

Preparing for Motivational Interviewing

The Family Wellness Survey provides a helpful indication of how a caregiver is doing, their life satisfaction, and their relationship with their child. Still, this is just one piece of information. There are a variety of other factors to consider and information to collect to gauge a caregiver's level of resilience and possible sources of stress.

Through the Motivational Interview (MI), you'll elicit open questions that help you interpret a caregiver's circumstances, needs and resilience. You will also use your EARS skills to build a collaborative, trusting relationship with a caregiver where they can rely on you to help them facilitate positive changes in their and their child's life. Your role is to support a caregiver in identifying areas of change or strength they can build upon to nurture their family wellness.

While preparing for your MI, it can be helpful to consider what else you know about a caregiver, their child, and their family. What are the caregiver's strengths? Their values? Needs? Goals?

Reflection

What do you know about this caregiver, their child, or their family?

What assumptions or beliefs do you have about this caregiver or their family?

If you identify that you may have made assumptions about a caregiver, consider what kind of questions you can ask to demonstrate your curiosity about their experiences?

Gauging Resilience Through Motivational Interviewing

SAMPLE QUESTIONS for gauging the caregiver's current level of resilience:

- What helps you handle stress? What has made a difference?
- How do you know when you are not managing things well? How can you tell when your child is not handling things well?
- How do you parent similarly to the way you were raised? Differently?

SAMPLE REFLECTIONS for determining the caregiver's level of resilience:

- Reflect back what supports are in place: "It sounded like you can count on your mom and your sister."
- To demonstrate empathy, reflect back their current level of resilience: "It seems that you may be feeling pretty hopeless right now."

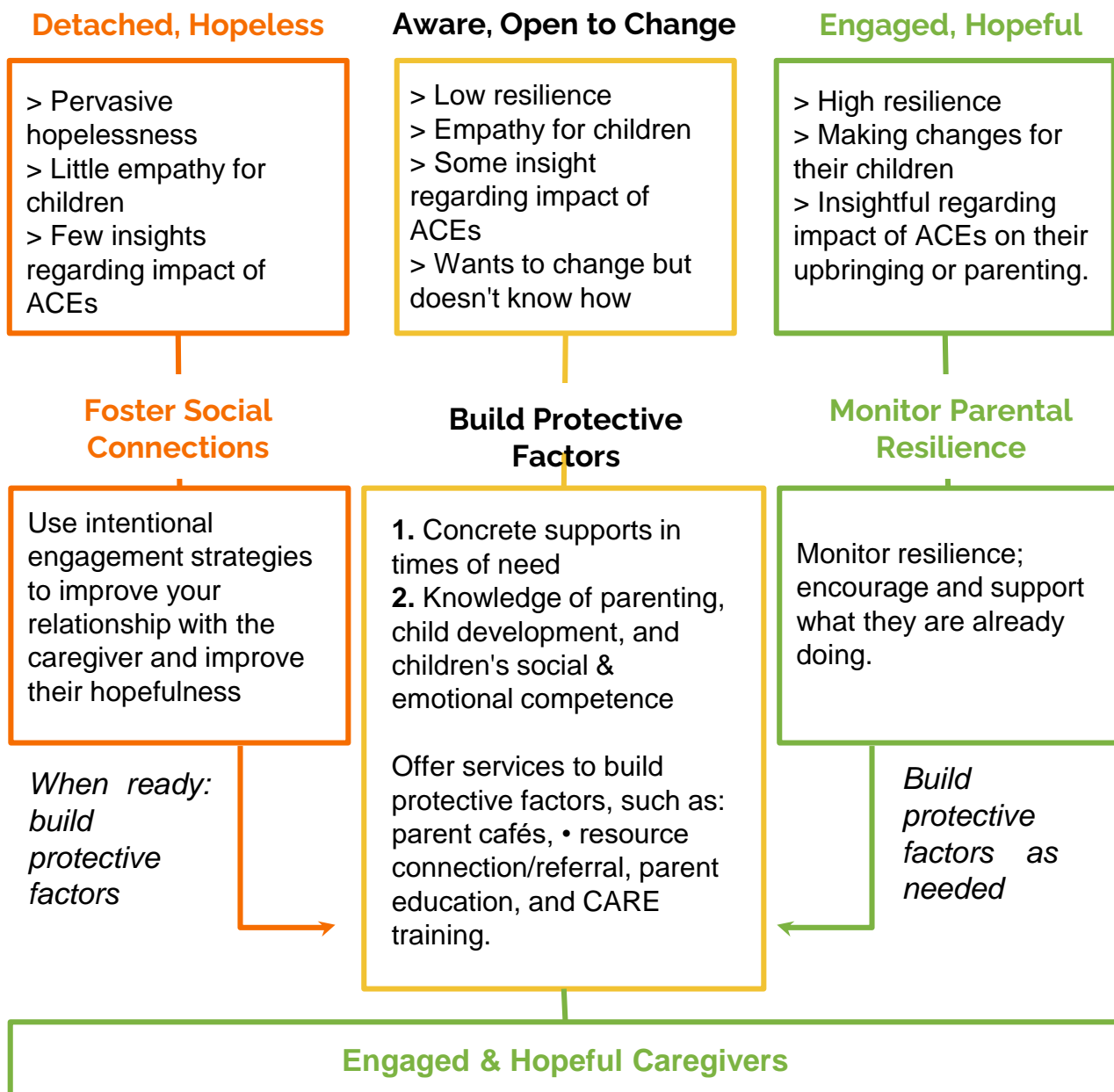
Reflection

Upon review of the caregiver's responses to the Family Wellness Survey what questions might you ask to gain a fuller understanding of the caregiver's challenges and level of resilience?

What resources may you want to investigate prior to the interview?

Partnership & Collaboration through Motivational Interviewing

Once you have determined the caregiver’s level of resilience through the interview, you will transition to building a collaborative, trusting relationship with a caregiver where they can rely on you to help them facilitate positive changes in life. While talking to the caregiver, think back to this table and the items on the next page to determine which strategies for facilitation and support will be most useful.



Strategies for Motivational Interviewing

EMBRACE THE DYNAMICS OF MI

The Caregiver is an expert, too: Be ready to partner, or collaborate, with caregivers. They are the experts on their life and knows what works vs. what doesn't.

Understand their motivations: Your role is to seek to understand the caregiver's needs, values, and strengths to support the caregiver in making change.

USE ACTIVE LISTENING & FACILITATION TECHNIQUES

Express Empathy: Apply reflective listening (the R in EARS) to demonstrate empathy.

Listen, Don't Tell: Instead of telling, directing, or convincing the caregiver to take a certain action, utilize active listening and reflections to evoke the caregiver's own resources and motivations for decision-making or change. Your role isn't to be an expert and give advice, but rather to support a caregiver's autonomy.

Develop Discrepancy: Assist the caregiver in developing discrepancies between their current state and ideal state. By supporting them to reframe their perception of situations – perhaps by helping them recognize how their current behaviors are inconsistent with their values or goals, or by recognizing their strengths and validating their self-efficacy – you are helping the caregiver learn to adjust their thinking and creating long-term change.

Roll with Resistance: Resistance to change is an expression of ambivalence about change, not a characteristics of a caregiver. Rather than trying to persuade a caregiver, recognize resistance as an indicator to adjust your strategies by diverting or directing (with open-ended questions and reflective statements) the caregiver towards positive change.

EMPOWER THE CAREGIVER

Support Self-Reliance and Self Efficacy: Support the caregiver's belief that their situation can improve

Elicit Hope: to encourage the caregiver's capacity to reach their goals.

Keep Learning:

[Motivational Interviewing: Practice Tips](#) from Psych-Mental Health Pub
[Your Ultimate Motivational Interview Toolkit](#) by PositivePsychology.com