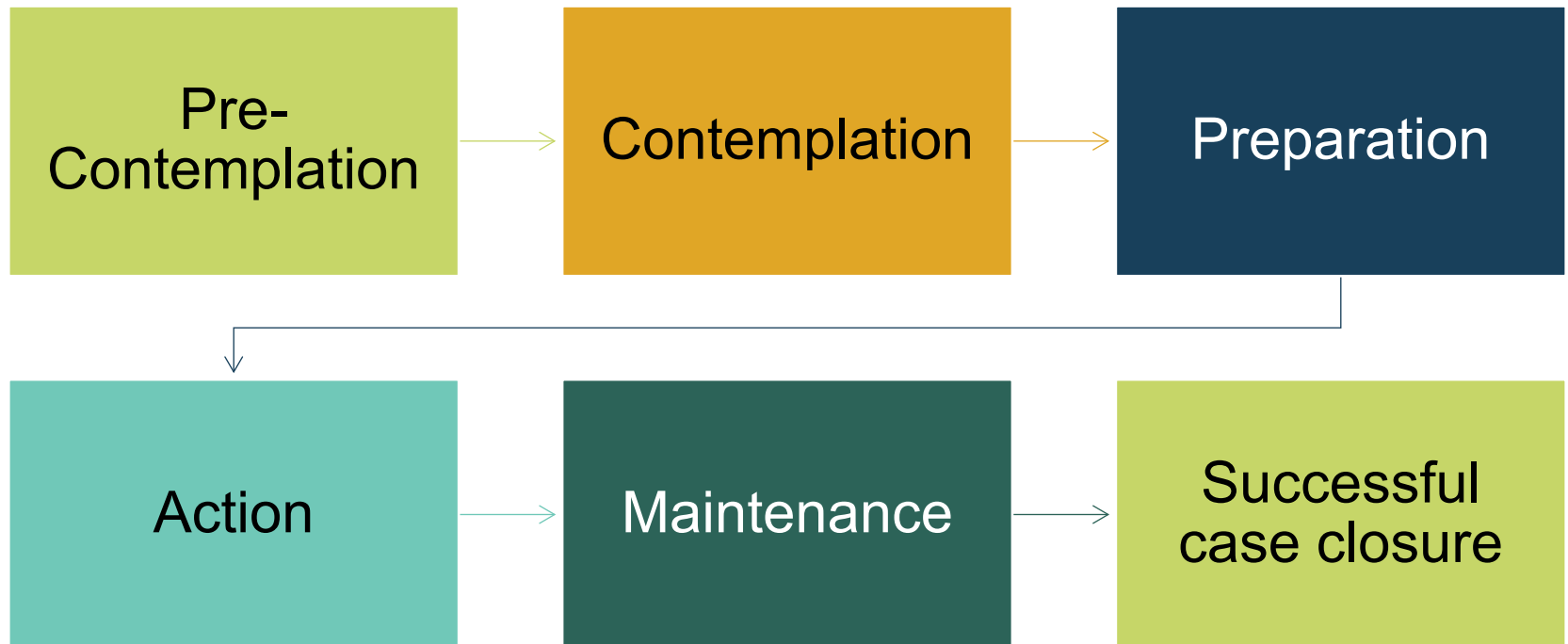


Lasting change



EBPs help us move toward saying “yes” to the question “Are families better off because HHS knocked on their door?”

Stages of Change



Basic Concepts

Ambivalence and listening statements

Existing motivation and exploring questions

Identifying change talk and lifting language

Refraining from anti-MI approaches

Identify strengths

Using MI to Pivot

Go from

Confronting denial

Persuading with logic

Arguing

Directing

Blaming and shaming

To

Roll with resistance

Develop discrepancy

Explore motivations

Support self efficacy

Express empathy

Ambivalence and Listening Statements

Client

“I’m not sure what everyone is so upset about. I deal with my mental health when I need to. I can tell when I need to get back on my medication. I know I should be more consistent, but I don’t like how it makes me feel. I just don’t think I need it all the time.”



Worker

“You are aware of your mental health needs, and you would like to be more consistent with your medication, but don’t like the side effects.”



Ambivalence and Listening Statement Benefits

- ▶ The client understands you are listening to them
- ▶ You frame the nature of the concern in a non-confrontational manner
- ▶ This will allow for the conversation to continue
 - The client was able to talk about the concern
 - Heard and not challenged

Existing Motivation and Exploring Questions

Client

“You are concerned with the condition of my house. Yes, it’s messy. I have 3 children, work part time and really don’t have much support outside my family. I wish I could deep clean, but I just don’t have the time with everything else going on.”

Worker

“What have you done in the past to get some free time?”

Client

“I asked my mother to watch the kids for a few hours on the weekends in the past which was helpful.”

Worker

“A clean house is important to you, and your mother may be willing to help with the kids to give you time to work on it.”

Existing Motivation and Exploring Question Benefits



Verbalized understanding of their concern



Identified what has been successful for them instead of telling the client what to do



Opportunity to focus on the client's solution as well as their motivation for wanting a clean house

Identify Change Talk and Lifting Language

Client

“My drinking is not the problem, having you (HHS) in my family’s business is the problem. My kids aren’t unsafe because of my drinking. Maybe I could cut back here and there, but it’s not like I’m drunk all the time, I just have a few drinks to relax.”



Worker

“Your drinking is not a problem, but you feel you could cut back some.”



Identify Strengths

Client

“I’m tired of having you in my life. I have been through this before and did everything I was asked to do. I completed treatment, I got a job and met with the worker every week to get my kids back. What more do I have to do now?”



Worker

“Your kids are very important to you, and you are willing to do what it takes to keep them safe.”



Identify Strengths

- ▶ Avoid an argument and push back from the client
- ▶ Focus on their strengths instead of being directive
- ▶ Think about what their next statement would be.....
- ▶ “You’re right, I do care about my kids and will always do what I need to for them.”

Why does MI work with families?

Gain a sense of autonomy

- Involvement in the process is empowering

Feel “heard”

- When families don’t feel they are being listened to are more likely to push back

Don’t feel “directed” or “controlled”

- Most of our families have been “told” what they “need”

More invested in change goals if they are theirs not ours

- Families have focus on their strengths instead of their problems

Finding the “WHY”

Evidence-based

Empowers families

Tomorrow is better than today and I can help make that happen

Review earlier polls and questions

How to improve the use of MI

Providing the right resources

Poll

How important do you feel the use of MI is in child welfare practice?

1 (not important) – 5 (very important)

What is one thing you can do tomorrow to improve your use of MI?