

RECOGNIZING AND RESPONDING TO CHANGE TALK ACTIVITY

When people are ambivalent, they often express change talk and sustain talk at the same time. As helping professionals, many of us are drawn to sustain talk, because we find it concerning and want to help. In Motivational Interviewing, we are encouraged to retrain our ears to listen for change talk. When we recognize change talk in client speech, we can differentially respond using our OARS skills.

In this exercise, you will listen to a song about a woman who is struggling with an alcohol/drug use disorder. While, listening to the song, follow along with the lyrics and note the examples of change talk.

- As a reminder, change talk includes the client's desires, ability, reasons, need, and commitment to change.

Step #1: Access and play the song online using the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IsOGGmB9b5A>

Step #2: Following along with the lyrics below and underline examples of change talk.

Amy:

They tried to make me go to rehab
I said, no, no, no
Yes, I been black
But when I come back, you'll know, know, know
I ain't got the time
And if my daddy thinks I'm fine
He's tried to make me go to rehab
I won't go, go, go
I'd rather be at home with a Ray
I ain't got seventy days
'Cause there's nothing, there's nothing you can teach me
That I can't learn from Mr. Hathaway

Amy:

I didn't get a lot in class
But I know we don't come in a shot glass
They tried to make me go to rehab
I said, "no, no, no"
Yes, I been black
But when I come back, you'll know, know, know
I ain't got the time

And if my daddy thinks I'm fine
He's tried to make me go to rehab
I won't go, go, go

Amy:

The man said, "why do you think you here?
I said, I got no idea.
I'm gonna, I'm gonna lose my baby
So I always keep a bottle near
He said, I just think you're depressed
This, me, yeah, baby, and the rest
They tried to make me go to rehab
But I said, no, no, no

Yes, I been black
But when I come back, you'll know, know, know
I don't ever want to drink again
I just, oh, I just need a friend
I'm not gonna spend ten weeks
Have everyone think I'm on the mend
And it's not just my pride
It's just till these tears have dried

They tried to make me go to rehab
I said, no, no, no
Yes, I been black
But when I come back, you'll know, know, know
I ain't got the time
And if my daddy thinks I'm fine
He's tried to make me go to rehab
I won't go, go, go

Step #3: Pick your top 3 favorite examples of change talk from above and write them in the spaces below. Indicate what type of change talk it is.

Step #4: Write 1 or more OAR statements that could be used to respond to each example of change talk in order to evoke more change talk. An example is provided on the following page.

Change Talk Example #1:
What type of change talk is it? (DARN-C)
Open-Question:
Affirmation:
Reflection:

Change Talk Example #2:
What type of change talk is it? (DARN-C)
Open-Question:
Affirmation:
Reflection:

Change Talk Example #3:
What type of change talk is it? (DARN-C)
Open-Question:
Affirmation:
Reflection:

Step #5: Write a summary that highlights the change talk offered in the song.

EXAMPLE

Change Talk Example: “Yes, I been black.”
What type of change talk is it? (DARN-C) Reason to Change
Open-Question: “How has being “black” affected you?” “What would it look different for you if you did take steps to quit?” How will things be better or different if you don’t feel so down?” “Why do you think you are going to lose your “baby” now?”
Affirmation: “When you make your mind up, you are really solid.” “You’ve thought a lot about this.” “Your relationship is really important to you.”
Reflection: “You’ve been thinking about change for quite some time.” “There are times when you think you are ready for a change.” “You have been feeling sad and are looking for some support.”