



MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING *101*



What is Motivational Interviewing (MI)?

A communication approach centered around empathy, collaboration, and support. It is often engaged when we want to *help others make changes* that would **enhance their wellbeing.**





Anyone can engage in an MI approach,
it is not just for counselors. We can use
MI to help our kids, parents, friends &
coworkers.



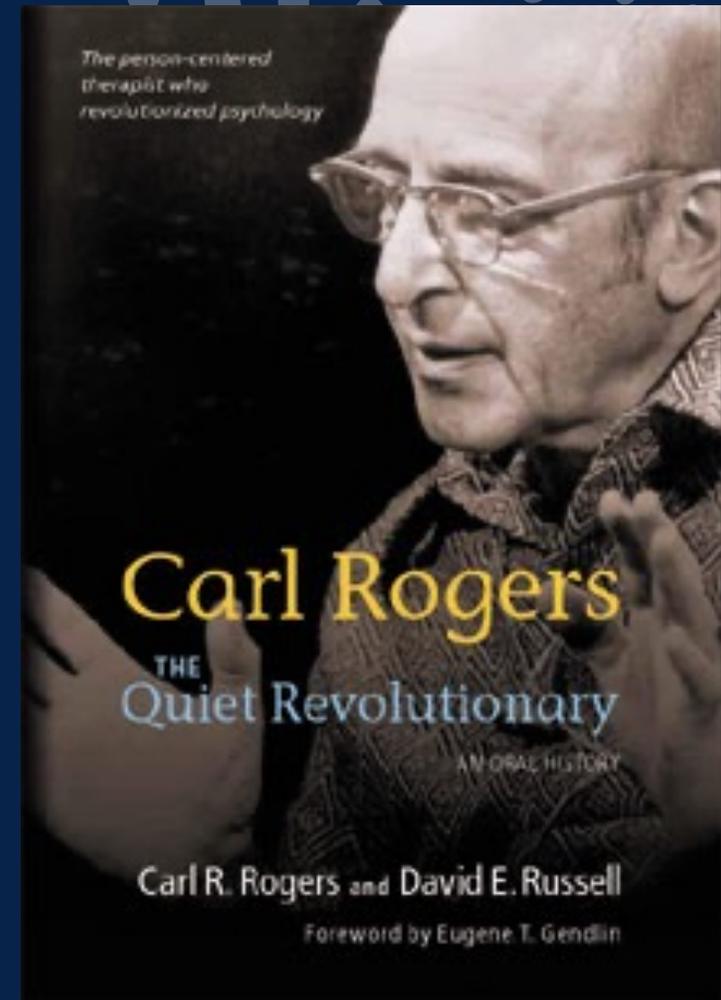
Where did the
name come from?

Motivational Interviewing
was originally developed
in part by...

*William Miller &
Stephen Rollnick*



The reason we say ‘in part’ is because MI builds on the work and writings of many other philosophies and theories, such as *Carl Rogers*.



The name MI refers to the process of inviting another (interviewing) to share the values, beliefs, preferences & desires that impact the decisions they make (motivation).



The Research



Over 90 clinical trials of MI

Demonstrate its *effectiveness* in helping people make behavior changes.

MI is trans-theoretical,
meaning it can be used with
any therapy technique.



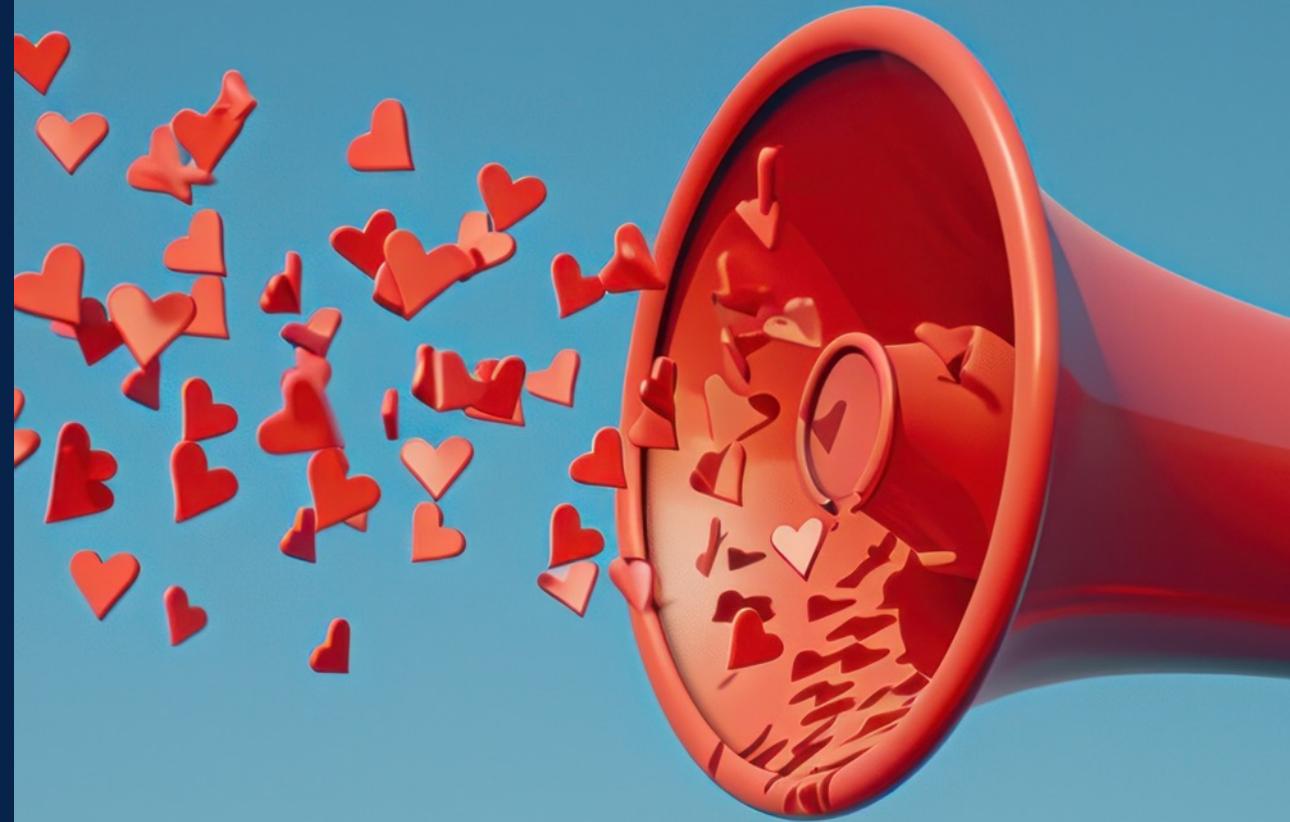


The Spirit of MI

The spirit of MI is non-judgmental, & empathic. It is one of walking shoulder to shoulder, as a fellow traveler with another. There is no pushing or pulling to get someone to do something, no expert/patient dichotomies, no sense that one person knows best what the other 'should' do; in fact there is no 'should-ing' in MI.



MI assumes that we all deeply want to do what is best for our wellbeing; we don't need to 'get' motivation from someone outside of us; instead, another can help us elevate and amplify our own intrinsic motivation.





MI is only used to support someone to change something their deepest self wants, *never* to coerce or manipulate someone to do something only we want them to do, even if we think it is for someone's own good.



Core Elements



1. Empathy



2. Listening



3. Eliciting



Main Strategies

An MI approach involves *empathic reflection, open-ended questions, normalizing, affirming & acknowledging feelings*. It can also involve eliciting self-assessments of how important someone thinks a particular change is or how much of a struggle they think it will be to change.





What does MI not do?



It would be uncommon in an MI approach to give advice. Cajoling, threatening, scaring, or shaming someone, even subtly, is never consistent with MI.



What is so
hard about it?



Most of us have been raised with people trying to get us to do things through fear, shame or punishment.

‘If you keep getting grades like this, you’ll never get into a good college’

FEAR

‘Next time I catch you with pot, you will be grounded for months’

PUNISHMENT

‘I’m really disappointed in you. I thought you were better than that’

SHAME

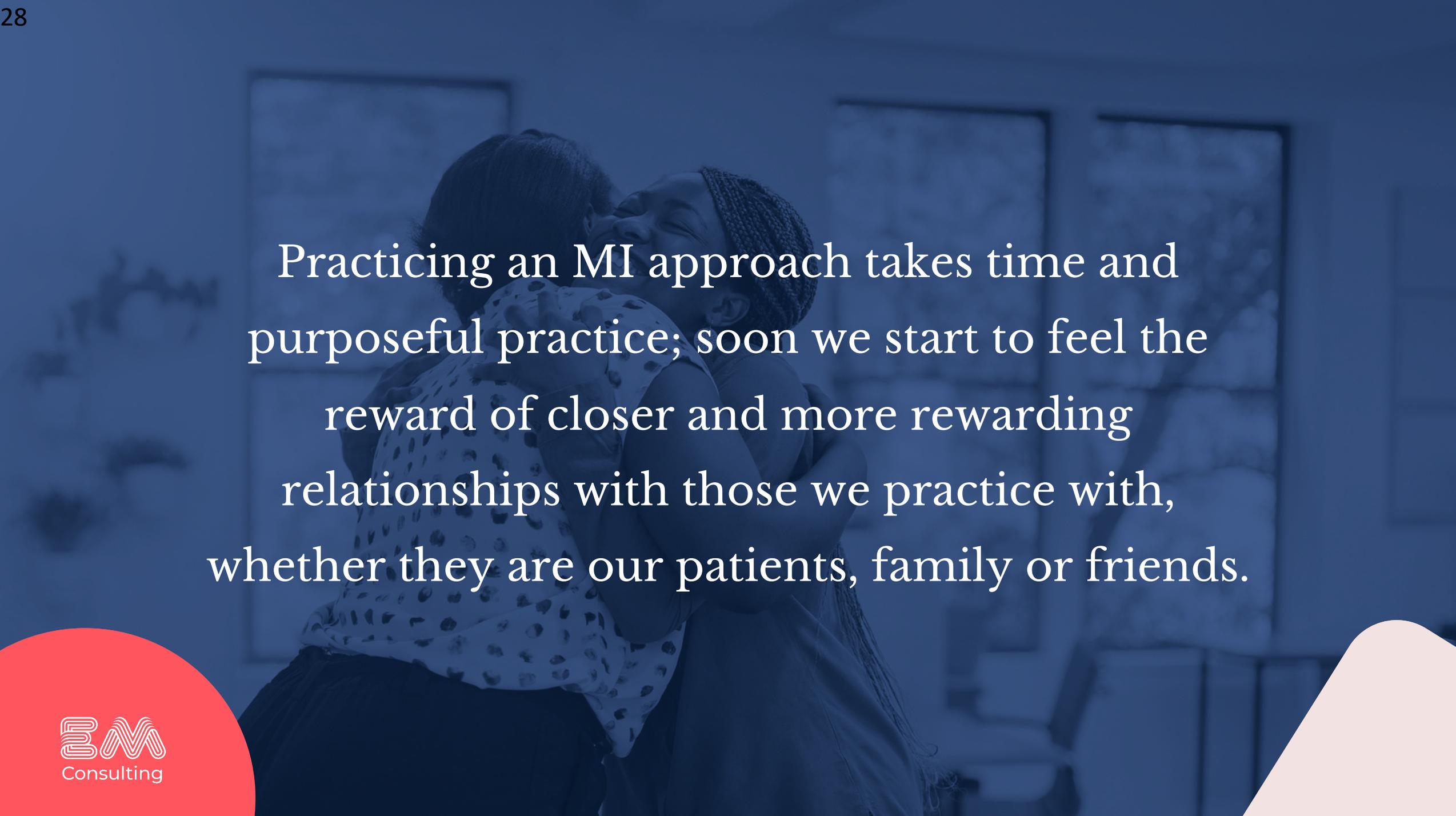
We've also likely been conditioned to give advice to try and 'fix' other's problems, since we probably received this too.



Often we are habituated to reassuring or cheerleading others, instead of reflecting or asking how they feel. While all of these things were likely done to us and by us with good intentions, they usually don't feel very good.



These communication habits are tough to break; we sometimes feel helpless if we don't give advice, or are at a loss of what to do without the tool of punishment.

A photograph of a woman with braided hair hugging a young child from behind. They are in a classroom, with a whiteboard and framed pictures on the wall. The image is overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent filter.

Practicing an MI approach takes time and purposeful practice; soon we start to feel the reward of closer and more rewarding relationships with those we practice with, whether they are our patients, family or friends.

For more useful resources
please visit:



www.emorrisonconsulting.com