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## 8.8. Motivational strategies

This section describes strategies that can be used when there are opportunities to discuss motivation to make changes in behaviour. They promote hope for change, and so contribute towards establishing the therapeutic milieu



While some behavioural changes lie with the child/young person, it is important not to make them responsible for changes that others need to make, and to explicitly recognise this in any intervention. As such, the strategies in this section can also be employed with family/carers where appropriate.



### Practitioner stance

- An ability to maintain an empathic, non-confrontational, collaborative and non-judgmental stance
- An ability to convey genuine acceptance of the child/young person's position and avoid the use of persuasion, and:
  - to 'roll with the resistance' and so avoid direct confrontation
- An ability to work from a position that respects the child/young person's autonomy and their responsibility for change

### Knowledge

- An ability to draw on knowledge of the psychology of behaviour change and motivation, i.e.:
  - motivation is shaped by an individual's perception of their ability to carry out a behaviour and the opportunity for them to do so
  - motivation to engage in a particular behaviour will typically fluctuate in response to competing internal (psychological) and external demands
  - ambivalence about behaviour change is not a pathological trait, but rather a common precursor to making a change
  - psychological reactance (defending a status quo) is a typical response to confrontation aimed at forcing behaviour change
  - practitioner empathy is a good predictor of successful behaviour change

### Motivational strategies

#### Identifying discrepancies

- An ability to draw out the child/young person's ideas, feeling and wants, and their intrinsic motivation for change



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■	An ability to help the child/young person discuss any distinction (and discrepancy) between their current situation and:
	■ how far it matches living according to their values
	■ their goals for the future
■	An ability to help the child/young person explore and resolve their ambivalence in favour of change
■	An ability to encourage exploration of ambivalence by using open questions to help the child/young person identify the pros of change and barriers to achieving this change
■	An ability to enhance the child/young person's perception of the importance of change and their confidence and readiness to make this change, by discussing ambivalence and highlighting reasons for change
<b>Style of interaction</b>	
■	An ability to use affirmative statements that acknowledge the child/young person's efforts and strengths
■	An ability to use open-ended questions to encourage reflection on behaviour change
■	An ability for the practitioner to avoid the use of 'traps', e.g.:
	■ question/answer traps (e.g. repeatedly asking questions that elicit mono-syllabic responses)
	■ premature focus traps (focusing on a problem area without fully exploring other areas of concern to the child/young person and identifying their priorities)
	■ taking-side traps (arguing against the child/young person's view of the problem)
	■ blaming traps (seeking to blame others or the child/young person for the current situation)
	■ expert traps (overruling the child/young person's perspective by asserting professional authority)
■	An ability to consistently maintain a reflective listening style by:
	■ forming hypotheses about the meaning of the child/young person's statements
	■ testing hypotheses by making reflective statements
	■ paying attention to statements that indicate a desire or ability to change, and reflecting them back to the child/young person in summary statements
■	An ability to elicit 'change talk' in a collaborative way by:
	■ recognising and reflecting on different levels of motivation when the child/young person talks about their desire to change, their ability to change, and their reasons for change
	■ recognising and strengthening language that indicates a commitment to making a positive behaviour change
■	An ability to offer summaries, to demonstrate understanding of the child/young person's difficulties and structure the intervention
■	An ability to reframe discussion positively, with a focus on behaviour change



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- An ability to help the child/young person consider new perspectives, in a non-confrontational way
- An ability to only offer specific information and advice when it is asked for
- An ability to help the child/young person discuss the benefits and barriers to changing problem behaviour
- An ability to develop, in collaboration with the child/young person, plans for behaviour change

- An ability to summarise any decisions that have agreed about behaviour change

### ***Monitoring***

- An ability to identify the child/young person's readiness for change, through open-ended discussion
- An ability to give positive and constructive feedback on behaviour change
- An ability to help the child/young person use self-monitoring tools to reflect on progress

### ***Meta-competences in motivational interviewing***

- An ability to adapt the pace of discussions in relation to the child/young person's needs and capacity
- An ability to judge when and how to introduce motivational strategies so as to deliver them 'opportunistically' (so that it is relevant to discussion and integrated into the session, and targeted at resolving ambivalence about behaviour change)
- An ability to elicit and be responsive to young person's feedback
- An ability to integrate motivational strategies into the work of the ward