

# OARS: The Basics of Motivational Interviewing



## O: Open Ended Questions

Avoid asking questions that can be answered with a yes or no. Open-ended questions empower the patient to take the lead in the conversation and alleviates the idea of there being a right or wrong answer.<sup>1</sup>

*"I see you're worried about \_\_\_\_\_. Can you tell me more about why you're concerned?"*



## A: Affirmations

Expressing gratitude and offering compliments to the patient fosters a positive connection and boosts their confidence.<sup>2</sup>

*"I want to thank you for sticking with me. I understand that what you're hearing may not be easy, and I appreciate your patience."*



## R: Reflective Listening

Repeat and clarify what the patient has shared. This enhances comprehension and assures the speaker that their words are being acknowledged. By echoing the patient's statements and emotions, it strengthens their sense of control and keeps the conversation flowing.<sup>2</sup>

*"So, if I understand correctly, you're considering the possibility of reducing your \_\_\_\_\_."*



## S: Summaries

Connect conversations and wrap up sessions by highlighting key points. Identify any differences between the patient's present circumstances and their future objectives.<sup>2,3</sup>

*"Before I suggest some referrals, let me recap what you've shared to ensure I haven't overlooked anything significant. Is there anything else you'd like to add before we proceed?"*

**Utilizing these tools will allow the patient to use change talk and enhance motivation for change.<sup>4</sup>**

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