

Readiness Rulers

The conversation facilitated through the provision of personalized feedback can flow seamlessly into a conversation using readiness rulers, introducing the client to the concept of the change plan, and getting them thinking about the future.

Example script:

- *“Does this have you thinking about any goals about your [substance use]? Are there any changes you might like to make in your [substance use]? What would you like your [substance use] to be like? How would you like for things to be different if you made a change? What do you think will happen if you do not change anything? What would be the advantages of making a change?”*

If the client identifies goals, then therapists are encouraged to elicit readiness/willingness and confidence/ability using the following **readiness rulers**.

Example scripts:

- *“On a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 being very ready to change, how ready or willing are you to make a change in your [substance use]?”*
- *“On a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 being very confident, how confident or capable do you think you are in making a change?”*

These can then be followed by asking:

- *“Why is it a ___ and not a ___ [lower number]? What would it take to go from a ___ to a ___ [higher number]? What would you be willing to try?”*

The task of the therapist at this point is to use Motivational Interviewing strategies to elicit and reinforce the client’s motivation to change and to start to think about goals they may want to set for their change plan. This may include:

- Affirming that the client has expressed a clear goal of becoming abstinent
- Noting that the client has a clear goal of reducing substance use but not stopping completely
- Acknowledging that the client has feelings of ambivalence, with one part of the client’s hopes including becoming abstinent or reducing use

Having noted the client’s current level of readiness for change, the therapist can then introduce the change plan.