

A blurred background image of a person's face, likely a woman, looking slightly to the right. The image is out of focus, with soft colors and a bokeh effect.

Change Talk

in Motivational
Conversations



Why **Change Talk** Matters



**“Change talk predicts
behavioral change”**

Miller & Rose. Toward a Theory of MI



Recognizing Change Talk

Client Speech

Neutral talk is “other talk”

Sustain talk favors the status quo,
not changing (different from resistance)

Change talk favors movement in
the direction of change

Change Talk: **DARN-CAT**

Preparatory change talk

- **D**esire to change (I want, like, wish)
- **A**bility to change (I can, could)
- **R**easons to change (if...then)
- **N**eed to change (I have to, got to)

Mobilizing change talk

- **C**ommitment (I will, I promise)
- **A**ctivation (I'm willing, am ready to)
- **T**aking steps (I made an appointment)

Change talk sounds like...

Focus: Getting in better shape

D: I'd like to feel more fit

A: I could maybe bicycle, jog, or swim

R: If I exercised more, I'd feel more alert

N: I've got to get off this couch and do something

C: I plan to bicycle more, and drive less

A: I'm ready to get started this weekend

T: Yesterday, I walked for 10 minutes after lunch

Change Talk: **DARN-CAT**

Focus: _____

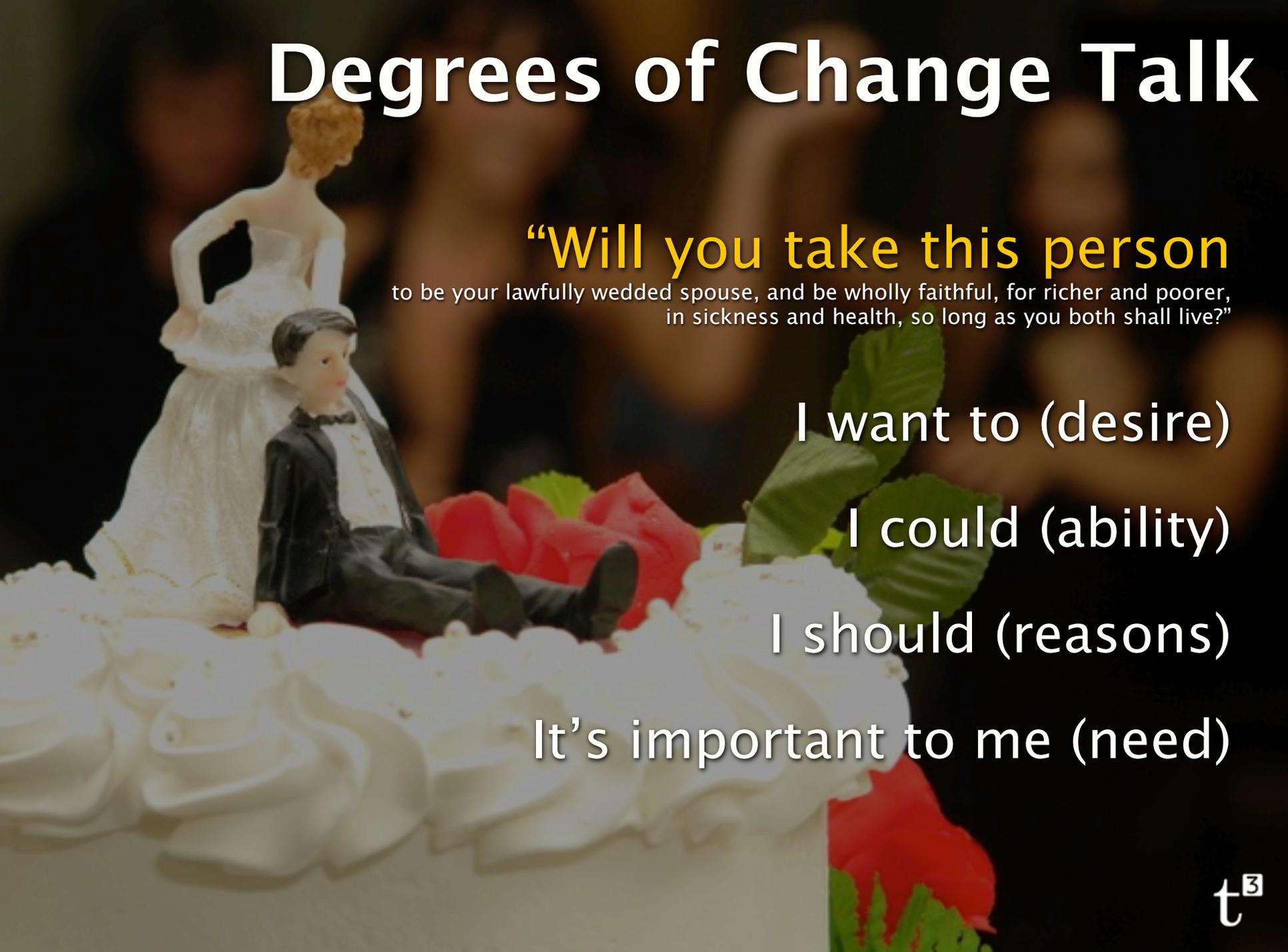
Preparatory change talk

- **D**esire to change (I want, like, wish)
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Degrees of Change Talk

A close-up photograph of a wedding cake. The cake is covered in white frosting with large, ruffled decorations. On top of the cake are two figurines: a bride in a white dress and a groom in a black tuxedo. The background is dark and out of focus, showing what appears to be a crowd of people at a wedding.

“Will you take this person

to be your lawfully wedded spouse, and be wholly faithful, for richer and poorer, in sickness and health, so long as you both shall live?”

I want to (desire)

I could (ability)

I should (reasons)

It's important to me (need)

A close-up photograph of a wedding cake. The cake is decorated with white frosting piped into a scalloped border. On top, there are several red roses and green leaves. A bride and groom figurine are placed on the cake. The bride is standing, wearing a white wedding dress with a full skirt and a long veil. The groom is sitting in front of her, wearing a black tuxedo with a white shirt and a black bow tie. The background is dark and out of focus, showing the silhouettes of people at a wedding reception.

I DO!

Activity

Is it change talk, sustain talk, or something else?

Focus: Drinking

I like to drink. It's what I do.

Focus: Drinking

I suppose I could spend my money in better ways.

Focus: Drinking

If I drank less, I'd probably feel less groggy the next day.

Focus: Drinking

You know, I'd like to quit, but it's so hard.

Focus: Drinking

I've got to do something about my drinking. It's really getting out of hand.

Focus: Drinking

Who are you to give me advice! I saw you walking into a bar just last night.

Focus: Drinking

I've tried to quit more times than I can remember, and I'm done trying.

Focus: Drinking

I've tried to quit more times than I can remember, but I'm willing to try one more time.

Focus: Drinking

I've tried to quit more times than I can remember, and I'm not sure I want to try again.

Focus: Drinking

If I quit, I'm sure my liver will thank me.

Focus: Drinking

Maybe I could drink less whiskey and more beer.

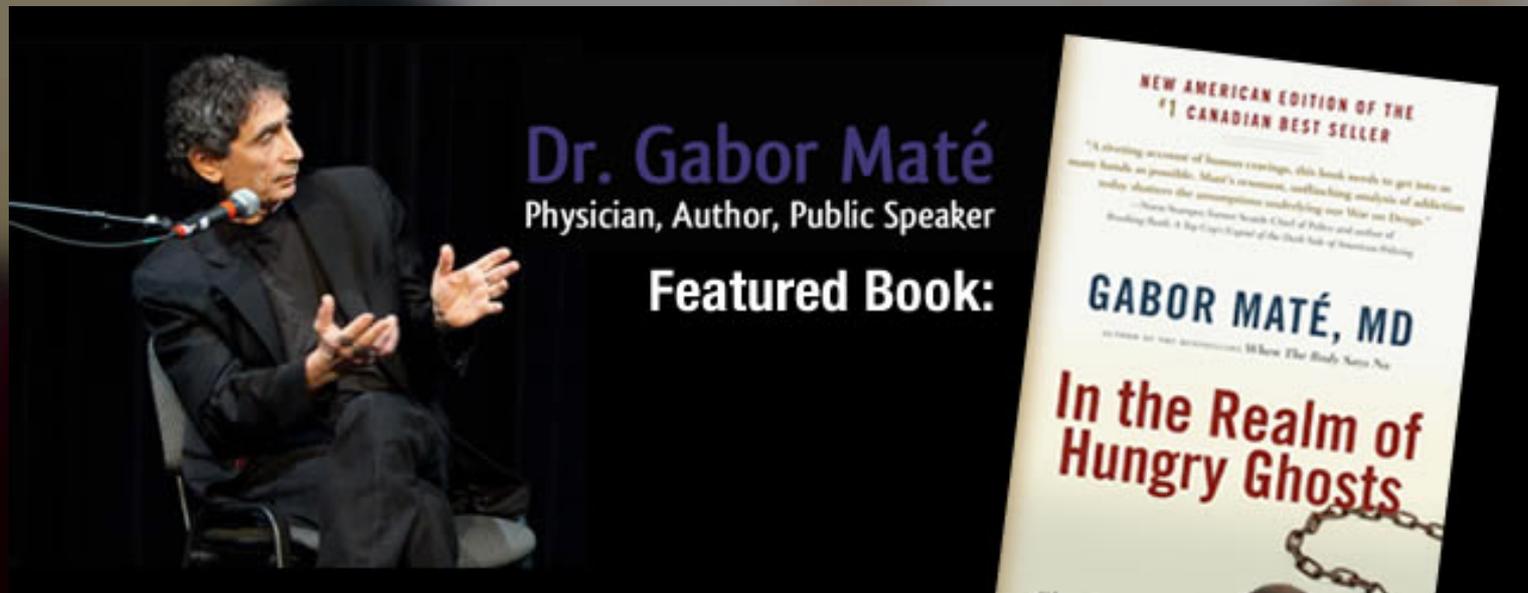
Activity:

Listening for Change Talk



Activity:

Listening for Change Talk



Maté, Gabor. *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction*. Toronto: Knopf Canada, 2008.

Jake

- It's hard to get away from it.
- When I'm older, I'll worry about pension plans and stuff.
- I don't see my own family for a year, and I don't care...
- Yeah, the coke's my life...I care more about the dope than my loved ones or anything else
- I don't know how to be without it

Jake

- I don't know how to live everyday life without it
- You take it away, I don't know what I'm going to do
- If you were to change me and put me in a regular-style life...
- I was there once in my life.
- Do you think you could send me to a skin specialist?
- I'll go, Doc. Don't worry, I'll go.
- That frog you're talking about. That's me.

Eliciting Change Talk

Change talk often flows naturally by simply using OARS.

When it doesn't occur naturally, we can elicit change talk using various strategies.

Strategies for Eliciting Change Talk

Ask evocative questions

Use importance and confidence rulers

Query extremes

Look back

Look ahead

Explore goals and values

Evocative Questions

In what ways has this been a problem for you?

How does it interfere with who you want to be?

What concerns you the very most?

How would you like things to turn out for you, ideally?

Evocative Questions

What do you see as possible options?

What changes, if any, are you thinking of making?

What will you do next?

How can I be helpful to you in this process?

Importance Ruler

Assess

“On a scale from 0 to 10, how important is it to you to make this change?”

Explore

“What makes you say ___ and not ___ (several numbers lower)?”

“What would it take to move from a ___ to a ___ (next highest number)?”

“How might I help you with that?”

Confidence Ruler

Assess

“On a scale from 0 to 10, how **confident** are you that you could make this change?”

Explore

“What makes you say ___ and not ___ (several numbers lower)?”

“What would it take to move from a ___ to a ___ (next highest number)?”

“How might I help you with that?”

“What concerns you absolutely most about _____?”

Query Extremes

What are the very best results you could imagine if you _____?”

Looking Back

“What were things like before ____?”

“What has changed?”

Looking Ahead

“How would you like things to be different a month/a year/three years from now?”

Yearnings, Values and Goals

“Tell me what you care most about in life?”

“What are your deepest longings?”

“What are your long term goals?”

“What are the rules you’d say you live by?”

“How would you like your life to be different?”

“How does ____ impact the person you want to be?”

“What is the life that wants to live within you?”

Activity: Eliciting Change Talk

Ask evocative questions

Use importance and confidence rulers

Query extremes

Look back

Look ahead

Explore values, yearnings, goals

Providing Information and Suggestions

“It is easy to overestimate how much information and advice clients need to be given.”

Miller & Rollnick

Elicit-Provide-Elicit

A Simple Strategy for Information Exchange



Elicit–Provide–Elicit

Elicit

- Ask what person already knows
- Ask what person would like to know
- Ask permission to provide information

Elicit–Provide–Elicit

Provide

- Prioritize what person most wants to know
- Be clear; use everyday language
- Offer small amounts of information with time to reflect
- Acknowledge freedom to disagree or ignore

Elicit–Provide–Elicit

Elicit

- Ask for person's response, interpretation, understanding

Activity: E-P-E

Elicit

- Ask what person already knows
- Ask what person would like to know
- Ask permission to provide information

Provide

- Offer small dose of suggestions, advice

Elicit

- Ask for person's response



Thank you