

Applying Motivational Interviewing to Behavioral Consultation with Teachers

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Introduction

Early intervention for behavioral problems within MTSS is especially critical given that improvements in student behavior lead to increases in perceptions of school, feelings of school safety, and academic outcomes (Mitchell et al., 2011). One way this can be ensured is through indirect services, e.g., behavioral consultations with teachers. It is imperative, therefore, that school psychologists have tools that are effective in supporting classroom teachers manage disruptive behaviors. School psychologists must be able to effect changes in teacher behavior first and in the process help teachers overcome such potential barriers as limited resources and anxiety produced by change that may arise. As such, this poster examines the Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change (TTM; Prochaska, 2013) and motivational interviewing techniques as specific means with which to facilitate teachers' own motivation to learn new classroom management skills.

The TTM describes specific processes that mediate individuals' progression through six stages of change from being unaware that a problem exists with their own behavior towards taking steps to changing their behavior in an effort to improve some outcome. The change processes identified by the TTM include: consciousness raising, dramatic relief, environmental reevaluation, self-reevaluation, self-liberation, counterconditioning, helping relationships, reinforcement management, and stimulus control. Behavioral consultation models derived from this theory use motivational interviewing techniques designed to evoke teachers' own motivation and commitment to change how they interact with their class to improve distal outcomes for students (e.g., Reinke, Lewis-Palmer, & Merrell, 2008). Specific examples of how motivational interviewing techniques can be used within the Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change to elicit teacher change are depicted in this poster session.

Four Processes in Motivational Interviewing

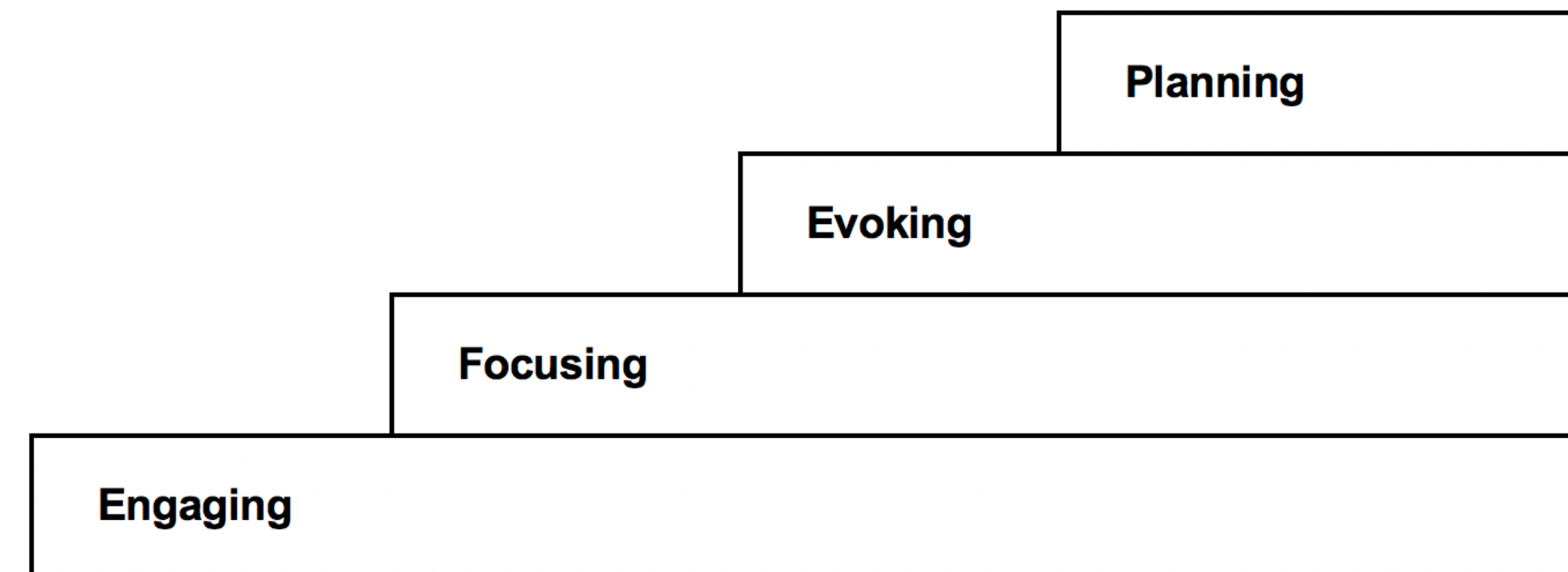


Figure 2. Four processes in MI. Adapted from *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change*, Miller and Rollnick (2013) p. 26.

Are You...

Engaging?

- How comfortable is this person talking to me?
- Do I understand this person's perspective and concerns?
- Does this feel like a collaborative partnership?

Focusing?

- What goals for change does this person really have?
- Are we working together with a common purpose?
- Does it feel like we are moving together, not in different directions?

Evoking?

- What are this person's own reasons for change?
- What change talk am I hearing?
- Is the righting reflex pulling me to be the one arguing for change?

Planning?

- Am I remembering to evoke rather than prescribe a plan?
- Am I offering needed information or advice with permission?
- Am I retaining a sense of quiet curiosity about what will work best for this person?

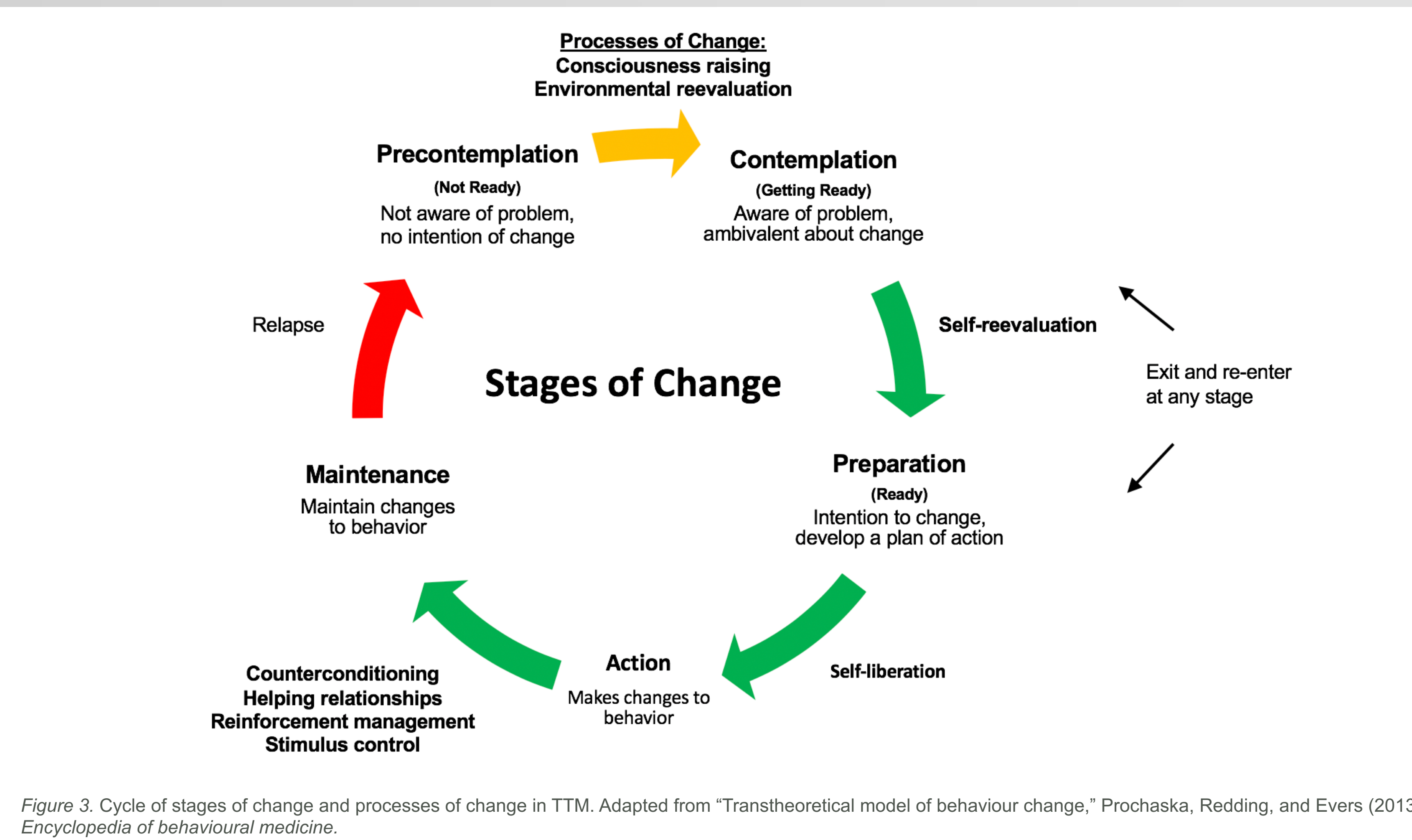


Figure 3. Cycle of stages of change and processes of change in TTM. Adapted from "Transtheoretical model of behaviour change," Prochaska, Redding, and Evers (2013) *Encyclopedia of behavioural medicine*.

Interview Strategies

Open-ended questions

(can't be answered in a single word)

- Why do you want to make these changes?
- What would you like to be different?
- How have you handled these problems in the past?

Affirmations

(specific and genuine)

- You're really putting a lot of thought and time into this.
- I think your classroom is very well organized and you are very calm. But even your reprimands are not harsh. They're not emotional.

Reflective statements

(paraphrasing comments with focus on implied feelings)

- You're really frustrated by how things are going.
- The philosophy of building community really extends beyond your classroom to the entire school and really the entire community.
- Meeting the needs of all students and meeting them where they are at is difficult.

Summarizing

(two or three sentences to draw connections)

- Let me make sure I'm understanding all of the big ideas so far. You're feeling pretty worn out from all the chaos in your classroom this year and taking on new classroom strategies just seems like another burden right now. At the same time, part of you is hopeful that spending time on it now could eventually give you more time.

Informing and Advising

(offers information or advice with permission)

- I could suggest some things that have worked for other people, but the most important thing is to find what will work for you, and you're the best judge of that. Would you like to hear some ideas?

The Underlying Spirit of MI

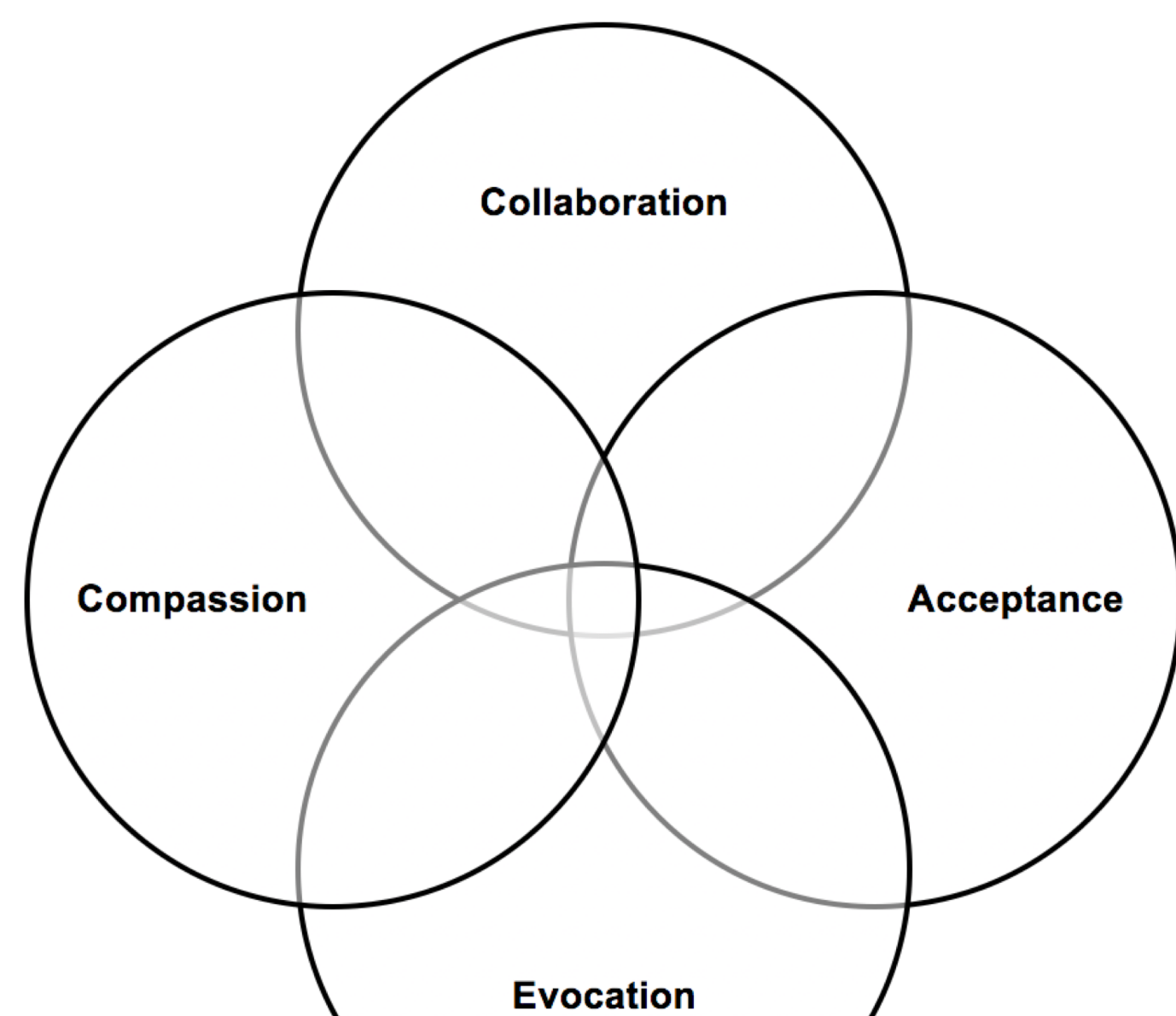


Figure 1. The underlying spirit of MI. Adapted from *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change*, Miller and Rollnick (2013) p. 22.

Motivational Interviewing Strategies Applied in a School Setting

Engaging in Precontemplation	Focusing in Contemplation	Evoking in Contemplation	Planning in Preparation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build rapport • Express empathy • Resist the righting reflex • Understand consultees' motivations • Listen • Empower consultees • Explore consultees' goals and values, e.g., the Teacher Values Card Sort • Create a sense of ambivalence towards change in consultees; develop a discrepancy between current and wanted behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with intention • Set an agenda • Use ecological assessments to bring focus to conversations, e.g., direct observations of critical teaching behaviors, teacher self-perceptions, critical aspects of teaching environment, teacher's use of classroom management • Use feedback, with frames of reference for what is considered effective practice, an area of concern, or an area of need of immediate attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw out consultees' arguments for change • Evoke change talk • Narrow focus • Ask how teacher wants things to be different, advantages of changing, reasons for changing, and optimism about being successful • Give personalized feedback based on assessment information, e.g., structured form with all feedback details summarized on a single page with constructive feedback and check-in questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize feedback and teacher's reaction to it • Create an action plan or set goal(s) with goal-setting form • End consultations with confidence rulers, to further assess teacher motivation and problem solve about potential barriers to change • Continue to emphasize personal choice and autonomy • Return to strategies to build readiness for change when hearing sustain talk from teacher

References

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- Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Prochaska, J. O., Redding, C. A., & Evers, K. E. (2013). Transtheoretical model of behavior change. In *Encyclopedia of behavioral medicine* (pp. 1997–2000). Springer. Retrieved from http://link.springer.com/10.1007/978-1-4419-1005-9_70