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Motivational Interviewing (MI) For Alcohol Addiction Treatment

BY LOUISVILLE ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTER

Motivational Interviewing (MI) For Alcohol Addiction Treatment is a counseling approach designed to help users change ambivalent behavior regarding their addiction to address their behaviors and thinking patterns and develop the tools to not only address but change this to overcome their addiction.

In 2020, 41.1 million people needed help with alcohol or drug abuse, but only 4 million received treatment for their addiction. 37.5 million people felt they did not have an addiction needing treatment.

What Is Motivational Interviewing?

The first reference to MI was noted by Professor William R. Miller in an issue of Behavioral Psychotherapy in 1983. It is a technique to overcome ambivalent behavior in addicts who don't see they have a problem to overcome or lack the motivation to quit.

A lack of motivation or desire to achieve sobriety is often the most significant barrier over financial or health reasons for tackling substance abuse.

The thought behind Motivational Interviewing (MI) For Alcohol Addiction Treatment is that alcoholics are aware of the negative aspects of their drinking but aren't fully ready to accept how their drinking is affecting them or are at a point of readiness to seek help and enact change.

MI Therapists work alongside other addiction techniques to facilitate the process of readiness to increase the person's own motivation and desire over their addiction.

Research indicates that those who seek treatment for alcohol addiction benefit from MI techniques and those required to attend addiction treatment as per legal consequences of drinking, such as driving under the influence.

The Objective and Steps of Motivational Interviewing (MI)

MI is made up of some key elements, which include:

- The individual is responsible for overcoming their ambivalence to their addiction, not the counselor
- Their ambivalence isn't resolved through direct persuasion
- The motivation needs to come from the individual
- The counselor is there to facilitate the required information from the individual
- The counselor is there to guide the individual into recognizing and resolving the ambivalence
- The readiness to change is not a trait. It is the result of interpersonal interactions
- The relationship between an individual and counselor is a collaborative partnership

The process of Motivational Interviewing is simple and straightforward and can often be completed in a few sessions to assist with alcohol addiction recovery treatments.

The four processes for the basis of MI include:

Engaging

Engaging the individual gets them to talk about their concerns and issues directly related to their alcohol addiction to establish a relationship built on trust, which can offer improved treatment outcomes.

Focusing

The focusing stage marries the conversation with the patterns and habits the individual would like to change. This helps determine a plan based on the discussion for the rest of the process.

Evoking

Here, the importance of change is reinforced, and then the option that change can occur is instilled during sessions. Giving individuals the confidence that they can do this and change is possible allows them to become ready and is the basis of MI and how recovery from addiction can be best supported.

Planning

Planning involves equipping the individual with a practical set of steps that can be used to enact change in their lives in a personalized way to get the most from their treatment.

The main Aim of MI is to figure out what the person wants for themselves and from their recovery, not what professionals think is best for them. This is achieved via empathy, reflective listening, and the ability of counselors to form a strong bond quickly with individuals.

Motivational Interviewing (MI) For Alcohol Addiction Treatment

As part of alcohol addiction recovery, MI's role in facilitating change is via increasing the motivation to change in a person. Without motivation, there is a lower chance any recovery from addiction will succeed and become unsustainable in the long term.

There are many different reasons people become dependent or addicted to alcohol and even more reasons why they don't want to address their addiction or seek recovery.

MI isn't about forcing a treatment plan on them against their will; it is about helping them to realize they can overcome their issues, tackle their addiction, and want to do so.

Used alongside evidence-based alcohol addiction treatments, MI allows people to confront their denial, look into the pros and cons of how alcohol affects their lifestyle, and develop that desire to want to change and be open to the recovery process.

The emphasis is on making sure that the individual comes to these conclusions on their own and develops their own desire for change without feeling forced to do so or like they have been coerced into doing something they don't want to do. Once they have reached this point, treatment becomes easier and allows for more effective and longer-lasting results.

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