

Motivational Interviewing Audit Scoring Guide

DESCRIPTION OF RATING ITEMS

This section describes in detail different counseling strategies an ISO may use during a session. Items 1 through 10 define strategies that are consistent with Motivational Interviewing (MI) and critical to the approach (e.g., open-ended questions, affirmations of strengths and self-efficacy, reflective statements). Each item includes a specific definition, frequency and extensiveness rating guidelines to help the skills developer/rater capture all occurrences of it, specific examples, and guidelines for rating the overall skill demonstrated by the ISO in using the particular strategy. We strongly encourage the skills developer and supervisors/raters to become very familiar with the rating items and to continuously refer to the definitions in order to provide ISO's with the most accurate, consistent, and individualized rating feedback and coaching.

Motivational Interviewing Consistent Items

1. MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING STYLE OR SPIRIT: *To what extent did the ISO provide low-key feedback, roll with resistance (e.g., avoiding arguments, shifting focus), and use a supportive, warm, non-judgmental, collaborative approach? To what extent did the ISO convey empathic sensitivity through words and tone of voice, demonstrate genuine concern and an awareness of the client's experiences? To what extent did the ISO follow the client's lead in the discussion instead of structuring the discussion according to the ISO's agenda?*

FREQUENCY AND EXTENSIVENESS RATING GUIDELINES:

This item refers to how much the ISO maintained an empathic, collaborative approach and handled resistance skillfully instead of head-on while consistently aiming to elicit the client's motivation for change. This therapeutic style is one of calm and caring concern and an appreciation for the experiences and opinions of the client. The ISO conveys empathic sensitivity through words and tone of voice, and demonstrates genuine concern and an awareness of the client's experiences. The ISO avoids advising or directing the client in an unsolicited fashion. Decision-making is shared. As the ISO listens very carefully to the client, the ISO uses the client's reactions to what the ISO has said as a guide for proceeding with the session. The ISO avoids arguments and sidesteps conflicted discussions or shifts focus to another topic where eliciting the client's discussion and motivation for change may be more productive.

A higher Frequency/Extensiveness rating would be achieved if the ISO consistently maintains the MI spirit and pursuit of an accurate understanding of the client throughout the session and clearly demonstrates an ability to respond without defensiveness to the client's resistance behaviors such as arguing, interrupting, negating (denial), or ignoring. The ISO appears facile in using core MI skills such as open-ended questions, reflections, affirmations, and summaries and integrates these skills with a variety of other techniques used to more directly elicit self-motivational client statements and to reduce resistance such as: Amplified reflection (reflecting the client's statements in an Exaggerated

manner); Double-sided reflection (restating what the client has said, but reminding them of the contrary things they have said previously); Shifting focus (changing the topic or focus to things the client is less resistant to exploring and changing); Reframing (acknowledging what the client has said, but offering a different perspective); or Coming along side (taking the side of no change as a way to foster the client's ambivalence and elicit change talk). Each of these techniques is used to reduce resistance and facilitate the client's consideration and discussion of change-related topics. *Lower ratings* occur when ISO's behavior supporting a MI stance is absent or seldom occur or if the ISO peppers the session with several MI inconsistent interventions that disrupts or negates the MI spirit.

EXAMPLE:

Client: "Why do you keep asking me to talk about my cocaine use? My kids are driving me crazy. You'd use cocaine too if you had my problems!"

ISO: "You have a valid point. Maybe we should think about having your family come to a session. This problem may be bigger than you alone."

SKILL LEVEL RATING GUIDELINES:

HIGHER: A ISO demonstrates a high quality motivational interviewing style/spirit when he/she establishes an overall tone of collaboration and respect. The ISO shows he/she cares about what the client is saying and strives to accurately understand and reflect the client's statements. The ISO uses any specific therapeutic strategy in the service of promoting an overall motivational interviewing style or spirit. A ISO also demonstrates higher skill when, throughout the session, the ISO deftly uses the client's reactions as a guide for formulating subsequent MI strategies and techniques. The ISO's attunement to the client is obvious.

LOWER: A low quality motivational interviewing style occurs when the ISO controls the interview process, insufficiently facilitates the client's open exploration of his/her problem areas and motivation for change, and acts inflexibly and defensively in response to client resistance. The ISO may deliver therapeutic interventions in a technically correct manner but with little facility, warmth, or engagement of the client. An ISO who does not adjust strategies to the client's shifting motivational state or who sounds redundant in the interventions selected also may receive lower Skill Level ratings.

2. ASKING OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: *To what extent did the ISO use open-ended questions (i.e., questions or requests that elicit more than yes/no responses) to elicit the client's perception of his/her problems, motivation, change efforts, and plans?*

FREQUENCY AND EXTENSIVENESS RATING GUIDELINES:

Open-ended questions are questions that result in more than yes/no responses and that don't pull for terse answers or very specific pieces of information. Often these questions begin with the following interrogatives: "What," "How," "In what," and "Why" (somewhat less preferable) or lead off with the request, "Tell me..." or "Describe..." The ISO uses open-ended questions to elicit an open conversation about the client's view of his/her problems and commitment to change. In brief, by using open-ended questions, the

ISO gives the client a wide range for discussing his or her life circumstances and unwanted behavior patterns.

A higher Frequency/Extensiveness rating would be achieved if the ISO asks numerous questions that invite client conversation (see Correct Examples) as opposed to asking only yes/no response questions (see Incorrect Examples). *Lower ratings* occur when the ISO asks very few questions or almost all closed-ended ones.

EXAMPLES:

Correct

So, what brings you here today?
What are some of the ways that substance use affects your life?"
What kinds of differences have you noticed in...?

Incorrect:

Do you use marijuana? When was the last time you used?
Can you tell me how heroin affects you?
Your wife thinks you are addicted to cocaine.
Are you addicted to cocaine?

SKILL LEVEL RATING GUIDELINES:

HIGHER: High quality open-ended questions are relevant to the ISO-client conversation and pull for greater client exploration and recognition of problem areas and motivation for change, without appearing to be judgmental or leading to the client. They are simple and direct, thereby increasing the chance that the client clearly understands what the ISO is asking. Usually, several open-ended questions do not occur in close succession. Rather, high quality open-ended questions typically are interspersed with reflections and ample client conversation to avoid the creation of a question-answer trap between the ISO and client. The ISO pauses after each question to give the client time to respond to each query.

LOWER: Low quality open-ended questions are poorly worded or timed or target an area not immediately relevant to the conversation and client concerns. They often will occur in close succession, giving the conversation a halting or mechanical tone rather than one that flows naturally between the ISO and client. Lower quality open-ended questions also may compound several questions into one query (e.g., "Tell me about how you felt before and after you got high and how that all affects your future risk for using cocaine."), making them harder to understand and respond to by the client. Further reductions in Skill Level ratings may occur if the ISO seems to be leading or steering the client, uses a judgmental or sarcastic tone when asking open-ended questions, or does not pause sufficiently after each question to give the client time to contemplate and respond.

3. AFFIRMATION OF STRENGTHS AND CHANGE EFFORTS: *To what extent did the ISO verbally reinforce the client's strengths, abilities, or efforts to change his/her unwanted behavior? To what extent did the ISO develop the client's confidence by*

praising small steps taken in the direction of change or expressing appreciation of personal qualities in the client that might facilitate successful efforts to change?

FREQUENCY AND EXTENSIVENESS RATING GUIDELINES:

This item refers to what extent the ISO expresses confidence in the client to achieve his/her goals. The ISO may affirm the client using many different approaches: a) using compliments or praise, b) acknowledging the client's personal qualities, competencies or abilities that might promote change, c) recognizing effort or small steps taken by the client to change. Sometimes, the ISO might use a positive reframe to affirm the client (e.g., noting how multiple treatment episodes and numerous relapses are evidence of the client's persistence in trying to deal with his or her drug use problems and not giving up). By complimenting, positively reinforcing, and validating the client, the ISO fosters the belief in the client that there is hope for successfully changing the unwanted behavior and that the *client* can change his/her own unwanted behaviors. Note: Skill developer or raters should not rate an ISO's simple statements of "Good" or "Great" as affirmations. Affirmations must include direct references to something about the client.

EXAMPLES:

ISO: "It sounds as if you have really thought a lot about this and has some good ideas about how you might want to change your unwanted behavior." That must have been really hard for you. You are really trying hard to work on yourself."

SKILL LEVEL RATING GUIDELINES:

HIGHER: Higher quality affirmations occur when the ISO affirms qualities or efforts made by the client that promote productive change or that the client might harness in future change efforts rather than being general compliments. The ISO derives these affirmations directly from the conversation. As a consequence, high quality affirmations are meaningful to the client rather than being too global or trite. A key ingredient in a high quality affirmation is the appearance of genuineness rather than the ISO merely saying something generally affirming in a knee-jerk or mechanical fashion.

LOWER: Low quality affirmations are not sufficiently rooted in the conversation between the client and ISO. The affirmations are not unique to the client's description of him/herself and life circumstances or history. The ISO may appear to affirm simply to buoy a client in despair or encourage a client to try to change when he/she has expressed doubt about his/her capacity to do so. In short, poor quality affirmations sound trite, hollow, insincere, or even condescending.

4. MAKING REFLECTIVE STATEMENTS: *To what extent did the ISO repeat (exact words), rephrase (slight rewording), paraphrase (e.g., amplifying the thought or feeling, use of analogy, making inferences) or make reflective summary statements of what the client said?*

FREQUENCY AND EXTENSIVENESS RATING GUIDELINES:

Reflective statements made by the ISO restate the client's comments using language that accurately clarifies and captures the meaning of the client's communications and conveys to the client the ISO's effort to understand the client's point of view. The ISO uses this technique to encourage the client to explore or elaborate on a topic. These techniques include repeating exactly what the client just stated, rephrasing (slight rewording), paraphrasing (e.g., amplifying thoughts or feelings, use of analogy, making inferences) or making reflective summary statements of what the client said. Reflective summary statements are a special form of reflection in which the ISO selects several pieces of client information and combines them in a summary with the goal of inviting more exploration of material, to highlight ambivalence, or to make a transition to another topic. Often, summary reflections receive an extensive or in depth tally mark on the worksheet.

EXAMPLES:

Client: "Right now, using drugs doesn't take care of how bad I feel like it used to. If anything, I feel worse now."

Simple Reflection

Using drugs makes you feel worse now.

Rephrasing

So, you have found that using drugs to deal with how badly you feel is not working well for you anymore.

Paraphrasing Using a Double-Sided Reflection

In the past using drugs helped you feel better when you were having a hard time or feeling badly. Now, it is only making matters worse for you.

Introductions to a Reflective Summary

Let me see if I understand what you've told me so far..."

Here is what I've heard you say so far..."

Skill Level Rating Guidelines:

HIGHER: Higher quality reflections occur when the ISO accurately identifies the essential meaning of what the client has said and reflects it back to the client in terms easily understood by the client. The ISO's inflection at the end of the reflection is downward. The ISO pauses sufficiently to give the client an opportunity to respond to the reflection and to develop the conversation. Well-delivered reflections typically are concise and clear. Over the course of the session, higher quality reflections usually have more depth (i.e., paraphrasing thoughts or feelings in manner that effectively brings together discrepant elements or that clarify what the client meant). If the ISO reflects several client statements, the ISO neatly arranges them in a manner that promotes further client introspection, conversation, and motivation for change. Often high quality reflections increase the time spent talking by the client, foster a collaborative tone, and reduce client resistance.

LOWER: Low quality reflections often are very inaccurate (i.e., "miss the boat") and may contribute to the client feeling misunderstood. They can be too vague, complicated, or wordy. They also may have an upward inflection at the end and consequently function as disguised closed ended questions. Typically low quality reflections decrease the time spent talking by the client and may increase the client's resistance. Skill Level ratings

also may decrease, even with high frequency reflections, if the reflections are too spread out rather than consecutively linked over the session such that they do not increase introspection, conversation, or motivation to change. Likewise, reflections that are redundant or remain repetitively simple such that the conversation seems to go around in circles are lower in quality.

5. FOSTERING A COLLABORATIVE ATMOSPHERE: *To what extent did the ISO convey in words or actions that they are working in collaboration with the client? How much did the ISO emphasize the (greater) importance of the client's own decisions, confidence, and perception of the importance of changing? To what extent did the ISO verbalize respect for the client's autonomy and personal choice?*

FREQUENCY AND EXTENSIVENESS RATING GUIDELINES:

This item captures any explicit effort the ISO makes to seek guidance from the client or to act as though their probation process were a joint effort as opposed to one in which the ISO consistently is in control. The ISO emphasizes the (greater) importance of the client's perspective and decisions about if and how to change. Any explicit ISO statements that verbalize respect for the client's autonomy and personal choice are examples of fostering collaboration during their meeting.

EXAMPLES:

ISO: *"What do you think would be a good way to handle this situation in the future?"*
"I would have thought you would..., but it sounds like you made a better choice by..."
"Let's look at that issue together."
"We can spend some time talking about your situation at home."

SKILL LEVEL RATING GUIDELINES:

HIGHER: Higher quality strategies occur in several ways. The ISO may directly and clearly note the greater importance of the client's perception about his/her unwanted behavior and related life events in contrast to what the ISO or significant others might think. The ISO may underscore the collaborative nature of the interview by highlighting his or her interest in understanding the client's perspective without bias. Likewise, direct and clear references to the client's capacity to draw his or her own conclusions or to make personal choices about how to proceed with a plan for change receive higher Skill Level ratings. Use of these strategies when the ISO perceives that the client is feeling coerced by significant others can be especially effective and lead to higher Skill Level ratings. Emphasizing viable personal choices rather than choices that are unrealistic to the client also improve Skill Level ratings. For example, an ISO may provide a choice among treatment options rather than highlight the option of program non-enrollment to a client who presents to treatment in a job jeopardy or court ordered situation; this type of client most likely will see treatment nonparticipation as too risky for losing his job or going to jail.

LOWER: Lower quality strategies occur when the ISO emphasizes personal choices that do not seem realistic to the client. Also, vague, wordy, or poorly timed efforts to articulate the client's personal control, autonomy, and collaborative role in the interview

reduce quality ratings. ISO advice giving in the context of seemingly collaborative statements also receives lower ratings (e.g., “You are obviously in the driver’s seat, but I wouldn’t do that if I were you.”).

6. DISCUSSING MOTIVATION TO CHANGE: *To what extent did the ISO try to elicit client discussion of change (self-motivational statements) through evocative questions or comments designed to promote greater awareness/concern for the problem, recognition of the advantages of change, increased intent/optimism to change, or elaboration on a topic related to change? To what extent did the ISO discuss the stages of change, help the client develop a rating of current importance, confidence, readiness or commitment, or explore how motivation might be strengthened?*

FREQUENCY AND EXTENSIVENESS RATING GUIDELINES:

This item refers to the extent to which the ISO made attempts to elicit client self-motivational statements or “change talk,” or any type of discussion about change. This is often accomplished through questions or comments designed to promote greater awareness/concern for a problem, recognition of the advantages of change, increased intent/optimism to change, or elaboration on a topic related to change. The ISO might ask the client about how other people view the client’s behavior as concerning or problematic and how these concerns by others impact the client’s motivation for change. The ISO also might initiate a more formal discussion of the stages of change or level of motivation by helping the client develop a rating of current importance, confidence, readiness or commitment to change and explore how any of these dimensions might be strengthened. In brief, this item captures somewhat more directive means for eliciting a client’s change talk and addressing a client’s commitment to change. While these strategies very often lead to “change talk” or self-motivational statements and movement toward the negotiation of specific change plans, the client does not need to respond in this fashion for this item to be rated highly.

A higher Frequency/Extensiveness rating would be achieved if the ISO attempts to elicit remarks from the client indicating either recognition of a problem, statements of concern, intention to change or optimism about change. The ISO will often use techniques that are rated on other items (e.g., open-ended questions, reflections about the unwanted behavior and/or about general problem areas related around the unwanted behavior) that, in this case, are meant to encourage “change talk” on the part of the client. The ISO may also explicitly assess the client’s current motivation to become abstinent, decrease or eliminate their unwanted behavior, especially if the client continues the unwanted behavior. A lower rating would be given when the ISO seldom strategically queries or reflects the motivational issues outlined above.

EXAMPLES:

ISO: “What concerns you about your unwanted behavior?”

“What are some reasons you might see for making a change?”

“What do you think would work for you if you decide to change?”

Client: “My wife really believes it is a problem, so she’s always on my back about it.”

ISO: “How do you feel about your unwanted behavior?”

What are your concerns and what do you think might need to happen?"

SKILL LEVEL RATING GUIDELINES:

HIGHER: Higher ratings occur on this item when the ISO uses evocative questions to elicit a client's change talk that are targeted to the client's current level of motivation. For example, if a client has not recognized drug use as a problem, the ISO asks the client to explore any concerns or problematic aspects of his or her drug use. If a client has recognized drug use as a problem but is uncertain about his or her capacity to change, the ISO directly queries the client about factors that might impact intent or optimism for change. Higher ratings also occur when the ISO collaboratively explores the client's current readiness to change in depth by combining rating scales and open-ended follow-up questions and reflections that prompt the client's arguments for change, optimism and self-efficacy.

LOWER: Lower ratings on motivation to change strategies occur when the ISO tries to elicit self-motivational statements that are inconsistent with the client's stage of change. Additionally, if an ISO's efforts to elicit self-motivational statements or to assess the client's readiness to change become redundant, they receive lower Skill Level ratings. ISO efforts to assess readiness to change that pull for resistance or arguments against change also receive lower ratings. For example, a lower quality intervention would occur if after a client selects a readiness to change rating of 6 on a scale of 1 (lowest readiness, to 10 (highest readiness)), the ISO asks, "How come you said a 6 rather than a 10?"

7. DEVELOPING DISCREPANCIES: *To what extent did the ISO create or heighten the internal conflicts of the client relative to his/her unwanted behavior? To what extent did the ISO try to increase the client's awareness of a discrepancy between where his or her life is currently versus where he or she wants it to be in the future? How much did the ISO explore how the unwanted behavior may be inconsistent with the client's goals, values, or self-perceptions?*

FREQUENCY AND EXTENSIVENESS RATING GUIDELINES:

This item involves efforts by the ISO to prompt the client's increased awareness of a discrepancy between where they are and where they want to be relative to their unwanted behavior. The ISO may do this by highlighting contradictions and inconsistencies in the client's behavior or stated goals, values, and self-perceptions. The ISO may attempt to raise the client's awareness of the personal consequences of the unwanted behavior, and how these consequences seem contrary to other aims stated by the client. The ISO may engage the client in a frank discussion of perceived discrepancies and help the client consider options to regain equilibrium. Other common techniques used to create or develop discrepancies include 1) asking the client to look into the future and imagine a changed life under certain conditions (e.g., absence of drug abuse, if married with children), 2) asking the client to look back and recall periods of better functioning in contrast to the present circumstances, and 3) asking the client to consider the worst possible scenario resulting from their unwanted behavior or the best possible consequences resulting from trying to change. Sometime double-sided reflections that bring together previously unrecognized discrepant client statements are examples of a

ISO's attempt to heighten discrepancies (which may also be rated on Item 8: Pros, Cons, and Ambivalence).

EXAMPLES:

ISO: "You say you want to save your marriage, and I also hear you say you want to keep the unwanted behavior (insert behavior)."

"On the one hand, you want to go out to the bar every night. On the other hand, you have told me how going out to the bar every night gets in the way of spending time with your son."

SKILL LEVEL RATING GUIDELINES:

HIGHER: Higher quality efforts to develop discrepancies typically occur when the ISO attempts to make the client aware of a discrepancy in the client's thoughts, feelings, actions, goals or values based upon the client's previous statements. The ISO presents the discrepancies as legitimate conflicts or mixed experiences rather than as contradictions or judgments that prove the client has a (unwanted behavior) problem. In addition, higher quality interventions are clear and articulate reflections that encapsulate divergent elements of what a client has said. In short, integration of the client's specific discrepant statements in well-stated terms using a supportive, nonjudgmental tone improves the Skill Level rating.

LOWER: Low quality efforts to develop discrepancies typically occur when the ISO highlights the opposite side of the client's ambivalence without sufficiently counterbalancing it. For example, a client might say he wants to continue to smoke marijuana after previously acknowledging how smoking angers his wife and may lead to an unwanted separation. A rater would give a lower Skill Level rating if the ISO responds by saying, "Yeah, but you said you don't want to be separated," instead of saying, "So even though you've told me you are concerned your wife might leave you, you continue to want to smoke marijuana." Often this approach appears somewhat argumentative and may heighten resistance rather than develop dissonance in the client's position. Abruptness in posing discrepancies ("gotcha!") or stating discrepancies with a hint of accusation also undermines ISO-client collaboration and reduces the overall quality of the intervention. Finally, wordy, cumbersome, or overly complex reflections of discrepant client statements receive lower Skill Level ratings.

8. EXPLORING PROS, CONS, AND AMBIVALENCE: *To what extent did the ISO address or explore the positive and negative effects or results of the client's unwanted behavior and what might be gained and lost by abstinence or reduction in the unwanted behavior? To what extent did the ISO use decisional balancing, complete a cost-benefits analysis, or develop a list of pros and cons of the unwanted behavior? How much did the ISO express appreciation for ambivalence as a normal part of the change process?*

FREQUENCY AND EXTENSIVENESS RATING GUIDELINES:

This item focuses on the extent to which the ISO facilitated the discussion of specific consequences of the client's unwanted behavior. This may include the positive and/or negative results of the client's past, present, or future behaviors as related to active displays of the unwanted behavior. Specific techniques used include decisional balancing,

a cost-benefits analysis, or listing and discussing the pros and cons of the unwanted behavior. An important stylistic component accompanying these techniques should be the ISO's verbalizing an appreciation for ambivalence as a normal part of the change process?

A *higher Frequency/Extensiveness rating* would be achieved if the ISO discusses ambivalence in detail or explicitly facilitates a costs/benefits analysis with client input concerning change versus remaining the same. A high score on this item typically involves the written completion of a Pros and Cons form either during the session or detailed review of a form completed prior to the session. A *lower rating* occurs when the ISO devotes little time or effort on any of these tasks.

EXAMPLES:

ISO: "What do you see as the positive and negative consequences of your failing to attend treatment?"

"You have had a lot of chest pain after using cocaine and seem very concerned about your health, your family, and where your life is going. And you have identified many possible benefits of stopping use, such as...."

"So by getting high, you feel good and can avoid painful feelings. What are some of the downsides to using?"

SKILL LEVEL RATING GUIDELINES:

HIGHER: Higher quality efforts to discuss the pros and cons of unwanted behavior occur when the ISO approaches the task in a nonjudgmental, exploratory manner. Throughout the examination of pros and cons, the ISO prompts the client to continue detailing dimensions of ambivalence using open-ended questions or reflections about consequences previously noted by the client. Full exploration of the pros and cons of stopping the unwanted behavior versus continuing use improves quality ratings. During this process, the ISO elicits responses from the client rather than suggesting positive and negative consequences as possibilities not previously mentioned by the client. Additionally, use of summary reflections within each dimension or to compare and contrast them may enhance the Skill Level ratings, particularly when the ISO uses these discussions to tip the client's motivational balance to the side of change. The specific technique of completing or reviewing a decisional balance sheet or simply discussing the pros or cons does not directly affect the Skill Level rating.

LOWER: Lower Skill Level ratings occur when the ISO seldom provides the client with opportunities to respond freely to the pros/cons dimensions or to more thoroughly reflect upon meaningful pros and cons to the client. Instead, the ISO provides the client with likely pros and cons and asserts this view to the client in a more closed-ended fashion. Consequently, the client becomes more of a passive recipient rather than an active participant in the construction of the decisional balance or discussion of factors underlying the client's ambivalence. Lower ratings also occur when the ISO asks the client to list pros and cons one after the other without exploring details or the personal impact of substance use on the client's life. When summarizing the client's pros, cons, or ambivalence, the ISO does not involve the client in the review and simply restates the

items in a mechanical or impersonal manner. The ISO makes no effort to strategically tip the client's motivational balance in favor of change.

9. CHANGE PLANNING DISCUSSION: *To what extent did the ISO discuss with the client his or her readiness to prepare a change plan. To what extent did the ISO develop a change plan with the client in a collaborative fashion? How much did the ISO cover critical aspects of change planning such as facilitating a discussion of the client's self-identified goals, steps for achieving those goals, supportive people available to help the client, what obstacles to the change plan might exist, and how to address impediments to change?*

FREQUENCY AND EXTENSIVENESS RATING GUIDELINES:

This item measures the extent to which the ISO helps the client develop a change plan. This process may include an initial discussion of the client's readiness to prepare a change plan. It may include a more formal process of completing a Change Planning Worksheet or a less formal ISO facilitated discussion of a plan without completing a worksheet. In either case, the intervention typically involves a discussion that includes many of the following areas: (1) the desired changes, (2) reasons for wanting to make these changes, (3) steps to make the changes, (4) people available to support the change plan, (5) impediments or obstacles to change and how to address them, and (6) methods of determining whether the plan has worked.

A higher Frequency/Extensiveness rating would be achieved if the ISO guides the client through a thorough discussion of change planning. This process does not have to include review of a completed Change Planning Worksheet, but a high score requires the development of a detailed change plan during the session. A lower rating occurs when the ISO addresses only a few elements of a change plan and spends little time examining them in detail.

EXAMPLE:

ISO: "So, it sounds like you have made a decision to stop using drugs and reduce your drinking. Let's spend some time figuring out a plan that will help you get started working toward that goal. What is the first thing that comes to mind?"

"What do you think might get in the way of this plan or make it hard for you to continue to make these changes?"

SKILL LEVEL RATING GUIDELINES:

HIGHER: As a prerequisite, a higher Skill Level rating for change planning requires that the ISO develop a detailed change plan that addresses most of the key change planning areas outlined above. The ISO takes sufficient time to explore each area and to encourage the client to elaborate by using open-ended questions and reflections. Overall, the development of the change plan is highly collaborative and serves to strengthen the client's commitment to change. If the client expresses ambivalence during the completion of the plan, the ISO attempts to resolve it in the direction of change instead of pushing forward when the client may not be ready to proceed.

LOWER: Lower Skill Level ratings occur when the ISO approaches the change planning process in a cursory fashion. The ISO does not actively engage the client in change planning or individualize the plan to the unique circumstances of the client. The lowest Skill Level ratings are given when the ISO takes on an authoritative and prescriptive tone while completing the change plan with the client.

10. CLIENT-CENTERED PROBLEM DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK: *To what extent did the ISO facilitate a discussion of the problems for which the client entered probation? To what extent did the ISO review or provide personalized, solicited feedback about the client's unwanted behavior and the evidence or indications of problems in other life areas?*

FREQUENCY AND EXTENSIVENESS RATING GUIDELINES:

This item involves explicit attempts by the ISO to inquire or guide a discussion about the problems for which the client entered the probation system. This discussion can include the crime, substance use, as well as, the many related problems in living that are associated with their unwanted behavior. The ISO facilitates the development of a full understanding of the nature of the client's difficulties. This process may involve the review of LSIR assessment, office report forms completed by the client, support systems, or from client admission. The method is less important than is the task of learning about the client's problems and providing feedback to the client about his/her problems in an objective, client-centered manner. The ISO guides this discussion and provides feedback using a non-judgmental, curious, collaborative client centered style. If the ISO provides formal feedback, the ISO implements this strategy only when solicited by the client or when seeking the client's permission first.

EXAMPLES:

ISO: "I wonder if we might start by your sharing with me some of the concerns around what brought you into the court system."

"You have given me an excellent description of some of your concerns. I would like to put this information together with some of the other information you provided when you began this program so we will both have a complete view of what might be helpful for you. Would that be alright with you?"

SKILL LEVEL RATING GUIDELINES:

HIGHER: Higher quality problem discussion and feedback occurs in several ways. Initial ISO efforts to facilitate a discussion of the client's problems may be fairly straightforward and of "adequate" quality (e.g., What's been happening that has led you to come see me today?). Subsequent ISO efforts may receive higher ratings if they promote the client's further elaboration and fuller understanding of the presenting problems, particularly when efforts to promote problem discussion successively build upon each other. Regarding feedback, higher ratings may occur when the feedback is very individualized to the client's experiences and self-report. The ISO presents the feedback in clear, straightforward, and supportive terms. Overall, the ISO is nonjudgmental about the feedback and uses open-ended questioning, affirmations, and

reflections as part of the feedback process and only offers feedback when solicited by the client or when obtaining the client's permission to do so first.

LOWER: Lower quality ratings on this item typically occur when a ISO presents feedback to a client in a generic way. The feedback may be unclear or presented in a judgmental fashion. Lower quality feedback also occurs when the ISO seems to be lecturing the client or drawing conclusions for the client without providing the client with opportunities to respond to the feedback provided. This latter approach to providing client feedback creates the image of the ISO as expert and often decreases the amount of talking done by the client. Unsolicited feedback also reduces the Skill Level rating.