If You've Got Five Minutes: Conversations that Make a Difference

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A collaborative conversation style for strengthening a person’s own motivation and commitment to change.

Lay definition

A person-centered counseling style for addressing the common problem of ambivalence about change.

Practitioner’s definition

When you kinda wanna just do it but not really

Or...

A way of helping people talk themselves into changing

A five minute conversation with yourself

Think of something you’ve been thinking about changing, but haven’t changed yet
Motivational conversations are about facing forward…coming alongside someone and facing the person’s future together.

Stephen Rollnick

“You don’t need to be clever and complex, just interested and curious. An uncluttered mind helps.”

Miller & Rollnick, 2013, p. 61

Breathe

Mutually find a focus

Evoke internal motivation

Provide information and suggestions (as needed)

Invite to action (while “letting go” of the outcome)

If you’ve got 5 minutes…

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focusing: finding a strategic direction

Mutually establish the agenda. Ask what the person wants to focus on. State what you wish to address (if anything).

focusing: finding a strategic direction

What would you like to focus on today? We could discuss A, B, C or something else. Would it be all right if we took a look at…?

Common areas of focus in your practice?
If you've got 5 minutes...

Breathe

Mutually find a focus

Evoke internal motivation

Provide information and suggestions (as needed)

Invite to action (while “letting go” of the outcome)

Instructions:

1. Pairs – practitioner, patient/client
2. Five minute conversation
3. Practitioner initiates finding focus: Example: “Would it be all right if I asked you a few questions about…”?
4. Patient/client – real or role-play

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

What’s okay about how things are? What’s not?
If you don’t change, what would be at stake?
If you were to change, your reasons?
Best reason?
How would you go about it to be successful?
How important/urgent?
How confident are you that you could change?
If change, who/what could help?
If change, what possible next step(s)?

If you've got 5 minutes...

Providing Information and Suggestions

As simple strategy for providing information, suggestions, advice

Elicit–Provide–Elicit

Elicit

- Ask what the person already knows
- Ask what person would like to know
- Ask permission to provide information

Provide

- Prioritize what person most wants to know
- Be clear; use everyday language
- Offer small amounts of information with time to reflect
- Acknowledge freedom to disagree or ignore

Elicit

- Ask for person’s response, interpretation, understanding
Activity: E-P-E

- Elicit
  - Ask what person already knows
  - Ask what person would like to know
  - Ask permission to provide information

- Provide
  - Offer small dose of suggestions, advice

- Elicit
  - Ask for person’s response

If you’ve got 5 minutes...

- Breathe
- Mutually find a focus
- Evoke internal motivation
- Provide information and suggestions as needed
- Invite to action (while “letting go” of the outcome)

What might you do as a next step in your own practice to facilitate conversations that make a difference?

Key ideas

- The clinical relationship takes the form of a partnership, not an expert–recipient stance
- Acceptance and compassion are at the heart of the conversation
- Motivation to change is elicited from individuals, not imposed on them from without

Key ideas

- Direct persuasion is rarely effective to resolve ambivalence or promote lasting change
- The worker uses primarily a guiding style
- It is the task of the individual to resolve his or her ambivalence and come up with the reasons for change

Thank you for all you do!