

Handbook for specialists of public employment services, social assistance institutions and non-governmental organizations.

Communication without borders

Support for social reintegration through motivational dialogue and coaching.

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"You Have a Chance" Foundation, ZaFOS West Pomeranian Forum of Social Organisations

Communication Without Borders

Support in social readaptation through motivational dialogue and coaching
A handbook for specialists in public employment services, social welfare institutions
and non-governmental organisations

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Introduction

The information contained in this handbook aims to enhance the competences of staff in labour market institutions, social services and non-governmental institutions carrying out tasks in contact with people entering the path of social readaptation. We present information combining the strategies, phases and basic skills of motivational dialogue as formulated by Rollnick and Miller (Miller & Rollnick, 2014) with coaching tools to help unleash the constructive potential of clients (Bacon, 2003; Panchal & Riddell, 2020). The indirect aim of the training is also to support individuals towards full social readaptation by increasing understanding of the challenges they face and ensuring that they are properly assisted in the transition from a life regulated by the norms of the correctional unit to an independent, constructive management of their lives. The leading strategies linking the above elements are, according to Miller and Rollnick (2014): partnership, acceptance, compassion and evocation, complemented by coaching.

Partnership is a key element of Rollnick and Miller's Motivational Interviewing Dialogue (MIRM). It is understood as a strategy for building a relationship with the client based on mutual respect, trust and cooperation (Miller & Rollnick, 2014). Partnership implies collaboration between counsellor and client. In motivational dialogue (DM), both parties are equal partners and the counsellor does not impose his/her solutions. Partnership is based on respect, empathy and a common goal - changing the client's behaviour.

Acceptance is about approaching the client, taking into account their experiences, feelings and choices. The counsellor does not judge or impose his or her beliefs, but actively listens and acknowledges the difficulties the client may encounter in the process of change. Acceptance is understood as an interlocutor's attitude that is based on unconditional respect and acknowledgement of the client, regardless of their choices, past or current problems (Miller & Rollnick, 2014).



Compassion implies an empathetic attitude on the part of the adviser towards the client. The counsellor actively listens to, understands and acknowledges the difficulties the client may have in the process of change. Compassion is not feeling pity, but is an active expression of understanding of the client's emotions and needs. Compassion allows for a safe and supportive space in which individuals can freely share their experiences without fear of judgement (Miller & Rollnick, 2014).

Evocation is based on the assumption that everyone has inner strengths and desires for change, but may have difficulty finding or formulating them. The interlocutor in MIRM does not impose ready-made solutions on the client, but rather creates a space for reflection and self-analysis, supporting the client in discovering their own values, goals and aspirations. The essence of evocation in the client relationship is to focus on the client's aspirations, values and potential (Miller & Rollnick, 2014). The interlocutor should avoid focusing on the client's problems and limitations and instead try to bring out the client's positive experiences, dreams and desire to grow.

Coaching, understood as a process of unlocking potential in a supportive relationship, is becoming an increasingly popular method to assist the social readaptation of former prisoners (Cox et al., 2018). Unlike traditional forms of rehabilitation, coaching focuses on enhancing an individual's strengths and building his or her self-confidence, which is a key element of successful re-entry into society (Stober & Grant, 2006).

There are many definitions of coaching, but it is most commonly described as a collaborative partnership process in which the coach supports the client in discovering their potential, setting goals and developing the skills needed to achieve them. Coaching is not about giving advice or imposing solutions, but about creating space for reflection, self-analysis and independent decision-making by the client (Grant, 2019).

The above brief outline of the spirit of motivational dialogue and the basics of coaching is further developed and detailed in the following section, in the description of competences that are useful for workers in labour market institutions, social care and NGOs. We discuss in detail the skills of asking open questions, appreciative, reflective listening, summarising, providing information and advice, as well as the coaching competences of resource awareness, goal formulation, goal-oriented partnership building and acceptance and support.

As this handbook is aimed at a wider audience working with ex-convicts, the users of this tool are referred to as 'professionals' in the following.

We encourage you to participate in training courses, organised by institutions that have developed a set of trainings and aids within the framework of the "Communication without borders" project and provide certification of the acquired competences: ZaFOS, ZISPB, UBV and Fundacja Tulipan.



1. Contract: engaging

• Engaging in Motivational Dialogue

MOTIVATIONAL DIALOGUE

A meeting between a client and a professional is a supportive relationship, based on the setting and realisation of the client's goal for change, taking place in a mutually agreed way and in the area of the institution to which the client reports after leaving prison. According to the definition of Motivational Dialogue (MD), it is a collaborative, goal-oriented way of communicating, paying particular attention to the language of change. It is not an informal chat, as it has fixed rules, scope and level on which it takes place. The professional here is someone who, in addition to expertise, is characterised by the ability to elicit information from the client in a way that encourages the relationship and its development towards change.

Motivational Dialogue is used 'with someone' and 'for someone'.

Working with the client in the Spirit of MD is first and foremost collaborative, caring, accepting, evoking motivation, rather than the professional urging, persuading or suggesting their own solutions. A proper professional-client relationship conducted using active listening skills, should be based on knowing and understanding the client's motivation, free from the reflex of fixing.

The competences of the professional indicated above are essential throughout the course of the client contact, but some of them are more pronounced in the initial stages of the processes of working with the client, while others are more pronounced in the later stages. In the first, baseline process, that of engaging, the professional uses this area of skills, supported by the attitudes displayed and backed up by expertise, which allows to build a platform with the client for further cooperation, but also allows to maintain the client's engagement in all further MD processes - orienting, evoking or planning - that is, in the whole journey leading to client-accepted change.

ENGAGEMENT - concept, definitions, examples

In the literature, the client's ability to engage, as implemented by the professional in the service process, provides the basis for building mutual trust, entering and persisting in the helping process in order to stimulate the client's intrinsic motivation to change and develop the client's own action plans. Engagement in MD is defined as the process of establishing a helping relationship based on trust and mutual respect. (Miller, Rollnick, 2014, p. 68)

The specialist is not an adversary for the client, but a partner.

Without engaging the client in the change process, the client will not be able to achieve independence and self-awareness. Engagement is the starting stage for establishing a relationship with the client, leading to collaboration and moving on to further processes occurring in MD. Without achieving the client's commitment to a collaborative journey to change attitudes and behaviours, there will be no willingness to start the process and move on. The techniques used by the professional to build commitment are:

- asking open questions,
- customer appreciation,
- reflecting listening,
- summarising,
- providing information and advice,
- raising awareness of client resources,
- a partnership focused on creating and maintaining customer engagement,
- acceptance and support of the client.



· Asking open-ended questions to achieve engagement

In working with the client, it is very important to skilfully elicit information about the client's situation, feelings, motives for action and purpose for approaching the professional. This is possible by the professional asking questions that encourage the client to speak freely, trigger reflection and expand self-awareness.

The number of questions asked affects the interviewee's comfort level in the dialogue. Asking a series of questions can be indicative of taking control of the conversation and create a perception in the client that there is no need to engage in the process, as it is the professional who will provide a ready-made solution to the problem they have raised. This can also prove to be a trap for the professional, who fails to see the client's willingness to engage, prevents the client from developing commitment, and may even encourage the client to withdraw from the collaborative relationship' (Miller, Rollnick, 2014).

Questions can vary in terms of their complexity and the intention of the asker, e.g. into simple and complex.

Simple questions are divided into closed and open questions.

Closed questions can be divided into two groups:

- 'whether' questions - require a choice between two 'yes' or 'no' statement options - are simple and non-absorbing,
- The 'which' questions include in their content some alternative for the customer.

These types of questions are used when confirmation of information or findings is expected, a decision is to be made, closure of an issue started, or as a means of re-orienting a client tending to deviate from the purpose and topic of the meeting. The role of closed questions in working with the client in the engagement process is of a structuring and guiding nature, but they should be used in moderation so as not to give the client the impression of interrogation and block the opportunity to trigger reflection.



Open-ended questions are questions that allow for a fuller expression of thoughts, are not categorised, give the respondent the opportunity to use their words and fully share their own thoughts and opinions. Answers to this type of question provide more information, bring out the involvement of the interviewee and identify their emotions.

Specific questions are engaging questions that not only provoke the interviewee to answer, but also to seek their own solutions. Prominent among these are:

- Trigger questions - allow you to develop alternative solutions, such as "How could you do it differently?"
- Mirror questions - used with people who are reticent or unwilling to communicate openly, they are used to confirm the client's interest in what they are saying, confirm the professional's ability to listen actively, and encourage involvement; it is a reflection of the words heard from the interlocutor while retaining their meaning with a slight rephrasing, such as "Did you mean that?", "Is that what you meant?"
- Reasoning questions - maintain the pace of the conversation and allow non-verbal messages to be uncovered, bringing out hidden emotions and messages, such as, "Could you say something more about this so that I can understand your current situation?"
- Probing questions - requiring caution on the part of the asker so as not to provoke offence in the client, they are designed to elicit specific information, such as "Which employee have you been to regarding this application?" (Birkenbihl, 1997)

The professional should ask questions in such a way as to allow the client to speak fully and have the opportunity to develop their thoughts. The client's responses to open-ended questions should not go unanswered by the professional. A simple rhythm in MD is to ask an open-ended question, followed by a reflection of what the client has said (e.g. two reflections to answer the question). (Krasiejko, Ciczowska-Giedziun, 2016)

Example:

Specialist: *What is your current financial situation?*

Client: *If I don't submit the documents for the allowance quickly, I won't get the money this month and I won't be able to pay my current bills.*

Specialist: *(1) If you do not receive the allowance, you will not be able to pay your bills. (2) It is urgent for you to submit this document.*

Step out of the role of the all-knowing expert, as this approach is ineffective when fostering personal change with a client. Recognize that you cannot provide answers for the client without their active involvement in the collaboration.

Examples of using open-ended questions to achieve engagement with the client:

- *What is your current situation in this area?*
- *What do you hope to gain from our meeting?*
- *What would you like to discuss with me now?*
- *What is most important to you?*
- *What will happen if you handle this case successfully?*
- *What prompted you to visit me?*
- *How did you cope with a similar situation in the past?*
- *What opportunities are available to you?*
- *Which option will produce the best results?*
- *What steps can you take, and where will you start?*
- *What might have happened if you had not taken these actions?*

Closed questions are used to confirm facts or obtain specific consent. During the process of engaging the client, these questions serve housekeeping and informational purposes.

It is important to avoid combining multiple closed questions, as this can hinder customer engagement. While such questions gather information, they do not foster a collaborative relationship with the client and instead position us as the expert.

1.3. Appreciation in engaging

Appreciative Inquiry is a method that shifts the client's focus from problems and weaknesses to their strengths and opportunities (Mrozowska, 2017). The principles of Motivational Dialogue (MD) align with this approach and include the following:

- expressing empathy, with the aim of building a bond with the client and responding appropriately to what they say,
- development of ambivalence, as the building up of certainty in the client on the way to achieving a goal - is a positive phenomenon on the way to change, it does not indicate demotivation of the client, but his/her indecisiveness
- self-esteem support, as strengthening the client's sense of agency, sustaining the client's belief in their ability to control their own behaviour and influence their own life.

People who are committed to the process are more likely to take steps toward change. However, achieving commitment is more effective when individuals believe in the change and feel confident in their ability to impact their own lives. For ex-prisoners, the professional's role may not always be perceived as competent enough to guide them toward change, as personal experiences often overshadow external guidance. However, the foundation of a specialist's competence lies not in shared personal experiences but in their ability to apply techniques that emphasize the client's positive experiences and the possibilities they present. The focus should be on what the client can do to address the problem, rather than dwelling on the factors that led to it.

A professional's acceptance of the client and recognition of their efforts thus far—whether it is the steps they've taken to improve their situation or simply their decision to seek help—can foster a sense of appreciation and encourage further progress.

Example:

Client: I am applying for social housing and have already visited the local authority, but they told me I would have to wait in a long queue. It feels hopeless, as once again, I haven't been able to sort anything out.



Specialist: *It's great that you've already had a conversation on this issue - that's a good start. Let's now discuss in detail what was communicated to you at the municipal office.*

Examples of statements by a professional that can be useful in fostering appreciation to achieve client engagement:

- *You have many resources.*
- *I appreciate you coming to see me today*
- *You have already told me a lot about your current situation in this area.*

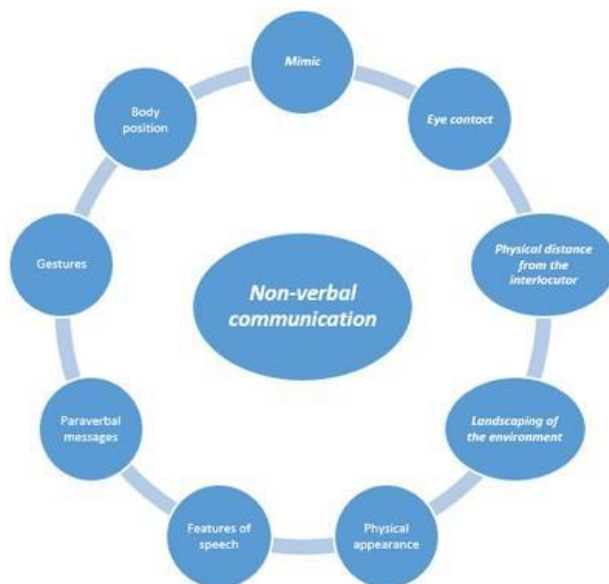
• **Reflective listening in engaging**

Jiddu Krishnamurti, an Indian philosopher, speaker, and writer, stated: *"When we listen to someone completely, attentively, we are listening not only to the words, but also to the feeling with which something is being expressed. We are listening to the whole, not just a part of it."*

Active listening is the basis of Motivational Dialogue. It involves unconditionally accepting what is said and not judging in the dialogue, recognizing the interlocutor's right to his or her own opinions while supporting him or her in the conversation, staying visibly in touch with the interlocutor, and signaling to follow him or her.

The ability to mirror is a signal to the interlocutor that we are listening and following them. It involves manifesting verbal and non-verbal signals that show commitment to the relationship during the service. The verbal side includes wording that demonstrates engagement in the conversation, e.g., ...aha, what was next, ...oh, that's interesting...

The non-verbal side is a system of non-verbal responses to an interlocutor's speech. The non-verbal message complements or replaces the verbal message and also allows emotions and feelings to be expressed. It manifests itself in the following forms.



Elements of non-verbal communication - own development.

When working with ex-prisoners, it is important to take an approach that creates an atmosphere of partnership. Through eye contact, appropriate facial expressions, or a well-structured conversational space, the professional becomes a partner for the client, increasing the likelihood of the client's commitment to undertaking change. Mirroring is also a verbal signal that demonstrates following the interviewee and their train of thought. It involves describing in words the emotions, feelings, and behaviors observed in the interviewee.

Reflecting statements related to change are particularly important, as they build on the discovery of the client's emotions and encourage greater involvement in the conversation and the change process. The client responds to the professional's message and engages further in the conversation if they perceive a lack of judgment and feel encouraged to continue talking.

Example:

Client: *Since I've been out of work, my family hasn't been giving me any peace.*

Specialist: *You feel pressure from your family.*

The client is engaged by the professional through the use of simple reflection, which encourages the client to move forward.

Client: *They want me to start working again.*

Reflective listening is an essential part of building relationships in communication. It should always follow a question, so avoid asking a series of questions without allowing space for reflection and mirroring.

Depending on the interlocutor, their readiness for contact, and the stage of the mutual relationship in the conversation, several types of mirroring may occur:

- Straightforward - Close to what the client has said, indicating the interest and attention of the professional.

Client: *I'm angry today; everything makes me angry.*

Specialist: *You are in a bad mood today.*

- Complex - Goes beyond what the client has said, giving new direction and dynamics to the conversation. It helps the client understand themselves better and, when skillfully worded, serves to develop the conversation.

Client: *I'm angry today; everything makes me angry.*

Specialist: *Something happened that put you in a bad mood.*



- Exaggerated/Amplified - Used to encourage the interlocutor to reconsider or back down from a particular position. This approach is helpful when the client's declaration is categorical.

Client: *I'm angry today; everything makes me angry.*

Specialist: *Nothing is getting done today...*

Client: *Something worked out there, though—I know I have to apply for a replacement property.*

- Diminishing - Intended to help the interlocutor step back from a categorical statement or position.

Client: *I'm angry today; everything makes me angry.*

Specialist: *You are a bit nervous about today's situation.*

- Bipartisan - Presents arguments "for" and "against" to explore both sides of the situation.

Client: *I'm angry today; everything makes me angry.*

Specialist: *On the one hand, you are irritated; on the other hand, you want to get something done.*

- Condensed reflections - Known as the "bouquet" in Motivational Dialogue (MD), these reflections summarize what the client has said in a condensed form, creating a complete picture of their statements. The professional selects key content that helps build the client's motivation during the engagement process.

- Specialist: *You are in a bad mood today. However, despite your irritation, you came to see me and found out that you should apply for a replacement property. You want to take this matter further.*



Diagram for the formulation of reflection in the engagement process - own elaboration

Properly formulated reflections, which are a part of active listening, affirm effective communication that is free of impediments and barriers. According to Thomas Gordon (Gordon T., 1994), the most common barriers include: Ordering, instructing or giving instructions.

- Warning, demanding compliance, or threatening.
- Giving advice, making suggestions, or offering solutions.
- Persuading with logical arguments, proving a point, or lecturing.
- Telling people what to do or moralizing.
- Disagreeing, judging, criticizing, or blaming.
- Agreeing, approving, or offering excessive praise.
- Shaming, ridiculing, or labeling.
- Interpreting or analyzing.
- Reassuring, showing sympathy, or offering comfort.
- Excessive questioning or probing.
- Withdrawing, diverting attention, yielding, or changing the subject.

1.5. Summarising and informing in engagement

Summaries play a crucial role in achieving customer engagement by organizing statements and consolidating the findings that emerge during conversations. According to Miller and Rollnick, summaries are a specific type of reflective listening skill. They identify three distinct types of summaries (Rosengren, 2013):

- **Gathering** - Involves collecting information, presenting it to the client, and maintaining the flow of conversation. It covers complex content and presents it in a clear and understandable way.
- **Linking** - Focuses on developing discrepancies and exploring the client's ambivalence. It contrasts what has just been heard from the client with the information obtained earlier.
- **Transitional** - Serves to guide or direct the course of the conversation and can be used to close the meeting.

Client engagement does not always remain consistent throughout the support process. There may be instances where the client's engagement diminishes so significantly that they are unable to move forward. What can the professional do in such cases to maintain the momentum of working together?

Examples of summaries to achieve engagement:

1)

Client: *I've been trying to get a job for so many months now. I've attended over a dozen interviews, but I still haven't received any offers. I don't want to keep looking anymore because it feels pointless.*

Specialist: *You have been consistently looking for work and attending interviews with employers. There were likely some positive or beneficial aspects from those experiences, which we could explore together...*

2)

Client: *I am on parole, and I was given your address as my parole officer. I know I have to come here, but no one has told me how often. I don't want to miss a meeting and risk going back to prison. I've already changed my social circle, and I'm not going to steal again. That's why I've started looking for a job and moved to a new place.*

Specialist: *Let me make sure I understand correctly. You are here because it's required by your parole conditions. You've indicated that you don't want to return to prison, and you're taking steps to change your behavior: you've moved to a new place, distanced yourself from your old company, and decided to look for a job. Does that cover everything?*

Do not rush to formulate a summary or push the client to quickly direct the conversation and set a goal. Doing so may lead to disagreement and resistance to further collaboration. This approach can weaken the commitment previously established and risk disengaging the client.

Summarizing and showing client appreciation are professional skills that help foster the client's full involvement in the change process.

PROVIDING INFORMATION AND ADVICE TO ACHIEVE COMMITMENT

The professional serves as a consistent companion in the areas impacted by the client's change. As such, they can and should provide information and advice when the client expresses a willingness and need for it. Ultimately, it is the client who initiates the counseling process and determines the areas in which the professional will offer support and engage by providing relevant information.

When visiting a professional working in a specific institution, the client expects to be informed about the scope and possibilities of the support the institution offers. This could include labor offices, municipalities or town halls, social assistance centers, crisis intervention centers, probation services, or institutions supporting individuals after leaving prison, such as foundations or other organizations. Each of these entities has distinct characteristics and areas of possible support. Clients typically do not have a comprehensive understanding of the support they can expect from these institutions or whether their needs can be met. In some cases, they may visit an institution that cannot address their specific needs. In such instances, the professional acts as a signposting service, providing information about available support or referring the client to an appropriate institution better suited to their case. (Together we can do more, ERASMUS+, edition 2022). The information provided to the client should be relevant to the purpose of their visit and specific to their case. As the relationship progresses and the client becomes more engaged in the process, they may have additional questions. At that stage, the specialist can provide further information to support their needs.





When the client views the professional as an expert in their field, they may expect advice. This moment presents a potential pitfall: the temptation for the professional to take responsibility for the client's situation. At this point, the specialist risks losing distance and objectivity, while the client may feel less compelled to take independent responsibility for their case. It is important for the professional to remain within their competencies and avoid assuming the role of a caring parent. Sharing personal examples or arguing with the client does not align with professional behavior and does not foster the client's readiness to change. Instead, it is more in the spirit of Motivational Dialogue (MD) to ask thought-provoking questions, paraphrase, and provide constructive feedback that encourages the client to reflect and engage actively in their own process.

This approach also reduces the risk of manipulation and prevents the professional from feeling pressured to take over responsibility for resolving the client's case.

An example from the professional practice of a labour office employee:

After leaving prison, the client began contacting a specialist to seek employment. This necessity arose from his obligations under probation. In his interactions with the specialist, the client expressed a desire to find a job, earn an income due to his family situation, and demonstrate his readiness for social reintegration. However, he consistently pointed out barriers, such as living far from the job center, the high cost of frequent public transport journeys, and his inability to afford regular phone calls to inquire about job opportunities.

An inexperienced specialist fell into the trap of manipulation and took the initiative and responsibility for making phone contacts with the client and potential employers. This approach resulted in the client's lack of involvement in the job search process and shifted responsibility for this area of the client's life onto the specialist.

An Example of MD-compliant professional behavior aimed at increasing client engagement:



Client: I live a long way from the job center, and since I'm not working, I can't afford to come or call frequently for job offers. It would be best if you called me.

Specialist: You have a limited budget that makes frequent visits to the job center difficult, but you're interested in accessing current job offers.

Client: Well, that's why someone from the office should inform me about them. Preferably you, because you already know me a bit.

Specialist: I am aware of your qualifications, but the final decision about a specific job offer is yours.

Client: Well, if I don't like something, you can keep looking. I don't think that's a problem. I've seen some offers on the notice board.

Specialist: You've been looking through today's job offers—that's good. You've been wondering which one might be right for you. What caught your eye in particular?

Client: Nothing suited me today, but if there's something tomorrow, I won't come again, because what's the point?

Specialist: The offers posted daily on our notice board are also available online on our office website.

Client: Is there information on the website?

Specialist: Yes. What could you do with that information?

Client: Well, I can check it myself on my phone every day.

Specialist: Exactly.

Client: This way, I won't have to spend money on tickets or phone calls. I'll also be able to contact employers directly. Then should I still come to you?



Specialist: You already know how to check the job offers available at the office and evaluate their suitability for yourself. While our contact can continue, it doesn't need to involve the daily analysis of new job postings. Instead, we can arrange a meeting to prepare your application documents for the job offer of your choice.

In the example above, the professional showed the right attitude and used MD tools. Their collection is captured by the English acronym OARS (Rosengren, 2013)

- O** (Open questions) - open questions,
- A** (Affirmation) - appreciation
- R** (Reflective listening) - reflection
- S** (Summarizing) - Summaries

In realising the contact with the client in this way, the specialist maintained the most important principles of MD, namely:

- **Expressing empathy**, understanding the client's mental and emotional state,
- **Supporting the client's sense of self-efficacy** by referring to their resources and positive experiences,
- **Developing the discrepancy** between the client's belief and current situation and the client's preferred state of affairs,
- **Following resistance**, expressed as denial, ignoring or taking offence at the professional - i.e. trying to understand the difficulties from the client's point of view and finding satisfactory solutions, rather than convincing 'by force'.

Helping does not mean bailing out or relieving the client of responsibility. Such an approach does not foster client engagement and often significantly reduces it. It is essential to allow the client to remain accountable for their own decisions and the consequences that follow.

1.6 Raising awareness of resources to achieve commitment

Individuals leaving prison often struggle to identify the resources they can use to navigate their new social situation. They tend to rely on past experiences shaped by their relationships with other prisoners and the norms established within that environment. They worry about how they will adapt to a present that is vastly different from their previous circumstances. These individuals often experience a range of ambivalent emotions, including joy at regaining their freedom, sadness related to the loss of relationships with loved ones, and feelings of aggression or anger stemming from their inability to meet basic livelihood needs. Identifying the resources they need to enter and adapt to a new reality becomes a crucial part of their engagement with a specialist. This process plays a significant role in fostering their commitment and readiness to embrace change.

A resource is not limited to one's own skills, experiences, or attitudes. It also includes family background, a supportive circle of friends, professional qualifications, education, work experience, and personal interests.

Making the client aware of their resources should involve providing them with the opportunity to identify these resources themselves, rather than taking an expert stance. The professional should avoid assuming the role of someone who, based on their knowledge or experience, takes the initiative and decides the client's fate (Nóžka, 2013). In conversations conducted in the spirit of Motivational Dialogue (MD), it is crucial that decisions and choices rest with the client. Only then can they take full responsibility for those decisions (Dabrowska, 2019).

GOAL-ORIENTED PARTNERSHIP IN ENGAGING

Motivational Dialogue "is not a way of influencing people to do what we want them to do. It cannot be used to create motivation that does not already exist within the person. MD is 'a partnership that respects the autonomy of the other person, seeking to understand their internal frame of reference' (Miller & Rollnick, 2014, p. 63).



When working with a client with the goal of fostering engagement, the professional should formulate messages in a way that emphasizes the client as an equal partner in the conversation. This involves resisting the reflex to correct the client, understanding their motivations, actively listening, and providing reinforcement at the right moment. Examples of such statements include:

- "I do not judge your conduct." – Resisting the reflex to correct or make amends.
- "I see that you are trying to be punctual and accurate." – Reinforcing the client's efforts.
- "You want to re-establish a good relationship with your colleagues." – Understanding the client's motivation.
- "I can hear that you are unhappy and prefer to avoid such situations in the future." – Demonstrating active listening.

The professional-client relationship should be grounded in partnership, incorporating the perspectives of both parties while ensuring respect for their individuality and their right to have their own views, values, and needs. This approach is rooted in the belief that every individual has a unique value system, which includes both universal and personal values that align with their specific needs. These values play a crucial role in shaping the decision-making process and the client's readiness to put in the effort required for change (Kowalczyk, Kowalczyk, Karczewska, 2014). In the spirit of Motivational Dialogue (MD), the professional's role as a partner in engaging the client is to demonstrate understanding of the client's situation and offer cooperation in a supportive and collaborative manner.

Partnership involves clearly defining the framework of the institution's capacities and the competences of the professional to whom the client has turned for support. If the organization cannot meet the client's expectations for assistance, the professional should help identify another organization or institution better suited to address the client's needs. The statement "I don't deal with that; please try somewhere else" should be replaced with "I will find out where you can turn to with this issue." Simply directing the client from one institution to another without properly understanding their needs



will diminish their commitment and foster reluctance to engage with professionals from specific institutions. Such an approach undermines the principle of partnership in the professional-client relationship.

ACCEPTANCE AND SUPPORT TO ENGAGE

It is important to remember that the client is responsible for their own goals, actions, and the consequences of those actions. In working with the client on their journey toward change, the professional should adopt an attitude of acceptance toward the client's choices and avoid imposing their own perspectives or experiences on the client's decisions. The specialist's experience must not dictate the pathways the client takes to achieve their chosen goals. It is ultimately the client who decides how to complete the tasks necessary to meet their needs. The professional can encourage the client to visualize their future situation and consider the potential consequences of the chosen path in achieving their goal. Even if the client asserts, "Nobody is going to tell me what is best for me now. I'm not going to do anything," the professional's appropriate response is to guide the client in reflecting on the possible outcomes of their decisions. Understanding and accepting the client's resistance as a natural element of motivation is key to the professional's response. Rather than appealing to social norms or postponing the meeting in the hope that the client will reconsider, the professional should address resistance constructively, helping the client explore the implications of their stance and fostering dialogue.

It is equally important for the professional to refrain from labeling or making judgments, such as "If you do this, you will face an obstacle you cannot cope with." Labeling involves making premature judgments and assumptions based on personal experiences or projections. When we focus too early on a particular problem or task and assign it a label, we risk imposing our perspective on the client rather than understanding theirs. The client should be given the space to accept their situation, acknowledge their decision to seek professional help, and recognize the baseline they have established along with the goal they will work toward. This approach fosters client autonomy and engagement in the process, allowing them to take ownership of their path toward change.

Labelling is a judgmental message that the client may perceive as stigmatizing or disapproving.

Example of labelling:

Client: I've been looking for a job for a few months now, but I'm not getting anywhere because employers judge me by my appearance.

Specialist (Labelling): You're not finding work because you don't care about your appearance.

The right response:

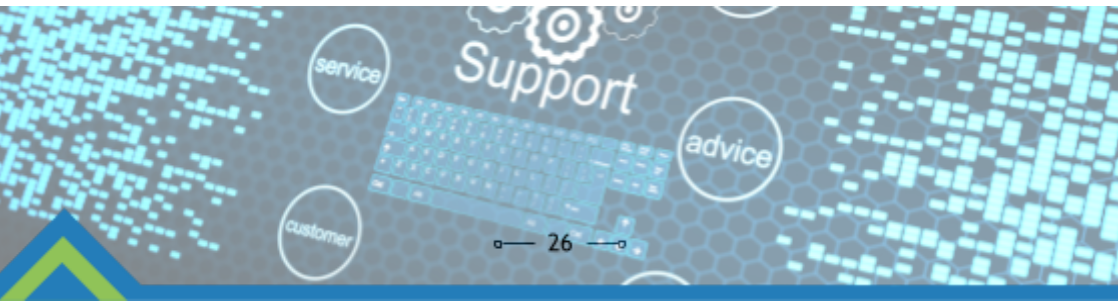
Client: I've been looking for a job for a few months now, but I'm not getting anywhere because employers judge me by my appearance.

Specialist: You feel that your difficulty finding work is linked to the first impression you make when meeting an employer.

Everyone, at various stages of life, experiences a need for acceptance, which is expressed through an empathetic approach, absence of criticism, and understanding. Life's difficulties, along with the consequences of socially and legally unacceptable action - such as those experienced by former inmates - often expose them to negative public perceptions and generalizations like, "If someone has committed a criminal act once, they will always tend toward similar behavior."

Acceptance of the past does not equate to accepting the replication of past behavior patterns in the future, and this distinction should guide the professional's attitude toward the client.

A professional aiming to engage the client in their personal change process should support them in adopting behaviors that promote reintegration, even if the professional is not directly involved in the process but serves as a supportive guide along the way.



2. Objectives: targeting

• Targeting in Motivational Dialogue

Targeting (focusing on the most important areas) is one of the four key strategies of Motivational Dialogue (MD) - planning, evoking, engaging, and targeting - that can help individuals leaving prison transition from considering change to taking concrete, effective action. Targeting involves a process in which the professional helps the client focus on one or more areas that are most important to them in terms of change. This strategy is particularly valuable when the client is dealing with multiple problems or goals and feels uncertain about where to begin. It is essential to remember that targeting does not mean the professional imposes a goal on the client. Instead, it involves supporting the client in defining and choosing the direction they want to take and assisting them in making informed and meaningful decisions.

Targeting in Motivational Dialogue is an ongoing process of identifying and maintaining a direction for change (Miller & Rollnick, 2015). To ensure it is both optimal and effective, targeting involves answering the following questions:

- *What are the client's true objectives regarding change?*
- *Do I fully understand what my client is expressing?*
- *Are we working together toward the same direction?*

An important step is to determine the client's readiness for change and their awareness of the direction they wish to take.

Collaborative statements help build a relationship founded on trust, partnership, and mutual respect.

Examples include: *We are here together to explore and find the best solution for you.* This statement highlights that the process is a collaborative effort and ensures that the client has a voice in the decision-making.

Your perspective is very important to me, and I'd like to hear your thoughts on this approach.

Such a statement encourages the client to share their thoughts and ideas, fostering a stronger sense of collaboration.

• Open questions in targeting

Open-ended questions are an effective tool in Motivational Dialogue (MD) and coaching. They allow the client to freely express their thoughts, opinions, feelings, or experiences. These questions are phrased in a way that avoids suggesting a specific answer or limiting responses to a simple 'yes' or 'no'. Instead, open-ended questions encourage more detailed and expansive answers, fostering deeper reflection and exploration of the topic. The characteristics of open-ended questions are:

- They provide an excellent foundation for gathering information about the client and their living situation.
- They help initiate the conversation effectively.
- They set the right tone for the conversation by being free from judgment.
- They encourage detailed responses instead of "YES" or "NO" answers. Open-ended questions often begin with words like *"what," "how," "why,"* or *"in what way."* For example: *"What do you think about...?"* or *"What experiences have you had with...?"*
- They allow the expression of opinions and feelings, enabling the client to share their true thoughts and emotions and discuss what is important to them.
- They promote dialogue and reflection, encouraging in-depth consideration of the topic, which can lead to more meaningful and insightful conversations.
- They stimulate engagement and collaboration. In Motivational Dialogue, open-ended questions help build rapport and trust by demonstrating the professional's genuine interest in what the client has to say.

Examples of open-ended questions in working with ex-prisoners about the past and experiences:

- *"What experiences from your time in prison have positively influenced your life?"* This question helps to understand how being in prison has affected their lives and identities.
- *"What was the most challenging aspect of adapting to life outside?"* This question enables a conversation about the challenges that former prisoners face upon release.

* A special type of open-ended question that can be used in Motivational Dialogue with ex-convicts is the Socratic question. This method can be employed to summarize conclusions, gain a deeper understanding of a problem, stimulate the search for solutions, or engage in a dialogue where the client corrects their own erroneous conclusions or assumptions. Features of Socratic questions include:

- They are concise and concrete – fully understandable to the interlocutor without being overly general or abstract.
- They have a clear purpose – while remaining open-ended, they make it easier for the client to respond meaningfully.
- They are deliberate but not suggestive – designed to elicit the client's perspective without leading or implying a specific answer.
- They are meant to explore the unknown – acknowledging that the client may not have a ready answer and allowing space for reflection.

There are six types of Socratic questions:

1. Clarification questions, e.g.: *What do you mean by _____?*
2. Questions to test assumptions, e.g.: *What are you assuming when you say this?*
3. Questions exploring rationality, reasons, and evidence, e.g.: *Could you explain your motives to me? Why _____?*
4. Questions about views and perspectives, e.g.: *What is the alternative? How can it be looked at differently?*
5. Questions about implications and consequences, e.g.: *How can we verify this?*
6. Questions relating to questions, e.g.: *What was the purpose of that question?*

Unlike open-ended questions, closed questions limit the interviewee's response to one of several options, most often a simple 'yes' or 'no' or a short, specific answer. These questions can be effectively used to confirm whether the professional has understood the client correctly, e.g., *"Did I understand correctly that...?"* or *"Did I remember accurately that...?"* Closed questions typically begin with phrases such as: *"Are you...?"* *"Do you have...?"* *"Which...?"* *"How much...?"*

• Appreciation and reflection in targeting

APPRECIATION IN THE ORIENTATION PROCESS

Appreciation (affirmation) in the orientation process is crucial for maintaining a positive conversational climate and supporting the client in making informed choices about the goals they wish to pursue. Affirmation in Motivational Dialogue:

- is an expression of acceptance
- is part of the process of uncovering important information
- is the recognition and acknowledgement of the client's efforts
- is the search for and confirmation of strengths

In order to be effective, appreciation should be authentic and include what really concerns the person.

Important! The professional should focus on describing the client's qualities and achievements rather than passing judgment. Ex-prisoners may carry a history of difficult experiences, feelings of shame, or low self-esteem, making it essential to approach them with sensitivity and attentiveness.

When using appreciative guidance to orient the client, the professional should adhere to the following principles:

Avoid judging or being judgmental

- Example: Instead of saying: *"You were in prison because of the mistakes you made,"* say: *"You have had some difficult experiences behind you, but now we are focusing on what lies ahead."*

Avoid excessive praise without justification

Example: Instead of saying: *"You are doing great,"* focus on a specific action: *"I appreciate that you managed to find a job, which required a lot of determination."*

Avoid excessive focus on the past

Example: Instead of saying: *"Tell me what went wrong that put you in prison,"* say: *"What would you like to change in your life now to achieve what is important to you?"*

Avoid a "top-down" approach

Example: Instead of saying: *"You need to do... to change,"* say: *"What steps do you think could be most helpful in this situation?"*

Avoid overlooking the client's strengths

Example: Instead of saying: *"You have a lot to fix after what happened,"* say: *"You can see that you have the skills that can help you start a new chapter."*

Avoid false optimism

Example: Instead of saying: *"Everything will work out now that you've been released,"* say: *"I know you have many challenges ahead, but you also have the strength and resources to deal with them."*

Avoid pressuring for immediate decisions

Example: Instead of saying: *"You need to find a job immediately to start your life over,"* say: *"What steps can you take to get closer to finding a job?"*

Avoid ignoring the client's concerns

Example: Instead of saying: *"Don't think about what can go wrong, just act,"* say: *"I understand that you have concerns about the future. What are your biggest concerns, and how can we address them?"*

REFLECTING LISTENING IN THE ORIENTATION PROCESS

Reflective listening involves actively engaging with the client, repeating or paraphrasing key points they express, and asking in-depth, reflective questions to gain a deeper understanding of their perspective. For example, when a person leaving prison shares concerns about finding a job, the professional might respond: "I understand that you are worried about whether employers will give you a chance after everything you've been through. Did I understand that correctly?"

In reflective listening, it is essential to create an atmosphere of acceptance and trust, which aids ex-convicts in rebuilding their self-esteem. This approach helps them feel more confident as they navigate their re-entry into social and professional life with the support they need.

Reflections perform the following functions:

- They are the most commonly used tool in Motivational Dialogue (MD).
- They demonstrate attentiveness and enhance understanding.
- They help develop the client's thoughts and guide the conversation consciously, particularly when reflecting statements related to change.
- They can address the content of the client's statement or the emotions involved, even if those emotions are not explicitly expressed by the client.
- They encourage further exploration and foster deeper dialogue.

Different types of mirroring are possible in communication:

Simple mirroring - involves directly repeating or briefly paraphrasing the client's statements, allowing them to confirm that their words have been heard, understood, and accepted correctly.

Client: *"I'm already annoyed by this constant sending of applications to employers; nothing comes out of it anyway."*

Specialist: *"So you are unsuccessfully looking for a job?"*

Compound mirroring - goes beyond simple repetition by adding interpretation, providing deeper meaning, or attempting to understand the client's emotions and thoughts.

Client: *"I don't feel like trying anymore if nobody appreciates it anyway."*

Specialist: *"You feel that your efforts are being ignored and that you lack motivation when no one notices."*

Enhanced mirroring - highlights or emphasizes the client's emotions, beliefs, or experiences to give them greater focus.

Client: *"I'm fed up with my job; it's all pointless."*

Specialist: *"It sounds like you've completely lost the will to work and feel that nothing you do matters."*

Two-way mirroring - simultaneously reflects two conflicting thoughts, feelings, or beliefs expressed by the client.

Client: *"I feel like throwing it all away, but at the same time I would like to see my plans through to the end."*

Specialist: *"On the one hand, you feel frustrated and want to abandon your plans, but on the other hand, you still want to see them through to change your life."*

Reflecting emotions - focuses on naming and drawing attention to the feelings expressed by the client, even when those feelings are not explicitly mentioned.

Client: *"I don't know why I always have to do everything myself."*

Specialist: *"It sounds like you feel isolated and unsupported."*

In summary, reflective listening can support the orientation of ex-convicts in the following ways:

- **Strengthens the client's self-awareness.**
- **Builds trust and fosters a relationship based on understanding.**
- **Supports the discovery and development of motivation for change.**
- **Helps avoid confrontation, reducing the risk of resistance.**
- **Enhances the client's autonomy in the change process.**

• Summarising and informing in targeting

Summarizing in the client orientation process helps assess progress and inspire further action. It brings together all the relevant information, presenting different aspects of the client's experience in a concise and cohesive manner. Summarizing can be described as a form of reflection that consolidates what the client has expressed and achieved, presenting it in a condensed and clear format.

Summaries can vary in nature depending on their purpose, context, and the situation in which they are used. One possible classification divides summaries into three types: collecting summaries, linking summaries, and transitional summaries.

Gathering summary is a type of summary that aims to collect and condense key information, conclusions, and reflections from the entire process, meeting, or conversation.

Example: A client struggles to navigate the labor market after leaving prison. Specialist: "Let's summarize what we've discussed today and highlight the key lessons we can take from this conversation."

Client: *"Okay, I've definitely noticed that my approach to my job search strategy has improved since our last meeting. I've also been able to identify some alternative avenues for finding work."*

Specialist: *"That's great - such a significant step forward. So, the key takeaways from our conversation are: first, you've recognized progress in your approach. Second, you've identified areas where you still need support, particularly with motivation when your energy is low. And third, you've decided to set a new goal for next month to become even more effective in your job search."*



Linking summary is used to connect various threads, pieces of information, or issues raised during a conversation, meeting, or process. It highlights the relationships and connections between these elements.

Example: A client struggles with alcohol problems after leaving prison.
Specialist: "Let's summarize what we've discussed today and see how these elements fit together in the context of your return to life outside."

Client: *"I thought I could handle drinking alcohol, but these problems overwhelm me so much that I need to relax somehow in the evenings, so I reach for a beer or a drink. Then my blood pressure spikes, my mood worsens, and I feel ashamed to leave the house because I can smell alcohol on myself."*

Specialist: *"So alcohol helps you relax, but at the same time, you're noticing its negative effects on your health, mood, and confidence."*

Interim summary acts as a bridge between different stages of a conversation, meeting, or process. It summarizes the findings or discussions so far to lay the groundwork for the next steps or topics to be addressed.

Example: A client wants to complete their qualifications after leaving prison and secure a well-paid job.

Specialist: *"Let's summarize what we've established so far. We've analyzed your strengths and skills and clarified that you want to enhance your qualifications and secure a well-paid job. Now that we're clear on this, we can move on to the next part of our conversation—discussing your next steps."*

Client: *"Sounds good. I feel like I now have a solid foundation to start thinking about the future."*

PROVIDING INFORMATION AND ADVICE IN THE ORIENTATION PROCESS

Providing information and advice are techniques intended to support the client in making decisions and implementing change. However, these techniques must be used carefully to avoid violating the principle of the client's autonomy. Motivational Dialogue, as a method of facilitating behavioral change, emphasizes respecting the individual's decisions and their ability to make independent choices. In this context, the provision of information and advice should not dominate the conversation or create pressure. Instead, it should act as a tool to help the client understand their situation and explore possible steps forward (Miller & Rollnick, 2015). By combining the professional's guidance with the client's own insights and reflections, the client gains a clearer understanding of how specific actions can impact the achievement of their goals.

In the process of informing, the professional should choose words such as.

Wrong wording:

"do it"

"you should do it"

"you have to do it"

Correct formulation:

"what do you think of this solution?"

"which of these options seem most appropriate to you?"

"what alternatives do you have?"

In Motivational Dialogue, the professional should provide information in a clear and understandable manner, grounded in facts. Complicated or overly technical language should be avoided. The information shared should be adapted to the client's level of knowledge and experience, which is particularly important when working with ex-convicts, who are often highly sensitive to the language used by professionals.

Advice should be tailored to the client's specific situation and goals, taking into account the issues already discussed. It should build on the client's insights about their own abilities, possibilities, and challenges. Instead of proposing universal solutions, the professional can suggest ways to address particular situations, encouraging reflection through open-ended questions. For example: *"What might be the benefits of such a decision?"*, *"What might happen if you decide to take this step?"*

Here are some basic principles on how to give directional information and advice in Motivational Dialogue:

- Prepare the client before sharing information.
- Present information and advice in an open and non-imposing manner. Avoid phrases like *"My experience says that..."* to ensure the client feels respected and autonomous.
- Avoid provoking resistance. Use balanced messages, e.g., *"On one hand, this is a commonly used solution, but on the other hand, it's important that you choose the option that best suits you."*
- Emphasize the client's choice. Ensure the client feels in control of the decision-making process.
- Use open-ended questions to introduce information or advice. Examples: *"What might happen if you chose this solution?"* *"What options do you see in this situation?"*



2.5. Resource awareness, partnership and acceptance in targeting

RAISING AWARENESS OF RESOURCES IN THE TARGETING PROCESS

Resource awareness is a process that builds self-confidence and fosters a sense of agency and competence, empowering the client to plan and implement change effectively. Clients who feel stigmatized after leaving prison may struggle with self-perception and doubt their ability to change. To address this, it can be helpful to adopt strategies that highlight the fact that everyone has resources that can be utilized, even when facing significant challenges.

Techniques useful in making the client aware of resources are:

- Identify and name strengths and their potential uses. Example: *"How can you use your communication skills to find a job?"*
- Refer to previous successes. Recall situations where the client has achieved success or overcome difficulties. Example: *"What did you do before that helped you solve this problem?"*
- Build on values and priorities. Discuss values important to the client to highlight internal resources. Example: *"If I recall correctly, you were an active runner before your sentence."*
- Encourage consideration of future possibilities. Support the client in envisioning a future where they utilize their resources. Example: *"What else do you think you could do with these skills?"*
- Encourage reflection on external resources. Highlight support available from outside sources, such as family, professionals, or community resources. Example: *"Are there people around you who could help you with this problem?"*
- Strengthen a sense of efficacy through positive mirroring. Acknowledge and appreciate the client's resources and their potential impact. Example: *"You seem very organized and determined. How do you think these qualities can help you achieve this goal?"*

- Resource-based action planning. Analyze together how specific resources can be used to implement chosen actions and plan next steps. Example: *"What can you do right now using the resources you already have?"*

Tools to support making the client aware of his or her resources can be, for example:

- Reflecting and paraphrasing – See subchapter V, Reflective Listening, for detailed guidance.
- Resource scaling/scaling questions – Helps the client evaluate their resources on a numerical scale (e.g., 1 to 10). Example question: *"How would you rate your coping ability on a scale of 1 to 10?"* If the client rates themselves as a 5, you could follow up with: *"What would need to happen for you to move up to a 6? What skills or resources could help you achieve this?"*
- Visualize future successes – Encourage the client to imagine achieving their goal, perhaps using a creative method like a collage. Example question: *"Imagine you have achieved your goal. What will change in your life? What resources did you use to get to this point?"*
- The "What works" technique – Ask the client to reflect on what has worked well in their life and identify the resources or strategies that contributed to those successes. Example questions: *"What do you do when you are doing better?" "What qualities or skills of yours help you during these moments?"*

ACCEPTANCE AND SUPPORT IN THE ORIENTATION PROCESS

When the professional demonstrates an attitude of acceptance, the client feels acknowledged and valued for who they are. This fosters greater openness to cooperation and a readiness to embrace change. Additionally, support from the professional strengthens the client's intrinsic motivation, helping them build confidence in their own resources and competencies needed to achieve their goals.

Acceptance in the client/ex-convict orientation process should be based on:

- Expressing empathy - *"I understand that you may feel confused when thinking about change."*
- Accepting without judging - *"I can see that you are resisting change. You have a right to feel this way."*
- Normalizing ambivalence - *"It is natural to feel both the desire for change and the fear of it."*
- Reflecting positive intentions and motivations - *"I can see that you really care about improving your health, even though you have some concerns. This shows that you value yourself."*
- Aligning with the client's constructive values. Reinforce values that encourage positive action, fostering motivation and self-worth.

Orienting ex-prisoners in line with their values can be done, for example, through:

- Identification of values. Sample questions: *"What guided your decisions before your sentence?" "Are there values that you now see as more important than they were back then?"*
- Understanding the impact of values on behaviour. Sample questions: *"Which of your past decisions aligned with your values, and which were in conflict with them? How would you like your decisions to reflect your values in the future?"*
- Linking values to rehabilitation goals. Sample questions: *"What goals do you want to achieve after your release, and how do these goals align with your values?"*
- Creating an action plan in line with values. Sample questions: *"What steps can you take now that align with your values and support your future goals?"*
- Reflecting on changing values. Sample questions: *"How do you think your values have changed since your time in prison? Are there any new values you'd like to incorporate into your life moving forward?"*

SUPPORTING CUSTOMER AUTONOMY/ AVOIDING IMPOSING
DIRECTION

Supporting the client's autonomy in choosing their direction enhances the



effectiveness of work with individuals in challenging situations, such as ex-prisoners. Autonomy fosters a sense of responsibility for one's own decisions, leading to more engaged and informed actions. Empowering the client to make decisions strengthens their confidence and improves their ability to cope with future challenges.

Which supports the client's autonomy in targeting:

- Asking open-ended questions. Sample questions: "What are your thoughts on what you would like to achieve? What do you think is important in this process?"
- Enabling choice. Sample questions: "What options do you see that could help you achieve your goal? Which one seems most appropriate to you?"
- Supporting independent decision-making. Sample questions: "What would you like to do as a first step towards achieving this goal? What actions do you plan to take?"
- Offering support, not pressure. Sample questions: "What support can I provide you with so that you can successfully implement your plans? Is there any additional information that can help you?"
- Giving positive/constructive feedback - constructive feedback is feedback given in a way that aims to support the development and improvement of the skills, behaviour or performance of the person receiving it. Its purpose is not only to draw attention to areas for improvement, but also to provide guidance and encouragement on how to make these changes. Constructive feedback is based on respect, empathy and concreteness. It should refer to specific behaviours and be spoken without insulting or judgmental phrases. When giving constructive feedback, we should choose the right time and place. In constructive feedback, there should be space to respond and ask questions. Example statements: "I admire your determination and the way you approach problem solving. What can you do to maintain this positive direction?"
- Encouraging reflection and self-assessment. Sample questions: "What changes have you noticed in your approach to this objective? What would you like to do differently to make the plan more relevant to your needs?"

3. Cooperation: evoking

• Evoking in Motivational Dialogue

Evoking focuses on activating the client's motivation to change by exploring their personal reasons and values that support change. This stage is particularly significant for ex-prisoners, as it helps them express their desire for a better life while addressing their mixed feelings about change. Various techniques can elicit "change talk," which refers to statements indicating a person's desire, ability, reasons, or need to change. Understanding and applying these techniques can greatly enhance conversations that foster reflection and positive behavior change.

Induction in Motivational Dialogue (DM) involves supporting the client in articulating their own motivations and arguments for change. It emphasizes building a dialogue that enables clients to express their thoughts and identify emotions related to their goals and obstacles (Levounis et al., 2017; Miller & Rollnick, 2013). The central idea is not to impose external motivations but to help clients uncover their own reasons for change. This approach respects client autonomy and fosters intrinsic motivation (Csillik, 2015).

Outreach is one of the techniques represented by the acronym 'OARS' (Open-ended questions, Affirmations, Reflective listening, and Summarizing):

- Open-ended questions encourage clients to explore their thoughts and feelings.
- Affirmations validate their efforts and strengths.
- Reflective listening demonstrates understanding and empathy.
- Summarizing ties together key points to reinforce progress and build clarity.

In this chapter, we will explore the key skills and techniques essential for motivating clients through scenario-based evoking sessions. We will also present specific evoking techniques, along with sample questions designed for diagnosis, data collection, and verification.

• Open questions in evoking

Open-ended questions are a fundamental technique for evoking responses and are central to the concept of Motivational Dialogue (MD). The purpose of open-ended questions is to encourage interviewees to provide in-depth responses. These questions prompt individuals to reflect on what they can change in the future or how things might look if they make intentional, thoughtful decisions.

Open-ended questions encourage detailed answers, fostering deep thinking about personal beliefs and value systems. For instance, asking, “How do you feel about this situation now that you know?” can help someone gain a better understanding of their feelings. Similarly, “What is important to you in this situation, and why do you care?” can help identify what matters most to the client, serving as a motivational starting point for positive change (Miller & Rollnick, 2013).

Systematically stimulating clients’ interest and personal responsibility also increases their motivation. For example, asking, “Do you want to look deeper into your situation?” challenges existing ways of thinking, offering an opportunity for increased self-awareness and a willingness to change. Manthey et al. highlight questions like, “What possibilities do you see in your situation?” to encourage clients to consider their circumstances from new perspectives (Manthey, T. et al., 2020; Miller & Rollnick, 2013).

Open-ended questions also promote clarity of thought. For example, asking, “How would you describe this to someone who knows nothing about you?” can help clients better understand their own thoughts and feelings. This deeper self-understanding often leads to more effective strategies for change (Miller & Rollnick, 2013).

Understanding what drives a person is essential to maintaining their commitment to personal goals, particularly for individuals leaving prison. Questions like, “What motivated you?” help clients uncover their intrinsic motivations or values, which can be used as tools to pursue their goals (Lundahl et al., 2010).



Goal setting is another key area where open-ended questions play a vital role. Questions such as, “What are your short-term goals?” and “Where do you see yourself in the next five years?” encourage clients to reflect on their aspirations and help them set realistic, actionable goals based on their current situation.

Finally, open-ended questions can build clients’ confidence and sense of self-efficacy, fostering belief in their ability to change and achieve their goals. Questions like, “What achievements are you proud of?” and “What skills or strengths do you have that will enable you to succeed?” can uplift morale, especially for individuals who may struggle with low self-confidence (Hetteema et al., 2021).





• Appreciation and mirroring in evoking

APPRECIATION IN EVOKING

Appreciative statements are phrases that identify and reinforce the client's strengths, efforts, and positive qualities. This approach is essential in evoking motivation, as it helps build clients' confidence and self-efficacy. Alongside appreciations (affirmations), techniques like paraphrasing and summarizing play a key role in effective communication by demonstrating active listening and clarifying the client's thoughts, ensuring they feel understood.

Affirmations can be a powerful tool for fostering change in ex-offenders, provided they are used to genuinely create and nurture a supportive environment where positive change can occur. They should not be merely superficial gestures, such as "being nice" or offering insincere compliments. The primary purpose of affirmations is to authentically highlight the client's strengths and efforts, showing them what they have done well. This not only enhances their self-esteem but also reinforces constructive behaviors that are crucial for reintegration into society after release from prison (Miller & Rollnick, 2013; Wagner & Ingersoll, 2013).

By acknowledging the client's successes, the professional can inspire greater confidence and encourage the continuation of positive actions, ultimately paving the way for long-term success and societal reintegration.

REFLECTIVE LISTENING IN THE MOTIVATION PHASE

Reflecting is one of the core skills in Motivational Dialogue (MD) and is used to deepen clients' engagement in conversations about positive change. It involves actively listening to the client and demonstrating understanding of the information and emotions they share. Reflective listening involves slightly rephrasing what the client has said to acknowledge their feelings and encourage them to keep exploring solutions. This approach makes clients feel understood, fostering deeper reflection on their decisions and



behaviors, which can lead to positive changes (Miller & Rollnick, 2013; Rosengren, 2009).

In practice, reflective listening means paying close attention not only to what the client is saying but also to the reasons behind their words. For example, if a client says, "I'm feeling very stressed about money right now... I don't know how I'm going to pay my bills next month," a reflective response might be: "It sounds like you're afraid there won't be enough money to cover your expenses." This response helps the client reflect on their own thoughts and feelings, which can pave the way for positive change (Miller & Rollnick, 2013).

Reflective listening works best when it steers the conversation toward change, which is the main goal of MD. Change talk occurs when the client begins to articulate their own arguments for change, a critical step in building motivation (Miller & Moyers, 2017). For instance, a client might say: "I try to stay clean, but it's difficult when I'm around my old friends." A reflective response could be: "It seems like you're really committed to staying abstinent, but it's a tough challenge when you're with your old friends." This response acknowledges the client's commitment while empathizing with their struggle, encouraging further conversation about strategies to cope in such situations.

Empathy is integral to reflective listening. Without empathy, reflection cannot be effective. According to Miller and Moyers (2017), empathy is vital in creating a strong therapeutic alliance. A lack of empathy from the professional can negatively impact the client's progress, potentially hindering their social reintegration. Poor client outcomes may indicate the need for the professional to demonstrate greater empathic understanding during the change process (Miller & Moyers, 2017).



podejście sprawia, że ludzie czują się zrozumiani, dzięki czemu są skłonni do głębszej refleksji nad własnymi decyzjami i zachowaniem, co prowadzi ich do pozytywnych zmian (Miller & Rollnick, 2013; Rosengren, 2009).

W praktyce refleksyjne słuchanie polega na zwracaniu szczególnej uwagi na to, co ludzie mówią - ale także próbę zrozumienia, dlaczego to mówią. Na przykład, gdy dana osoba mówi: "Czuję się teraz bardzo zestresowana z powodu pieniędzy... Nie wiem, jak zapłacić rachunki w przyszłym miesiącu", przykładem odzwierciedlenia może być: "Wygląda na to, że boisz się, że nie będzie więcej pieniędzy". Pomaga to klientowi zastanowić się nad własnymi myślami lub uczuciami, co może prowadzić do pozytywnych zmian (Miller & Rollnick, 2013).

Refleksyjne słuchanie działa najlepiej, gdy zmierza do rozmowy o zmianie, czyli do głównego celu DM. Rozmowa o zmianie jest opisywana jako odkrywanie przez klienta jego własnych argumentów na rzecz zmiany, co jest niezbędne dla zbudowania motywacji (Miller & Moyers, 2017). Dzięki refleksji nad tym, co zostało zrozumiane lub dostrzeżone przez specjalistę, klient może lepiej wyrazić swoje pragnienia, opisać umiejętności, wyrazić powody i potrzeby wprowadzenia zmian. Przykładowe stwierdzenie klienta: "Staram się pozostać czysty, ale jest to trudne, gdy jestem w pobliżu moich starych przyjaciół" może zostać odzwierciedlone w refleksyjnej odpowiedzi: "Wygląda na to, że jesteś naprawdę zaangażowany w utrzymanie abstynencji, ale jest to dla ciebie ciężkie wyzwanie, gdy jesteś w towarzystwie swoich starych znajomych". Taka wypowiedź podkreśla zaangażowanie i uznaje trudności, z jakimi boryka się klient, zachęcając w ten sposób do dalszej rozmowy na temat strategii radzenia sobie w takich sytuacjach.

Z refleksyjnym słuchaniem jest także ściśle związana empatia. Bez empatii nie może być skutecznej refleksji. Według Millera i Moyersa (2017) empatia jest ważna w tworzeniu sojuszu terapeutycznego. Oznacza to, że jeśli specjaliście brakuje wystarczającej empatii wobec jego klientów, może to wpłynąć na nich negatywnie, prowadząc do słabych wyników readaptacji społecznej. Niewielkie postępy klienta mogą wskazywać na potrzebę zwiększenia okazywania empatycznego zrozumienia przez specjalistę zaangażowanego w proces zmiany (Miller & Moyers, 2017).



• Summarising and informing in evoking

SUMMING UP IN EVOKING

Summarizing is a highly effective technique for inducing motivation. It involves integrating the client's reflections to identify and highlight the main themes, helping to deepen their understanding. By briefly restating what has been discussed, summarizing serves to connect important points in the conversation and emphasize key findings. This technique supports the extraction of the client's motivations and plans for change, while structuring their thinking, reinforcing their commitment, and ensuring that both the professional and the client have a shared understanding of what has been discussed (Miller & Rollnick, 2013).

Even the most motivated clients may experience setbacks or relapses. While a relapse in motivation or re-emergence of problems is a common part of the change process, it is not an inevitable phase. Motivational Dialogue (MD) emphasizes supporting clients in recognizing the possibility of failure without defining relapse as an unavoidable outcome.

Summarizing can play a key role in reducing the risk of relapse. According to Miller and Rollnick (2013), although relapse is part of the change process for many people, it does not occur with every client. By building resilience and helping clients develop strategies to manage challenges through clear and constructive summaries, professionals empower clients to progress more confidently and maintain their momentum toward positive change.

INFORMING AND ADVISING IN EVOKING

Despite its client-centered approach, Motivational Dialogue (MD) also incorporates providing information or advice, especially when clients request it or appear to be stuck. Informing and advising should always be conducted with the client's consent and in a way that respects their autonomy. This involves collaborating with the client to offer useful information and suggestions while aligning with their values and goals (Miller & Rollnick, 2013; Rosengren, 2009).

Informing and advising are essential components of one-to-one support, as they help bridge the gap between what clients need from professionals and the resources or strategies they may not yet know about. Informing supports clients' decision-making by equipping them with valuable information and pointing them toward opportunities for self-directed learning. This empowers clients to take action to achieve their goals independently.

The process of informing is inherently collaborative, increasing client motivation and reinforcing their belief in their ability to succeed. It also strengthens the partnership between the client and the professional (Stinson & Clark, 2017).

To achieve effective results, professionals can provide guidance grounded in their expertise while respecting the client's autonomy. For example, they might say: "Can I share some strategies that others have found helpful in similar situations?" (Schumacher & Madson, 2015).



3.5. Resource awareness, partnership and acceptance in evoking

RAISING AWARENESS OF RESOURCES WHEN SUPPORTING EX-CONVICTS AT THE EVOKING STAGE

At the Motivational Dialogue (MD) evoking stage, it is crucial to recognize and leverage both internal and external resources to support change. This involves helping clients identify their strengths and available support systems, which can significantly enhance their ability to overcome challenges and achieve their goals.

Support is a multidimensional construct that plays a vital role in the overall well-being and resilience-building of individuals facing difficulties in their lives. It can be categorized into four main types:

- Emotional support
- Informational support
- Instrumental support
- Social support

Each category serves a unique purpose and can make a significant difference to how well a client copes with stressors or achieves their goals.

TASK-ORIENTED PARTNERSHIP AT THE INDUCTION STAGE IN WORK WITH EX-CONVICTS

Motivational Dialogue emphasizes building a partnership with the client. At the evocation stage, this partnership becomes particularly critical as realistic and achievable tasks are identified—tasks that the client is both willing and able to undertake (Kinner & Young, 2018; Miller & Rollnick, 2013). Task-oriented partnership involves collaboratively setting goals and defining the steps needed to achieve them while ensuring that clients feel supported throughout the process. This approach empowers and motivates individuals seeking support or other services where goal setting is essential for success. According to Hagger et al. (2020), this partnership strategy highlights the importance of clear communication and consistent support to help clients successfully progress toward their goals. Additionally, partnership in Motivational Dialogue aims to break down large, overarching

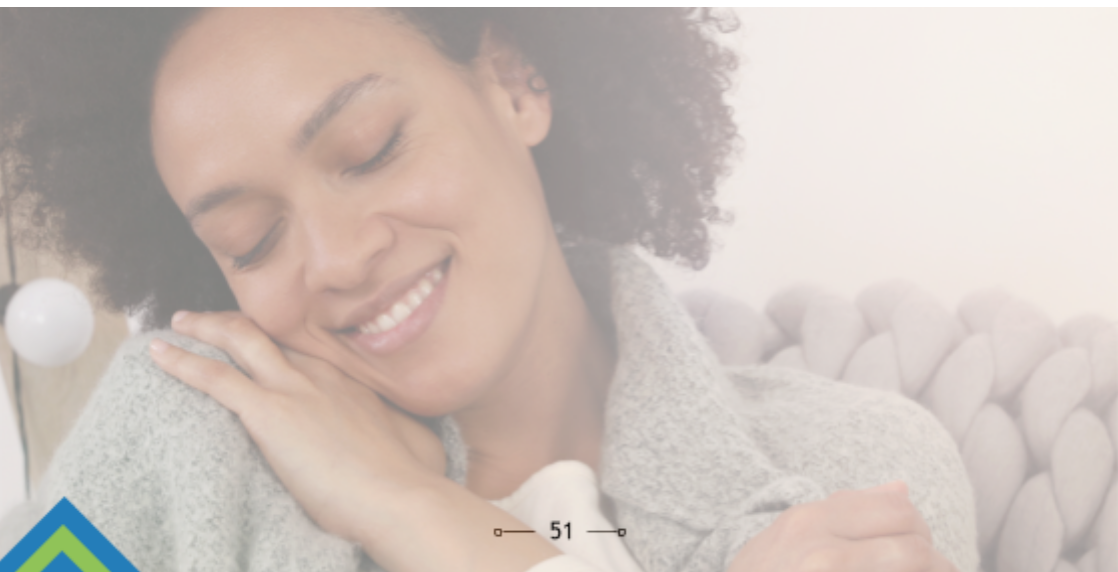
goals into smaller, more manageable steps. This reduces feelings of overwhelm and discouragement while promoting sustained engagement and motivation (Kinner & Young, 2018; Miller & Rollnick, 2013).

ACCEPTANCE AND REINFORCEMENT DURING THE INDUCTION PHASE IN WORKING WITH EX-CONVICTS

Acceptance and reinforcement play a crucial role early in Motivational Dialogue (MD) interventions, especially for ex-convicts. These elements create a supportive environment that fosters clients' self-efficacy, resilience, and independence, enabling them to cope effectively with challenges.

Acceptance involves demonstrating unconditional positive regard and empathy, allowing clients to express themselves freely without fear of judgment. It also includes respecting their right to self-determination by recognizing and honoring their ability to make their own choices.

Empowerment is achieved by helping clients recognize their personal control over life events and their ability to choose from available alternatives in various aspects of their lives. This dual approach not only strengthens the task alliance between client and professional but also equips clients with the inner strength needed to face future challenges (Csillik, 2015; Ryan & Deci, 2018).



4. Systematic: planning

• Planning in Motivational Dialogue

Planning occurs when the client demonstrates readiness to act and implement change by creating concrete steps to achieve their chosen goal. This stage typically follows a phase where the client has gained a clear understanding of their motivations and is prepared to take action. The professional's role is to skillfully guide the client through this process. Coaching skills are crucial at this stage and include:

- Encouraging the client to take action.
- Stimulating reflection.
- Asking the right questions (Kimsey-House et al., 2018).

Since asking the right questions is the most important skill for the coach in the planning process, it is essential to tailor the questions to the client's situation, goals, skills, and cognitive abilities.

- evoking - *"why?"*
- engaging - *"should we go together?"*
- focussing - *"where to?"*
- planning - *"how?"*

When working with clients in the spirit of Motivational Dialogue (MD), it is essential to recognize when the client is ready to transition from evoking to planning. This shift requires careful attention to the client's readiness to move from reflecting on change to taking concrete action. The OARS tools of Motivational Dialogue - Open-ended questions, Affirmations, Reflective listening, and Summarizing - can be effectively employed at this stage. These techniques help ensure a smooth transition by continuing to support the client's exploration of their motivations while encouraging them to take the first steps toward their goals.

The specific coaching tools outlined in the following section—such as the Eisenhower Matrix, GROW analysis, formulating SMART goals, and providing constructive feedback—are invaluable for effective planning.

A specialist working with ex-convicts in the spirit of Motivational Dialogue (MD) should utilize coaching techniques and tools to support their clients' development and change processes. This involves helping ex-convicts discover and fulfill their potential. The specialist adopts a goal-oriented partnership model, which emphasizes equality in the relationship between the client and the specialist, avoiding any authoritarian approach. To effectively plan activities when working with ex-convicts, it is crucial to first prioritize—identifying which areas of life require the most immediate intervention. Is the primary goal to secure housing and provide a stable livelihood, or should the focus be on addressing urgent health concerns? The direction of support will depend on the client's unique needs and circumstances. Exploring the planning framework requires asking open-ended questions to uncover the client's priorities and aspirations. This collaborative approach ensures that the planning process is tailored to the client's situation, promoting empowerment and sustainable change.



Open questions in planning

Open-ended questions serve as an effective tool in supporting Motivational Dialogue and facilitating the action planning process with clients. These questions enable clients to explore and articulate their goals, needs, and opportunities through self-reflection. Open-ended coaching questions should be precise and neutral, avoiding any implication of preconceived conclusions, while the responses should provide meaningful insights that inform further action.

Depending on their purpose, the following types of questions can be used during the planning process:

Question function	Examples of questions
Target identification	<i>What do you aim to achieve through this change?</i>
Exploring motivation and the importance of change	<i>What benefits do you anticipate from achieving this goal?</i>
Seeking resources and opportunities	<i>What support or resources are currently available to you?</i>
Planning specific activities	<i>What initial steps would you like to take?</i>
Confidence building	<i>What personal qualities will assist you in achieving your goal?</i>

GROW analysis as a coaching model for structuring planning conversations
The GROW analysis is a widely used coaching tool that facilitates structured conversations centred on goal planning. Its key features include:

- Focusing on goal clarity and situational awareness – assisting the client in defining and understanding their goals as well as evaluating their current circumstances.
- Identifying optimal solutions – supporting the client in exploring available options and analysing potential obstacles to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Emphasising reflection and self-awareness – encouraging the client to engage in introspection, enhancing their understanding of themselves and their aspirations.

The acronym GROW represents the four key elements of the coaching process:

- Goal – Objective: Defining the purpose of the coaching conversation. Example questions: *"What do you want to achieve?"*, *"How will you know when you have achieved your goal?"*, *"Why is this goal important to you?"*
- Reality – Current situation: Assessing the client's actual circumstances. Example questions: *"What challenges are you currently facing?"*, *"What steps have you already taken towards achieving your goal?"*, *"Where are you now in relation to your goal?"*
- Options – Exploring possibilities: Identifying potential options and obstacles to achieving the goal. Example questions: *"What could you do differently?"*, *"What other options do you have for achieving your goal?"*, *"What are the potential risks associated with these options?"*
- Will – Commitment to action: Making decisions and determining specific actions. Example questions: *"When will you start?"*, *"What exactly will you do?"*, *"What resources or support will you need?"*

Element of the GROW model	Situation	Client formulation	Examples of questions
Goal	Defining the goal of the person working on his/her social and professional reintegration	"I would like to find a stable job that allows me to support myself," he says.	"What do you want to achieve in the next six months?"
Reality	Analysis of the current situation, challenges and resources	"I have experience in manual work, but I am not qualified and lack confidence."	"What is your situation now?"
Options	Considering options and seeking solutions	"I can try to complete vocational courses or enrol with a temporary employment agency."	"What options do you have to start working towards your goal?"
Will	Action planning and commitment to concrete steps	"Next week I will enrol on a welding course and submit my CV to two companies."	"What are you going to do as a first step?"

Cartesian Questions – a tool for decision-making and plan formulation

Cartesian questions consist of a set of four questions designed to aid in decision-making and exploring the potential consequences of different actions. These questions are especially useful when weighing the pros and cons of a decision and assessing the possible outcomes of taking or not taking a particular course of action.

By encouraging clients to consider their choices from multiple perspectives, Cartesian questions deepen their understanding of the implications of their decisions, fostering a more reflective and informed approach.

The four Cartesian questions:

1. What will happen if I do this? The question focuses on the positive consequences of making the decision, e.g. "If I start a new job, I will gain financial independence."
2. What will happen if I don't? The question considers the positive sides of staying in the current situation, e.g. "If I don't take the new job, I will have more time for my family."
3. What won't happen if I do this? The question encourages exploration of the negative consequences of making a decision, e.g. "If I start a new job, I won't have as much time to pursue my hobbies."
4. What won't happen if I don't do it? The question helps to reflect on the negative consequences of inaction, e.g. "If I don't take a new job, I won't improve my financial situation."

Cartesian questions are particularly valuable when working with ex-convicts, as they encourage a comprehensive understanding of the situation, beyond just the positive aspects. These questions help clients develop an awareness of the potential consequences of decisions made - or not made - while addressing ambivalence and fear of change. By fostering deeper reflection, Cartesian questions support ex-convicts in building clarity and confidence, empowering them to navigate decisions more effectively and embrace positive change.

The Coaching Funnel – a visual model for supporting planning in coaching conversations

The coaching funnel is a visual model of a coaching conversation that begins with defining the client's ultimate goal. This initial step focuses on clarifying what the client aims to achieve. In the next stage, open-ended questions are used to expand the understanding of the situation by exploring it in depth. Once the situation has been thoroughly examined, the client decides on a course of action. The conversation concludes with the client selecting a specific step or steps they are committed to taking, ensuring a clear path forward is established.



Funnel of coaching questions (self-developed)

Examples of questions that can be asked at various stages during a coaching conversation in a 'funnel' arrangement:

Step 1: Questions of purpose *"What do you want to achieve by meeting with me?"*

Step 2: Deepening *"What exactly would you like to change?"*

Step 3: Options *"What could you do to get closer to your goal?"*

Step 4: Decisions *"What steps could you take to... (find a job)?"*

Step 5: Action *"Where would you like to start?"*

• Appreciation and reflection in planning

APPRECIATION IN PLANNING

Valuing is presented in the section 'Targeting'. Here, concrete examples of its application in the action planning process with ex-convicts will be shown. When appreciating the client in the planning process, the professional should focus on problem-free areas that have been successful, showing the client's actions in a positive light.

In the process of planning activities with ex-convicts, appreciation fulfils the following functions (Rollnick, Miller 2015):

- **Raises self-esteem.**
- **Reinforces motivation to change.**
- **Increases the sense of control over life.**
- **Reduces the fear of failure.**

Examples of appreciation in the action planning process with ex-convicts:

- Emphasising survival and adaptation skills. Example: *"You survived a challenging time in prison, demonstrating remarkable strength. This resilience is a skill that will support you in your daily life, especially when you face difficulties on your path to social reintegration."*
- Highlighting past successes and Progress. Example: *"You've chosen to change your life by actively looking for a job. That's a significant step requiring courage and commitment. Remember, taking action itself is already a success."*
- Drawing attention to responsibility and willingness to change. Example: *"You made the independent decision to work on yourself and pursue change. This shows that you are ready for new challenges and are willing to take responsibility for your life."*

- Accepting difficulties and fostering a sense of competence. Example: *"The change you're about to make won't be easy, but your readiness to make the effort reflects your strength and determination. Even if obstacles arise, you have the ability to overcome them."*
- Emphasising the role of positive relationships. Example: *"Your past experiences highlight the value of surrounding yourself with supportive people. You recognise that building positive relationships is key, and it's something you can excel at."*

REFLECTING LISTENING IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Active and reflective listening will find particular use in recognising signals of readiness to change.

How do you recognise the signals of readiness for change?

The client often expresses a willingness to change through:

- A change in language: Statements such as *"I have to", "I want to", "I can" are appearing more often.*, *"I am ready", "I will try"* or more concrete statements of willingness to act.
- Reducing resistance: The client stops expressing doubts and starts formulating ideas for change.
- Emotions of readiness: The client may show excitement, optimism or relief at the thought of change.
- Action questions: The client begins to ask about ways to implement the change, e.g. *"Where should I start?"*

How to summarise the language of change?

Summarising is a step that helps the client to solidify their motivation and steer the conversation towards planning. The specialist can say *"From what you say, you want to make a change because it will help you [benefit]. You seem to be ready to start acting. Is that a good summary?"*

How to propose a transition to planning?

If the client seems ready and the active change phase can begin, the professional can ask the following questions:

- *What would you like to change?*
- *What is your plan for implementing change?*
- *How can you solve this problem?*

It is important that the transition takes place in a spirit of cooperation. The client must feel that he or she is in charge of the process.

Transition to planning in case of ambivalence

If the client expresses doubts, rather than moving on to planning, it is worthwhile:

- Re-explore ambivalence: *"On the one hand I can see that you see the benefits of change, but on the other hand you have some concerns. Can we talk about this a Little bit more?"*
- Ensure readiness is sufficient: *"Do you feel you are ready to move forward, or do you still need more time to think about it?"*

Flexibility in the transition to planning

This is not always a straightforward process. A specialist can introduce elements of planning gradually:

- Suggestion for a small step: *"What do you think you could start with to see how it works?"*
- Exploring the possibilities: *"What would be the most realistic first step in your situation?"*

Commitment & activation

Engaging and activating the customer are two key elements in the transition from calling to planning in motivational dialogue.



Commitment is the stage where the client demonstrates their resolve to take action toward change. At this point, the client begins to express a willingness and readiness to act, marking the critical transition from the contemplation phase to actual planning. In Motivational Dialogue, commitment is conveyed through the client's statements that indicate their readiness to take the first step toward change. This stage is essential for translating intentions into concrete actions, paving the way for meaningful progress.

Examples of commitments:

- *"I want to start looking for a job because I am keen to improve my situation."*
- *"I am willing to try to change my habits to improve my health."*

Techniques to support engagement:

- Discovering the client's intentions: In this stage, it is helpful to ask questions that help the client to be clear about what he or she wants and what action he or she will take, e.g. *"What specific steps will you take to achieve this goal?"*
- Commitment scaling: Using a scale, e.g. *"On a scale of 1 to 10, how ready are you to take action?"*, helps to assess the client's level of commitment and motivation.

Activation refers to the stage where the client begins to plan concrete action steps. This phase marks the transition from general intentions to specific, measurable actions. Activation involves the client defining precisely what they will do, how they will do it, and when they will take these steps. This stage is crucial for transforming motivation into tangible progress, providing structure and clarity to the client's path toward achieving their goals.

Examples of activation:

- *"I'll start looking at job offers tomorrow and by the end of the week I'll have sent out at least five applications."*

- *"From Monday, I will run for 20 minutes every day to improve my health condition."*

Techniques to support activation:

- Concretising the action plan: It is crucial to help the client identify the exact action they intend to take, such as: *"What exactly do you need to do to start implementing this plan?"*.
- Identifying support: Providing support or identifying resources that can help the client to take action, e.g. *"Who or what can help you to achieve this goal?"*.

The process of moving from calling to planning:

1. Induction (engagement) - the client begins to consider the change and the coach or therapist helps them to understand why the change is important. This is the discovery phase of motivation.
2. Commitment - The client begins to express a desire to change and a willingness to act. In this stage it is important that the client accepts their commitment and feels that change is their own goal.
3. Activation - In this phase, the client begins to create a concrete action plan and takes the first steps towards achieving his or her goals.

• **Summarising and informing planning**

SUMMARISING IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Summarising during the planning process involves consolidating and organising the client's information in a concise and clear manner. This practice helps the client visualise their progress in the change process, reinforcing motivation and clarity about the steps ahead.

The objectives of summarisation in the planning process are:

1. Confirming and strengthening commitment.
2. Capturing information.

3. Presentation of progress and identification of areas for further work.
4. Strengthening a sense of control and empowerment

Constructive feedback as a form of debriefing in the planning process
Constructive feedback as a form of debriefing in the planning process is a tool to support the client as they move from the plan to actually taking action. Constructive feedback allows a space for reflection, enables an assessment of progress to date and indicates what can be improved in the subsequent change process.

The key elements of solution-focused constructive feedback are:

- Clarity and concreteness. Example: Instead of saying, "*Your CV is inaccurate,*" it is better to say, "*I noticed several inaccuracies in your CV that we should discuss.*"
- Positive introduction. Example: "*I appreciate that you delivered your CV on time.*"
- Focus on solutions. Example: "*It might be worth creating a checklist for your CV to make sure all the details are accurate. If you need help compiling such a list, I would be happy to help.*"
- Reinforcing motivation. Example: "*Getting the details right in your CV can help you get a job. It will show the employer you are accurate and reliable.*"
- Involving the client in the process. Example: "*What opportunities do you see to improve your CV? Maybe you have your own ideas for improvement?*"
- Avoiding judgement. Example: Instead of saying, "*You are too careless in your CV,*" it is better to say, "*Some of the data in your CV seems inaccurate, which may affect its perception by the employer.*"
- Regularity and timeliness. Example: After the meeting, discuss quickly what went well and what can be improved to make it better next time.

Constructive feedback when working with an ex-convict might look like this:

- Client: "*In the past week I have been able to meet with a careers advisor and write a CV.*"

- Specialist: *"It's great that you have taken these steps! Working on your CV is a very important step. From what you say, I can see that you have started to actively pursue change. What are your plans for next week? What next steps are you going to take?"*

In this case, feedback confirms progress, motivating further action. At the same time, the specialist does not just stay on praise, but asks for the next step, allowing the planning process to continue.

PROVIDING INFORMATION AND ADVICE IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Providing information and advice during the action planning process enables the professional to adapt to the client's evolving needs, values, and circumstances throughout the change journey. This is particularly important for ex-convicts, who may face significant life changes such as shifts in family dynamics, health issues, or environmental factors. A flexible approach ensures that plans remain relevant and responsive to these changes. Key factors in implementing flexibility in planning when working with ex-convicts include:

- **Regular evaluation and adjustment of plans.** Example of action: Regular meetings to discuss progress, challenges and the need to adjust objectives and actions.
- **Personalising the approach.** Example activities: Matching goals and activities to the client's personal aspirations and specific circumstances, such as the need to learn new skills or repair family relationships.
- **Responding to changing circumstances.** Examples of actions: Modification of the action plan when an ex-convict encounters new challenges or circumstances affecting his/her ability to achieve previous goals.
- **Support at difficult times.** Example activities: Offering additional support or resources at times of crisis, such as help in coping with health or emotional problems.

- **Encouraging reflection and self-assessment.** Example activities: Reflective questions that make you think about the effectiveness of past actions and how changes can be made to better align with your values and needs.

4.5 Resource awareness, partnership and acceptance in planning

RAISING AWARENESS OF RESOURCES IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Making resources aware in the planning process is inseparable from analysing them. The client needs both external and internal resources to carry out any planned activity.

These resources can include skills, experiences, social support as well as specific material and financial resources. There are a number of resource assessment tools, the selection of which depends on the client's purpose, need for detail, and abilities (e.g. cognitive). The tools should be completed by the client themselves, with support from a professional. Below are some examples of resource assessment tools:

- **Resource mapping.** Resource mapping involves creating a list of all available resources that a client can use to achieve their goals. It can include personal resources (e.g. skills), social resources (e.g. family, friends, support groups) and material resources (e.g. access to education, funding). The specialist creates the resource map together with the client by asking questions like: Example: "Who could you reach out to for support if you face difficulties?"
- **Open questions in the context of resources.** Open-ended questions are used in motivational dialogue to get the client to reflect on their resources. In this way, the client begins to see his or her strengths and the external support he or she can count on. Example: "When have you successfully overcome difficulties in the past, and what resources were important to you during those times?"

- **Resource Scale.** A resource scale is a tool designed to help clients evaluate the availability of their resources and explore how they can utilise them effectively. This tool is particularly useful for identifying resources that the client may not yet recognise and for determining which resources are most critical to achieving their goals. Example: On a scale of 1 to 10, the client evaluates the extent to which a specific resource (e.g., family support) is currently helpful to them.
- **The technique "Asking for the best version of yourself".** This tool involves asking the client a question to remind them of their strengths and resources. It helps them to become aware of what qualities or experiences they have used in the past in difficult situations and which might be useful in the current context. Example of a question: "Imagine that you have already reached this goal. What qualities, skills or resources have helped you get to this place?"
- **SWOT analysis.** A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis can also be used to understand the client's resources, focusing on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Through this analysis, the client can see what resources and support they have at their fingertips. Example: During the SWOT analysis, the client can point out his or her strengths (professional skills), but also identify threats (e.g. financial instability), which will help to better plan the next steps.



- **Change Readiness Assessment.** This tool allows the client to assess how ready they are to make changes, what internal and external resources can support the process, and what resources they may lack. This helps to identify areas that need more support or development. Example: The client may be asked to rate his or her motivation, social support and available material resources on a scale of 1 to 10.
- **Profile sheet.** A profile sheet is a document used to collect and systematically organise information about a person, their strengths, resources, challenges, as well as their goals and motivations. The profile sheet is helpful in creating an individual action plan and in assessing the degree of progress in the change process.

Example areas in the profile sheet:

- **Personal data:** Basic information about the client, his/her history and current situation.
- **Personal resources:** strengths, skills, work experience, values.
- **External support:** Family, friends, institutions, support organisations.
- **Objectives and motivation:** Short-term and long-term goals, reasons for change, intrinsic motivation.
- **Challenges:** Barriers, difficulties in achieving goals, fears.
- **Action plan:** Specific steps the client should take to achieve their goals.
- **Resource card.**

A resource sheet is nothing more than a tabular listing of the client's resources, which are grouped under 4 headings:

- Personal resources.
- Family/human resources.
- Material resources.
- Social and housing resources.

The professional explains to the client what is meant by the terms given, e.g. what are resources, what are personal resources.

ACCEPTANCE AND SUPPORT IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Acceptance and support of the client are comprehensively discussed in the

chapter on Targeting. In the context of planning, the Dilts Pyramid can also be referenced as an additional framework for understanding and applying client acceptance and support. This model provides a structured approach to aligning different levels of change, ensuring that the client's goals, values, and behaviours are consistently integrated into the planning process.

The Dilts Pyramid is a tool that represents the different levels at which an individual can function. It provides insight into how various aspects of life influence thinking, emotions, and actions. The pyramid consists of six hierarchical levels, each building upon the one below, offering a structured framework to explore personal development and change.

Using the Dilts Pyramid in working with ex-convicts can help to understand in which area of a person's life change is taking place and what resources are available in each area to support social and vocational reintegration.

Sample questions for each area in the Dilts approach:

- **Environment** - *"What are the challenges posed by your current environment?"*
- **Behaviour (Behavior)** - *"What do you do to avoid difficult situations?"*
- **Skills and abilities (Capabilities)** - *"What capabilities would you like to develop to feel more confident in the labour market?"*
- **Beliefs and Values** - *"What do you believe will help you achieve your goals?"*
- **Identity** - *"Who do you want to be in the future?"*
- **Vocation / Spirituality (Purpose / Spirituality)** - *"What bigger goals would you like to achieve in life?"*

5. Releasing potential: coaching

• Coaching in social readaptation

Coaching is an effective method for helping individuals achieve their personal and professional goals. Through a thought-provoking and creative process, the professional works collaboratively with the client to inspire them to maximise their potential. This approach is particularly beneficial for individuals undergoing significant life transitions or those seeking change, such as ex-offenders. Coaching fosters positive thinking, builds self-confidence, and lays the foundation for long-term success by empowering clients to take control of their lives and realise their aspirations.

Coaching is a collaborative, goal-oriented method of unlocking people's potential that can be used in a variety of contexts, including working with ex-convicts. Essentially, according to Cox et al. (2014), coaching involves creating a safe environment where clients can gain insight into themselves and take steps towards what they want (Cox et al., 2014).

Within MD, coaching aims to support the client in decision-making and guides them through stages to enable self-discovery, increased decision-making and confidence in their abilities. The client focuses on their strengths or resources needed to overcome identified barriers (Cox et al., 2014).

Clarifying coaching goals enables ex-convicts to focus on something achievable that they can work on as they rebuild their lives after release. Setting goals in line with the SMART rules can apply, for example, to a situation in which a person wants to find employment after release from prison. In such a scenario, 'specific' (S) means anything that is explicitly related to securing a job, such as updating a CV. "Measurable" (M) means verifiable, e.g., the number of job applications filled per week. "Achievable" (A) indicates whether the available options are even possible to consider, while "adequate (realistic)" (R) indicates whether they are within the reach of



that particular person. "Time-bound" (T) requires specifying the time within which each task should be completed (Stinson & Clark, 2017). Regular review sessions should be held, where necessary adjustments can be made if required, as this allows goals to be adjusted to current circumstances and also helps to keep motivation levels high.

The foundation of effective coaching is building trust between the professional and the client. Trust provides security for clients to openly share their experiences, feel understood and supported throughout their journey, which increases engagement during the session. Active listening skills are helpful when trying to engage with clients, as they demonstrate that the professional has heard them well enough to respond appropriately later (Grant, 2012). The techniques used also always include empathy - showing genuine concern combined with an understanding of what the client may be experiencing at the time (Miller & Rollnick, 2013).

• **Open questions in coaching**

In coaching, open-ended questions encourage deeper reflection and awareness by requiring broader answers than a simple "yes" or "no." The use of open-ended questions in coaching is rooted in humanistic psychology. Carl Rogers emphasised the importance of adopting a non-directive approach, allowing individuals to become the experts in their own lives (Rogers, 2021). This approach fosters sustainable change by promoting intrinsic motivation (Miller & Rollnick, 2013).

Open-ended questions facilitate self-discovery, leading to a deeper understanding of oneself, personal goals, objectives, and the reasons why these goals may not yet have been achieved. They also help clients identify the barriers preventing them from reaching their goals (Cox et al., 2014).

Follow-up questions are another effective tool in this process, encouraging clients to explore their initial responses more deeply. For example, asking a client to elaborate on something they previously mentioned or clarify what



they mean can prompt them to provide more detailed insights. This process helps uncover subconscious thoughts and feelings, which can further illuminate their path toward change (Hettema et al., 2021).

• Appreciation and reflection in coaching

APPRECIATION IN COACHING

Appreciation, or affirmation, is a positive statement that highlights the client's strengths and efforts, contributing to their sense of competence and motivation. In coaching, appreciation plays a key role in building trust and fostering confidence in the client's ability to create positive change. For ex-convicts, this approach can be particularly valuable in addressing low self-esteem or feelings of inadequacy.

Positive psychology forms the foundation of coaching and the practice of expressing appreciation. This discipline focuses on identifying and enhancing what goes well in life, rather than centring on illness or pathology (Biswas-Diener, 2020). Expressions of appreciation enhance positivity by recognising clients' efforts, qualities, and achievements, thereby reinforcing their motivation. Additionally, a humanistic approach, rooted in the concept of unconditional positive regard, emphasises accepting individuals as they are, without judgment or conditions (Rogers, 2021). This perspective supports the creation of a safe and empowering environment, enabling clients to build self-belief and work toward their goals.

When working with ex-prisoners, it is essential to ensure that appreciation is both concrete and authentic, focusing on each client's specific strengths or efforts. Acknowledging even small steps toward achieving goals is crucial, as individuals often need encouragement and the reassurance that someone recognises and values their efforts in the moment (Grant, 2017).

REFLECTIVE LISTENING IN COACHING

Mirroring involves repeating key information and identifying the dominant emotions expressed by the client. By reflecting emotions, the client can hear



their thoughts echoed in the professional's expression, which encourages deeper reflection and awareness of the bigger picture (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). Mirroring also helps to acknowledge and name both positive emotions and underlying concerns that may not be immediately apparent (Rosengren, 2009).

In coaching ex-convicts, mirroring plays a crucial role in identifying and addressing heightened emotions. It allows individuals to express feelings of remorse for past actions while also processing anxiety about their future outside the prison walls. As such, mirroring should not be limited to isolated moments during a session but rather used systematically throughout the process. This consistent approach fosters an atmosphere of support and motivation, increasing client engagement (Cox et al., 2014). Reflections in coaching should be carefully tailored to the client's unique situation and communication style. Personalised reflections strengthen their impact, encouraging clients to think more deeply about their concerns and fostering a sense of empowerment to address them (Rosengren, 2009).

• Summarising, informing and advising in coaching

SUMMARISING IN WORKING WITH PEOPLE IN THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL READAPTATION

Summation is a coaching technique that can be effectively integrated with Motivational Dialogue.

During the debrief, the professional collaborates with the client to review and confirm what was discussed during the interview, ensuring mutual understanding of the situation, progress, and the plan for next steps.

Many clients who have left prison struggle to translate their thoughts into actionable plans, a challenge that the debriefing technique can effectively address.



Summarisation is grounded in active listening. Professionals focus on both the client's statements and their body language, enabling them to identify key points that resonate with both parties (Grant, 2014). It is recommended that professionals periodically summarise the conversation to ensure clarity and alignment. Additionally, a comprehensive debriefing should be conducted at the end of the meeting. Example: *"Today we discussed your goals of achieving stable housing and employment. You identified several actionable steps for this week, such as attending job fairs and contacting housing services."*

INFORMING AND ADVISING ON COACHING

At times, coaching may involve providing information and advice, particularly when clients face significant challenges that require specific solutions. This should be done in a manner that respects the client's autonomy, offering recommendations and resources to empower them to make their own informed decisions. This approach is especially crucial when working with ex-convicts, who often need guidance to navigate complex systems and overcome barriers to reintegration. By balancing support with respect for independence, professionals can foster both confidence and self-reliance in their clients.

The practice of informing and advising in coaching is grounded in adult learning theory and motivational interviewing principles.

Adult learning theory, as proposed by Knowles (1984), highlights the importance of providing adults with relevant knowledge and accessible resources to enable them to make informed choices. Building on this foundation, Miller and Rollnick (2013) further developed motivational interviewing, which prioritises supporting client autonomy through non-directive methods rather than directing clients during counselling. This approach fosters a collaborative environment where individuals are empowered to take ownership of their decisions and change processes.

Information and counselling

Information and counselling can play a vital role in coaching approaches, particularly when working with individuals transitioning from prison to reintegration. Many ex-convicts face challenges such as limited access to information, scarce material resources, and a lack of preparedness to navigate new technological solutions. Sharing knowledge can help bridge these gaps, enabling clients to access resources such as virtual bulletin boards, community centres, or support services (Rosengren, 2009).

Informing and advising have been identified as some of the most impactful tools in coaching, particularly for ex-convicts. When professionals provide relevant information and necessary materials, they empower their clients to make informed decisions and take ownership of their actions. This process fosters greater self-reliance and accountability (Grant & Hartley, 2013).

5.5. Resource awareness, partnership and acceptance in coaching

RAISING AWARENESS OF RESOURCES IN COACHING

When supporting individuals who have previously been deprived of their liberty, it is essential to identify and leverage resources that can facilitate their social reintegration. These resources may include the client's personal competencies as well as support programmes available to them. Awareness of accessible resources can encompass talents, skills acquired during incarceration, or forms of social support. For instance, if an individual gained carpentry skills while imprisoned, this expertise can serve as a valuable asset for securing future employment (Biswas-Diener, 2020). By recognising and utilising these resources, professionals can empower clients to build a sustainable path toward reintegration and personal growth.

Utilising external resources, such as social programmes, job placement services, and support groups, enhances the likelihood of successful reintegration for clients with diverse needs and backgrounds.

A good starting point is conducting an assessment of the client's strengths, skills, and experiences. For example, professionals might ask questions about previous employment, hobbies, and interests. When using coaching techniques during interviews, it is crucial to consistently highlight the client's accomplishments and what they have already achieved.

TASK-ORIENTED PARTNERSHIP IN THE COACHING PROCESS

Task-oriented partnership in coaching involves collaboration between the professional and the client to set goals, plan activities, and identify specific tasks that will move the client closer to their desired outcomes. This approach is grounded in the concepts of goal setting and action planning, as developed by Locke and Latham (1990), who demonstrated that challenging but specific goals yield better results than vague or easily attainable ones. Action planning focuses on breaking large goals into smaller, manageable tasks, increasing the likelihood of success by making the process more concrete and less overwhelming (Gollwitzer, 2014).

Task-oriented partnerships also draw from cognitive behavioural coaching (CBC), which incorporates techniques from cognitive behavioural therapy to help clients define and achieve their goals. This partnership provides a structured pathway toward success, whether it involves securing stable housing, gaining employment, or rebuilding constructive relationships.



COACHING

ACCEPTANCE AND EMPOWERMENT IN COACHING EX-CONVICTS

When working with formerly incarcerated individuals, it is crucial that coaching focuses on strengthening their sense of self-efficacy. Empowerment through coaching techniques is rooted in the principles of positive psychology and self-determination theory (SDT). SDT, developed by Deci and Ryan (1985), emphasises the importance of fostering autonomy, competence, and connection to help individuals feel empowered in any given context (Ryan & Deci, 2018). The primary goal of empowerment in coaching is to help clients recognise what they can achieve independently, thereby building their confidence and enabling them to take meaningful steps toward their desired outcomes.

In many cases, former prisoners face psychological and social challenges. Coaching is a way of enabling them to express themselves openly in a non-judgmental environment.

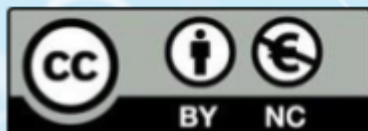
Professionals working with ex-prisoners should begin by acknowledging the client's experiences and emotions without passing judgment or criticism. Following a thorough assessment of available resources, the professional can encourage the client by saying something like: *"Remember, you have what it takes to overcome these challenges. Let's focus on the next step forward."*



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