



Alaska Primary Care  
ASSOCIATION



# Motivational Interviewing for Vaccine Hesitancy

Communication Skills to Help Resolve Vaccine Ambivalence  
& Increase Vaccination Rates

Presented for: **Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Inc. 7-20-2022**

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# Grandmother and Grandchild

- Grand-daughter: "Grandma what is that mark on your arm?"
- Grandmother: "That is my Smallpox vaccine scar."
- Grand-daughter: "Why don't I have one."
- Grandmother: "Because it worked."







# Objectives

## Learn

- 4 effective engagement skills
- 4 best MI skills to address patient ambivalence

## Increase

- Increase your confidence to improve vaccination rates and positive health outcomes.

## Decrease

- Decrease your stress in delivering care to vaccine resistant or hesitant people.



CULTURALLY RESPECTFUL: Understanding the Spirit of Motivational Interviewing is of Primary Importance.



**Collaborative**




**Evocative**



**Respects Autonomy**



**Compassionate.**



If you want others to be happy  
practice compassion,  
If you want to be happy,  
practice compassion.

-Dali Lama



A photograph of a doctor in a white lab coat listening to a patient's arm with a stethoscope. The patient is a woman with short blonde hair, wearing a light blue sleeveless top and a dark blue blood pressure cuff on her left arm. The doctor is a woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a white lab coat and large gold hoop earrings. They are in a clinical setting with medical equipment on the wall. The text "Is this really going to WORK?" is overlaid in white, and "Reasonable expectations!" is overlaid in white below it.

Is this really going to WORK?

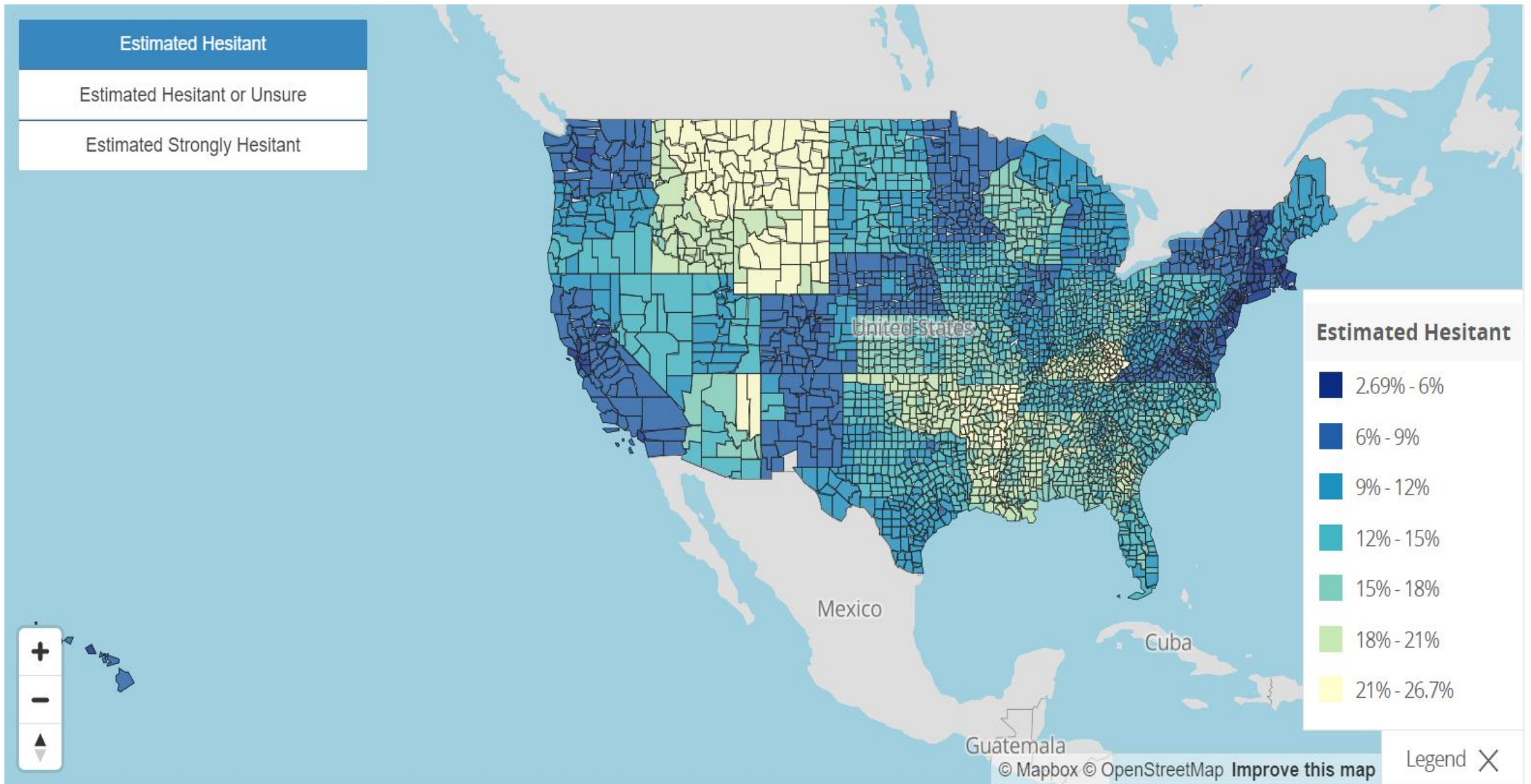
Reasonable expectations!

# What Is Vaccine Confidence?

**Trust professionals and patients have for:**

- Recommended vaccines
- Providers who administer vaccines
- Processes and policies that lead to vaccine development, licensure or authorization, manufacturing, and recommendations for use








# Ambivalence and the Vaccine Hesitant Patient

- When you don't quite know what you want
- You feel more than one way about something
  - On the one hand  
I feel/want/need/fear \_\_\_\_\_
  - But on the other hand,  
I feel/want/need/fear \_\_\_\_\_



What can we  
do about the  
hard liners?

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The art of PRE-persuasion





What works and what doesn't work?

Communication skills that reduce stress and compliment the Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

# Hello

my name is

## Using Names Works!

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- **Feels respectful**
- **Improves connectedness**
- **Increases trust**
- **Enhances your investment in them**
  - **Compassion through focus on Patient**



# Good Humor Works!

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- Smiles and gentle humor can go a long way to set a patient at ease
- It makes you more real and less of an authority to be argued against



# Medical Authority Works!

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- Respectful use of your medical authority
- Most patients will go along with provider recommendations when ambivalent
- Clear, strong recommendations







## Vulnerability works!

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### Leveling the playing field to foster trust

- Share your own past concerns
- How did you resolve them
- Why you feel safe yourself
- Ask for their advice

Brene' Brown, DSW, Researcher

Photo: Brenebrown.com





Is This Manipulation?

- **Using Names**
- **Humor**\_\_\_\_\_
- **Authority**
- **Vulnerability**
- **MI Skills**



# Role Play

Thank you and  
welcome to:

Mr. Steven Fowler  
MLS(ASCP)CM

Clinical Informaticist

**Role Playing:**  
**Provider**



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# What Does NOT Work The Righting Reflex



# Confidence Ruler: How it works



SCALE 1 – 10



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Develop Discrepancy:  
Change won't occur  
without it

- Core values VS behaviors
- Identify gaps
- Become more open to change through realization



OARS

Open-ended questions

Affirmative Statements

Reflective Listening

Summary Statements





# Open Ended Questions Rationale

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- **Requires MORE than a yes or no answer**
- **Creates space to tell their stories and do most of the talking**
  - **opportunity to respond with reflections or summary statements that express empathy.**
- **Too many yes/no questions may feel like an interrogation and impede connection**



# Affirmations: Rationale

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Response to what client said



Used to recognize people's strengths successes and efforts to change



Helps increase confidence in ability to change



Avoid sounding insincere – focus on making statement instead of praise

## Reflective Listening: Rationale

- Allows you to intently listen and express understanding of their situation back to them
  - Building empathy
  - People feel heard
  - Encouraging their own statements about change

**GET IT WRONG?** Will usually tell you and this opens more dialogue



# Summaries: Rationale

**Require careful listening to what the person has said**

**Great way to end the session – or assist a talkative person on to the next topic**

# RULE

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**R**esist telling them what to do

---

**U**nderstand their motivations

---

**L**isten with empathy

---

**E**mpower them



# OARS Excercise

Practicing your skills



# OARS POLL CHALLENGE

- 4 challenging questions to examine OARS approach
- 3 will have series of answers to choose from
- Final will ask for a volunteer from the audience to unmute and respond with best answer



**OARS:**  
**Opened**  
**Ended**  
**Questions**  
**Challenge**  
**POLL**

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*I was so afraid when I got the news about my cousin being in the hospital from COVID that I made an appointment to talk to you about the vaccine, I haven't gotten it yet, I've been too afraid.*

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**1. I hear you, that sounds like it hit close to home.**

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**2. I bet you're ready to get vaccinated now, aren't you?**

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**3. Tell me more about your vaccine fears.**

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**4. How long was your cousin in the hospital for?**

# OARS:

## Affirmation Challenge Poll:

My cousin was young and healthy like me, she didn't even meet any of the risk factors that I'd heard about. I figured if I got infected, it'd just be like a bad cold or something, but she was intubated. It kinda freaked me out and that's why I'm here to talk to you about it.

1. Sounds like you're not ready to take the vaccine.
2. After seeing that, you're ready to learn more and maybe get vaccinated yourself.
3. There's evidence young and healthy people can die from COVID.
4. After seeing that, you were wise enough to learn more and maybe get vaccinated yourself



# OARS:

## Reflection Challenge Poll

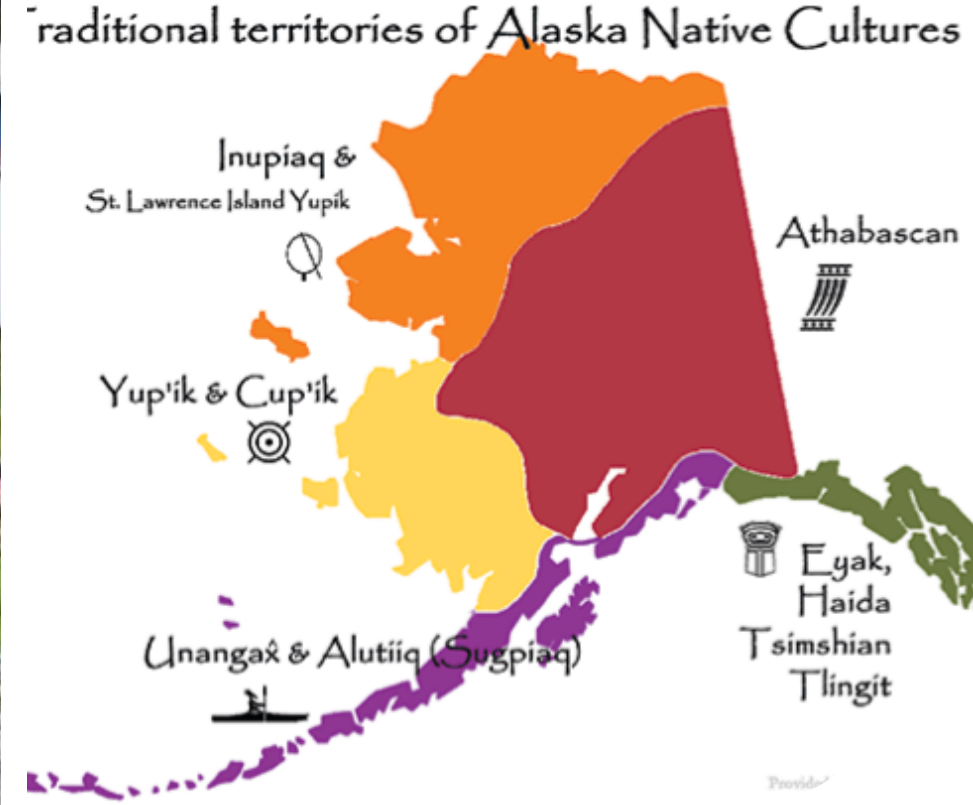
Who knew my young, healthy 26-year-old cousin would be intubated in the hospital. We weren't that worried before she got sick, our uncle had COVID and it was nothing more than a bad cold for him.

1. Your uncle had an infection from COVID that was pretty mild.
2. You aren't someone who gets sick very often.
3. Tell me more about why you weren't vaccinated long ago?
4. After your cousin went to the hospital, it made you realize this was potentially a bigger risk than you imagined.

# OARS:

## Summary Challenge:

- *It had me totally freaked out to see my young healthy cousin intubated in the hospital from COVID. We never thought any of us would get that sick; Seriously, my uncle was fine after getting it. We felt bad for the old and unhealthy people that were dying but I figured we were pretty safe since our risk factors were so low. I wasn't against the vaccine, I just heard conflicting stories and figured it was safer to develop natural immunity than take this controversial vaccine. But now I'm realizing I'm not so safe after all and that's why I am here.*



## Role Play Characters and Setting

FICTIONAL case example demonstrating the spirit of MI





Clinical Challenge  
ROLE PLAY DEMONSTRATION

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- **APPROACHING  
RESISTANCE**

**We will discuss as we go**

**Sounds will indicate start  
and stop of role play on  
each slide**

# Motivational Interviewing 4 Steps

- **Step 1: Ask the patient to share their concerns**





# How Confident are you in the COVID-19 Vaccine?

- Why are you a \_\_\_\_\_ [insert # reported] and not a zero?
- What would it take for you to get from \_\_\_\_\_ [insert # reported] to \_\_\_\_\_ [the next higher number]?







# Motivational Interviewing: 4 Steps

- **STEP 2: Ask permission to share the information**  
**Reflect back** so they feel heard.

Demonstrate empathy with careful summary and asking permission to share expertise

(Observe use of respectful medical authority)

# Motivational Interviewing: 4 Steps

**Step 3: Use education and stories  
to help influence their perspective**

*Avoid arguing and focus on disease  
prevention*

- *Use personal vulnerability*
- *Use their names*

Info resources: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov);







# Bonus SKILL

Highly Effective!





**Ask!**

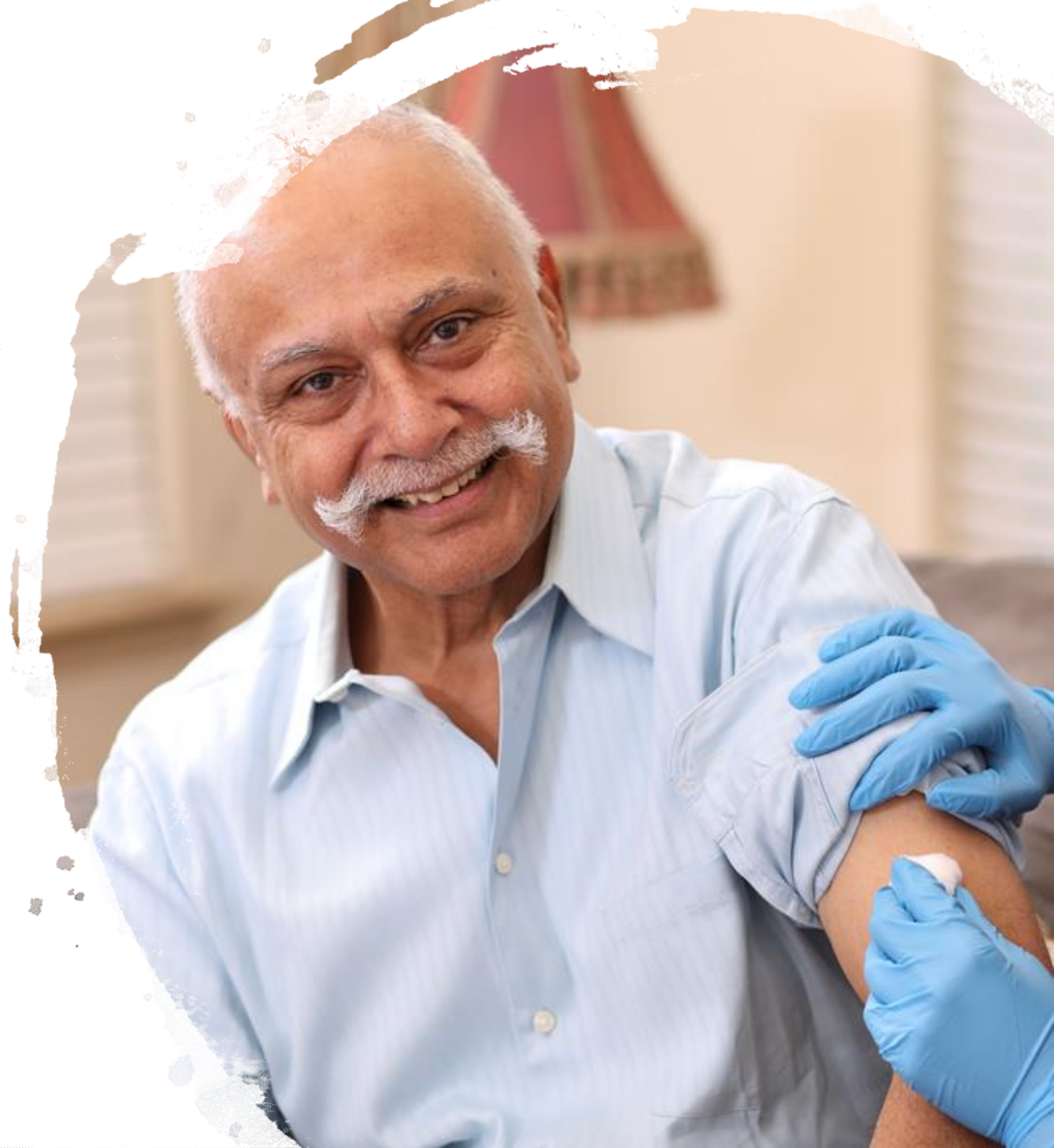
What might be  
bad about  
taking this  
vaccine?



# Ask This Next!

*What might be GOOD about taking the vaccine?*

The more change talk we hear from an ambivalent person the more likely they are to move in the direction of change. (TRUE)







## Motivational Interviewing: 4 Steps

- **Step 4: Affirmation of Autonomy**  
*A strong vaccine recommendation often works.*



## Tips in case of declination or delay

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- Let patient know you will offer it again with strong recommendation
- Be honest about what you don't know and what's not known
- Reflect the heart of their intention to avoid argument
- Offer reading material
- Relax, you've done the best for your patient





Gain  
Cooperation

LAST TIPS:  
Asking their advice

# Answering Questions: It's OK not to know – find out and share what you can

- How are the first COVID-19 vaccines different from most other vaccines?
- Severe allergic reactions have been reported, should I be worried?
- Should I be worried about how fast these vaccines were developed?
- Has the vaccine been tested long enough to know whether there are any long-term side effects?
- Are there still unanswered questions about the vaccine?
- Is there a microchip in the vaccine?





# Education: Team-Work Ideas

The importance of leadership: Setting priority for staff

Displaying education: handouts in lobby, on walls on TV

Creating continuity of messaging amongst staff

Setting aside time in staff meetings for education

- Tasking a team or person with presenting educational resources and information

Making handouts and leaflets available (tagging person responsible)

Practicing communication MI skills together: Role Play for success

# Prepare to Educate: Articles and Videos to study, share and/or create handouts

- How conspiracy theories use the CDC database to spread misinformation <https://globalnews.ca/news/7957771/covid-19-vaccine-misinformation/>
- Science Behind Covid-19 Vaccines Debunking Myths: <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/doctors-debunk-9-popular-covid-19-vaccine-myths-and-conspiracy-theories>
- Covid-19 What You Need to Know: <https://www.templehealth.org/about/blog/covid-19-vaccine-what-do-i-need-to-know>
- **What should I know about vaccines for children and... | The Ad Council** ([getvaccineanswers.org](http://getvaccineanswers.org))
- **Video: Will COVID-19 Affect Fertility?** [What should I know about vaccines for children and... | The Ad Council \(getvaccineanswers.org\)](http://getvaccineanswers.org)
- [COVID-19 vaccines for kids: What you need to know - Mayo Clinic](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/kids-and-teens/healthy-lifestyle/covid-19-vaccines-for-kids/2021-12-27)
- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/teresaghilarducci/2021/12/27/21-of-americans-are-vaccinehesitant-rates--but-dont-be-harsh/?sh=3a32d4cf6080>

WAIT,  
DON'T RUN JUST  
YET!

THERE'S MORE...  
(Q&A answers from  
attendees in  
following slides)





## **ANSWER:**

The Spirit of MI is what we've hoped to convey in this training today. If you approach your client with a curious attitude, compassion for their position and seeing the best in their motivations, reflect that back to them so they feel heard and use the skills demonstrated in this training, you should be able to have a productive conversation. You might practice role playing with a colleague to test out your MI skills. Ask your partner how they felt about the discussion and examine what you did well so you might repeat that with your patient.

- Q&A  
How to apply MI with parents of infants and children to motivate informed consent?
- - Interested in immunizations.  
School is coming.

**Q&A:** What do you recommend for patients who are combative or feel strongly against the vaccine?

#1 is always safety. Following your policy and protocol for combative patients is the first response to managing an unsafe situation.

2. Using the Spirit of MI as described in this training is an excellent way to avoid triggering someone's belligerent behavior. It might even defuse the situation when done well. I have personally deescalated verbally hostile and disruptive people in clinics with a Spirit of MI attitude, avoiding the need for Security intervention. Always follow your clinic policy and procedures for such situations.

I recommend viewing these two videos available on YouTube for public access examples of working with hostile or resistant patients.

1. The Rounder: <https://youtu.be/b8C1jQe0FZE>

2. BMJ Learning: <https://youtu.be/bTRRNWrwRCo>

**Q&A:** How do you work with clients that originally agreed and received the first dose, but then are hesitant or have received pushback by family, etc. to not get the second dose (or booster)?

We focused on the example of vaccine hesitancy in this training. Know that the Spirit of MI and MI techniques demonstrated are universally applicable regardless of the topic or presenting issue. I recommend role playing this scenario with a colleague and exploring what you did well or where you might have missed an opportunity. Here is a public access video on YouTube to get another example of a successful MI conversation that can illustrate a comparable situation.

<https://youtu.be/URiKA7CKtfc>



**Q&A:** Is there a reason during the MI process that you did not start with the medical condition that the patient came in with first, but rather started addressing their vaccination hesitancy first

Yes, because the focus of this training was to demonstrate the MI conversation around vaccine hesitancy in the confines of a short training. We will consider altering future role play scenarios to present the reason for the visit first so it more accurately reflects the flow of a medical appointment.