

Knowing the nutrition isn't *the problem*.

Motivational interviewing, stages of change & the science of follow-through.

Built on Miller & Rollnick · TTM · SDT · AND Counselling.

Inside this preview: the Clinical Guide cover, contents page and the OARS skills chapter in action, the Patient Handout Pack contents and a complete handout, a full recipe card, and a complete contents map of the full bundle.



SWIPE TO EXPLORE

A CLINICAL GUIDE

The *Behaviour Change* Handbook



Fig. 28 · Stages of change

Contents

01 Behaviour Change Theory for Dietitians

Transtheoretical Model · Health Belief Model · Social Cognitive Theory · Self-Determination Theory · COM-B Model · Matching interventions to stage

02 Motivational Interviewing Fundamentals

Spirit of MI · OARS skills · Change talk vs sustain talk · MI decision balance

03 Advanced MI Techniques

Developing discrepancy · Rolling with resistance · DARN-CAT · Sustain talk · Ambivalence · Importance/confidence rulers

04 Goal Setting & Action Planning

SMART goals · Implementation intentions · Micro-habits · Habit stacking · Self-monitoring · Setback management

05 Counselling Skills for Specific Populations

Paediatric · Adolescents · Elderly · Low health literacy · Cultural diversity · Mental health comorbidities

06 Difficult Conversations in Dietetics

Weight discussions · Non-adherence · Breaking bad news · Managing expectations · Patient disagreement · Setting boundaries

07 Group Education & Workshops

Session design · Facilitation skills · Group dynamics · Interactive activities · Virtual sessions

2.2 OARS — The Core Skills of MI

OARS is the acronym for the four fundamental communication skills used in MI. These are not exclusive to MI — they are foundational counselling skills — but MI uses them with specific strategic intent: to **evoke change talk**.

O — Open Questions

Open questions cannot be answered with "yes" or "no." They invite the patient to think, explore, and elaborate. In MI, open questions are used strategically to **evoke the patient's own reasons for change**.

MI IN PRACTICE — OPEN QUESTIONS FOR NUTRITION COUNSELLING

Instead of: "Do you eat breakfast?" (closed — yields "yes" or "no")

Try: "Walk me through a typical morning — what does your eating look like from when you wake up?" (open — yields rich clinical information)

Instead of: "Are you willing to reduce your sugar intake?" (closed — invites "no")

Try: "What role does sugar play in your day?" (open — explores meaning and function)

Instead of: "Do you know that processed food is unhealthy?" (closed, condescending)

Try: "What have you noticed about how different foods affect how you feel?" (open, empowering)

A — Affirmations

Affirmations are genuine statements that **recognise the patient's strengths, efforts, and values**. They differ from praise (which is evaluative and positions the clinician as judge). Affirmations build self-efficacy and strengthen the therapeutic relationship.

MI IN PRACTICE — AFFIRMATIONS

Praise (avoid): "Good job on losing 2 kg!" (evaluative, ties worth to outcomes)

Affirmation (use): "You've been consistent with your evening walks for three weeks now — that shows real commitment." (recognises effort and character)

More examples:

"You came back today even though last time was difficult — that takes courage."

"The fact that you're asking these questions tells me how seriously you're taking your health."

"Managing your family's meals while trying to follow a new eating plan is genuinely hard — the fact that you're doing both shows real strength."

Patient Handouts

01 My Readiness for Change

02 My Values & Health Goals

03 Pros & Cons of Change

04 My SMART Goals

05 My Action Plan

06 Tracking My Progress

07 Managing Setbacks

08 Mindful Eating Guide

09 Building Healthy Habits

10 My Meal Planning Template

11 Understanding Emotional Eating

12 My Support Network

13 My 7-Day Meal Plan & Shopping List

14 My Food & Feelings Diary

My Values & Health Goals

Connecting what you eat to what matters most to you

Lasting change happens when it connects to something you truly care about. Diets based on rules often fail because they don't feel meaningful. When your food choices align with your **values** — the things that matter most to you — change feels purposeful rather than punishing.

What Matters Most to Me?

Circle or highlight the values that are most important to you (choose your top 3–5):

- Family & relationships
- Being a good parent / partner
- Independence & self-reliance
- Physical health & energy
- Mental health & wellbeing
- Being active & fit
- Longevity & being around for my family
- Feeling confident in my body
- Being a good role model
- Career & professional goals
- Enjoyment & quality of life
- Spiritual or religious practice
- Community & social connection
- Other: _____

My Top Values

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Scrambled Eggs on Toast

The simplest hot meal you can make — and it never gets old

LEVEL 1

5 INGREDIENTS

QUICK

BEGINNER

340
KCAL

18g
PROTEIN

30g
CARBS

1
SERVES

5
MIN

Ingredients

- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp butter
- 2 slices bread
- Pinch of salt & pepper

ALLERGENS · Contains: Egg, Milk (butter), Gluten (wheat bread). Always check labels on packaged items (stocks, sauces, plant milks, breads) and confirm with the patient.

Method

1. Crack 2 eggs into a bowl and whisk with a fork until combined.
2. Melt the butter in a non-stick pan over medium-low heat.
3. Pour in the eggs. Stir gently with a spatula, pushing the eggs around until just set but still soft (about 2 minutes).
4. Toast the bread while the eggs cook.
5. Season with salt and pepper. Serve on toast.

340
KCAL

18g
PROTEIN

30g
CARBS

16g
FAT

2g
FIBRE

Behaviour change tip: This is proof that cooking does not need to be complicated. If you can make scrambled eggs, you can cook. That is your starting point — and it counts.

THE DIETITIAN'S VAULT

Recipe 01 — Level 1: Beginner

The *Behaviour Change* Handbook for Dietitians

You have just previewed 6 pages. Below is what's in the full bundle.

PART ONE

Clinical Guide

10 CHAPTERS · 65 PP

- Behaviour-change theory for dietitians
- Motivational interviewing fundamentals (OARS)
- Advanced MI: change talk & sustain talk
- Goal setting & action planning (SMART/ER)
- Counselling skills for specific populations
- Difficult conversations in dietetics
- Group education & workshops
- Self-care for the dietitian
- Worked case studies & quick-reference cards

PART TWO

Patient Handout Pack

14 PRINT-READY HANDOUTS

- My readiness for change
- My values & health goals
- Pros & cons of change
- My SMART goals & action plan
- Tracking my progress · managing setbacks
- Mindful eating guide
- Building healthy habits
- Emotional eating · support network
- 7-day meal plan · food & feelings diary

PART THREE

Recipe Collection

45 RECIPES ACROSS FOUR SKILL LEVELS

- Beginner — 5 ingredients or fewer
- Building skills — 15-minute meals
- Growing confidence — batch cooking
- Celebration — special meals
- Plant-based mains & smart snacks
- Allergen line on every recipe

Plus the Counselling Worksheet Pack: 20 print-ready worksheets — decisional balance, values elicitation, readiness rulers, relapse plans.

\$89

Four files · including the Counselling Worksheet Pack

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The Dietitian's Vault