



The Art of Persuasion vs. Motivational Interviewing

First Coach:

This is an exercise for pairs, in which one person is the recoveree and the other the coach. The coach uses a variety of methods to try to persuade the speaker to make the change.

Recoveree role: Identify a change that you are considering, something you are thinking about changing in your life, but have not definitely decided. It will be something you feel two ways about. It might be a change that would be “good for you,” that you “should” make for some reason, but have been putting off. Tell the coach about this change you really are considering: a habit, attitude or behavior, but it should be something you haven’t changed yet. Maybe it’s something that would be good for you, or that you think you should change. It should be something you feel comfortable sharing -- not your deepest, darkest secret, okay?

Coach role: Convince and persuade the recoveree to make the change that he or she is considering. Specifically, do these five things:

1. Explain why the recoveree should make this change.
2. Tell the recoveree specific benefits that would result from making the change.
3. Tell the recoveree how they could make the change.
4. Emphasize how important it is for the recoveree to make the change. This might include the negative consequences of not doing it.
5. Persuade the recoveree why they should do it.

After you have had your discussion, give a short summary of what you have talked about and ask the person if they are now committed to make the change.

Second Coach:

This is an exercise for pairs, in which one person is the recoveree and the other the coach. The coach uses a variety of methods to try to listen to what the recoveree wants to do in order to make the change.

Recoveree role: Identify a change that you are considering, something you are thinking about changing in your life, but have not definitely decided. It will be something you feel two ways about. It might be a change that would be “good for you,” that you “should” make for some reason, but have been putting off. Tell the coach about this change you really are considering: a habit, attitude or behavior, but it should be something you haven’t changed yet. Maybe it’s something that would be good for you, or that you think you should change. It should be something you feel comfortable sharing -- not your deepest, darkest secret, okay?

Coach role: Don’t try to persuade or fix anything. Don’t offer advice. Instead ask these five questions one at a time, and listen carefully to what the person says:

1. Why do you want to make this change and why is it important to you?
2. If you do decide to make this change, how might you go about it in order to succeed?
3. What are the three best reasons for you to do it?
4. How can I support you?
5. Are there any resources or people that you think would help you?

After you have listened carefully to the answers to these questions, give back a short summary of what you heard, of the recoveree’s motivations for change. Then ask one more question: So, what do you think you want to do? And listen with interest to the answer.

Discussion:

How were the recoverees’ experiences during and following these 2 conversations?

How did the recoveree feel?