

Tips for getting people to open up

Please use the suggestions in this guide to help motivate members of the group to share more than just 1-2 word answers.

1. To help them share a story or express their thoughts/feelings, try the following:
 - A. Ask open ended questions, such as:
 - “So tell me more about...”
 - “What are some reasons for...”
 - “How would you like to...”
 - B. **AVOID** “Why” questions. They tend to make people feel defensive and are not as effective.
2. Another option is to try asking screening questions. These are questions that dig a little deeper in getting to know a person’s situation or condition without being too direct.
 - A. Questions regarding risks (i.e. “We all do things that aren’t good for us from time to time. What are some things that you are doing which you feel are negatively affecting your condition?”)
 - B. Questions about self-management (i.e. “Sometimes people forget to take medicine or keep appointments with their doctors. Some have a hard time following through with diet and exercise. What difficulties have you had with managing or treating your condition?”)

- C. Questions about health (i.e. “What are you doing that is helping or hurting your health?”)
3. Use non-verbal communication
- A. Try to understand the person speaking on a deeper level – consider their emotions, thoughts, and values
 - B. Make sure your body language shows you are interested in what the person is saying. For example, give attentive eye contact, have an open posture, don’t cross your arms, lean forward, etc.
 - C. Send signals that you understand what they are saying like nods and affirmative comments.

Tips for overcoming group obstacles

Please use this guide to help you learn how to handle different personalities and approaches people in your group may have.

People generally have two components that make up their approach to change. These two components are their drive and their confidence level.

Obstacle

The person lacks both drive and confidence, making them unaware or negative about changing.

What to do? – Decrease negativity or increase awareness

Enhance drive –

1. Help them identify their priorities
 - a. How important is your health and your future to you?
 - b. Would you agree that your health should be a priority for you?

2. Help them explore their drive
 - a. What's the down side of taking action?
 - b. What are some good things about staying the same?
 - c. What are good things about changing?
 - d. What's the down side of staying the same?
 - e. What would you have to give up in order to make this Challenge a priority in your life?

Enhance confidence –

1. Help them identify a time in the past when they were successful at making changes

2. Help them come up with small and reachable steps

3. Help them identify barriers ahead of time
 - a. What will or might get in the way?
 - b. Anything else? (ask a second time)
 - c. What would help you overcome that? What, if anything, has helped in the past?

4. Let them know that slip ups and relapses are okay and encourage them to keep moving

Obstacle

The person has a high level of drive but low confidence making them frustrated.

What to do? – Decrease frustration

Enhance confidence –

1. Help them identify a time in the past when they were successful at making changes
2. Help them come up with small and reachable steps
3. Help them identify barriers ahead of time
 - a. What will or might get in the way?
 - b. Anything else? (ask a second time)
 - c. What would help you overcome that? What, if anything, has helped in the past?
4. Let them know that slip ups and relapses are okay and encourage them to keep moving

Obstacle

The person has a low level of drive and a high level of confidence making them skeptical.

What to do? – Decrease Skepticism

Enhance drive – help them sort out their indifference

1. Help them identify their priorities
 - a. How important is your health and your future to you?
 - b. Would you agree that your health should be a priority for you?

2. Help them explore their drive
 - a. What's the down side of taking action or making a change?
 - b. What are some good things about staying the same?
 - c. What are good things about changing?
 - d. What's the down side of staying the same?
 - e. What would you have to give up in order to make this Challenge a priority in your life?

Obstacle

The person has both a high level of drive and confidence making them motivated.

What to do? - Give ongoing support to keep them going and help them plan to deal with obstacles.

1. Plan for relapse – review past lapses; identify possible obstacles, help them remember that people lapse every now and then and that's okay. Remind the person that they just need to keep moving forward and not feel guilty and unmotivated.
2. Removing obstacles – Encourage them to look for solutions to these obstacles ahead of time. For example, if they have three kids with three different schedules, how will they go about making time for themselves and their health? A solution would be to arrange a carpooling schedule with other parents to allow themselves more time.
3. Remind them of their progress – provide positive feedback and motivation on an ongoing basis.