**Ten Strategies for Evoking Change Talk**

**1. Ask Evocative Questions – Use Open-Ended Questions**  
*Examples:*  
- Why would you want to make this change? (Desire)  
- How might you go about it, in order to succeed? (Ability)  
- What are the three best reasons for you to do it? (Reasons)  
- How important is it for you to make this change? (Need)  
- So what do you think you’ll do? (Commitment)

**2. Ask for Elaboration**  
 *When a change talk theme emerges, ask for more detail:*

- In what ways?

- How do you see this happening?

- What have you changed in the past that you can relate to this issue?

**3. Ask for Examples**  
 *When a change talk theme emerges, ask for specific examples*.

- When was the last time that happened?

- Describe a specific example of when this happens.

- What else?

**4. Looking Back**  
 *Ask about a time before the current concern emerged:*

- How have things been better in the past?

- What past events can you recall when things were different?

**5. Look Forward**  
 *Ask about how the future is viewed:*

- What may happen if things continue as they are (status quo).

- If you were 100% successful in making the changes you want, what would be different?

- How would you like your life to be in the future?

**6. Query Extremes**

*Ask about the best and worst case scenarios to elicit additional information:*  
 - What are the worst things that might happen if you don't make this change?

* What are the best things that might happen if you do make this change?

**7. Use Change Rulers**  
 *Ask open questions about where the student sees themselves on a scale from 1 – 10.*

- On a scale where one is not at all important, and ten is extremely important, how

important (need) is it to you to change \_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

-Follow up: Explain why are you at a \_\_\_ and not (lower number)?

- What might happen that could move you from \_\_\_\_ to a \_\_\_\_\_[higher number]?

- How much you want (desire),

- How confident you are that you could (ability),

- How committed are you to \_\_\_\_ (commitment).

**8. Explore Goals and Values**  
 *Ask what the student’s guiding values are.*

- What do they want in life?

- What values are most important to you? (Using a values card sort can be helpful here).

- How does this behavior fit into your value system?

- What ways does \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (the behavior) conflict with your value system?

**9. Come Alongside**  
 *Explicitly side with the negative (status quo) side of ambivalence.*

- Perhaps \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is so important to you that you won't give it up, no matter what

the cost.

- It may not be the main area that you need to focus on in our work together.

**Specific MI Tools:**

1. List of Pros and Cons (Benefits/Costs) for and against behavior change
2. Assess Importance and Confidence
3. Looking Back – student reflects on effective strategies used with past successes; have them think back to time when things were going well ­­ describe this and what has changed now
4. Looking Forward – have student think about their hopes for the future if they make this change; how would they like things to be different; what are realistic options now – what could you do now; what are the best results you could imagine if you make this change
5. Exploring Goals – assess match between student’s current behavior and future goals; explore how realistic goals are (trying to explore and develop discrepancies between current behavior and student’s goals for the future)