

AABP · 2026

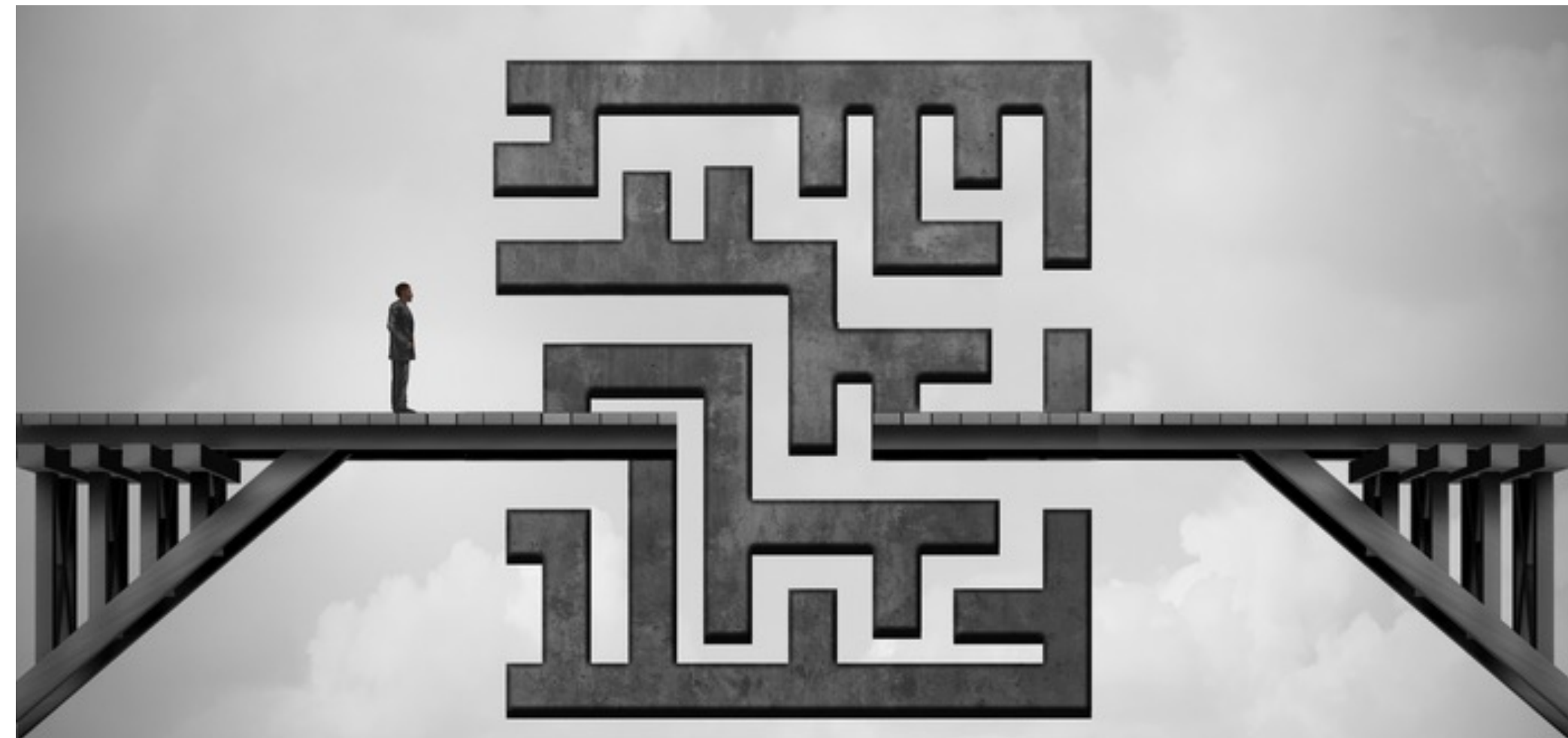
# Motivational Interviewing in Biofeedback Practice

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Getting Clients to Want to Change

Saul Rosenthal, PHD

Matt Bennett



**THINK ABOUT A CHANGE OR GROWTH CHALLENGE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH, BUT HAVEN'T ACTED ON**

# Matt Bennett, MA, MBA

Nerd in a career-long journey to find ways to improve outcomes

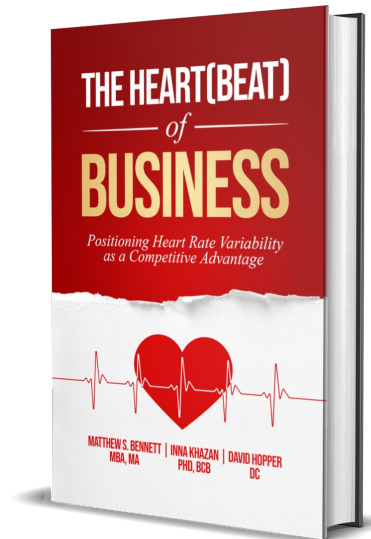
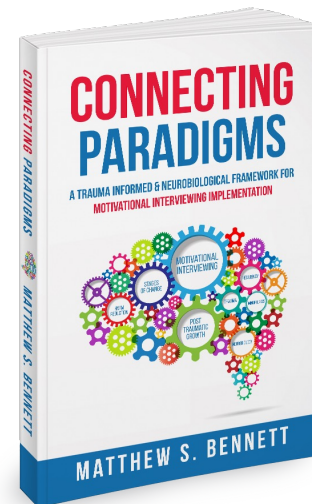
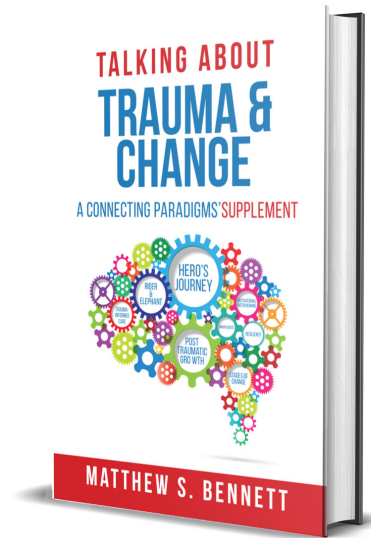
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- Free books
- Heart Rate Variability Podcast

I have the following disclosures:

- Co-Founder of Optimal, LLC
- Company behind Optimal HRV App



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**FOURTH EDITION**

# MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

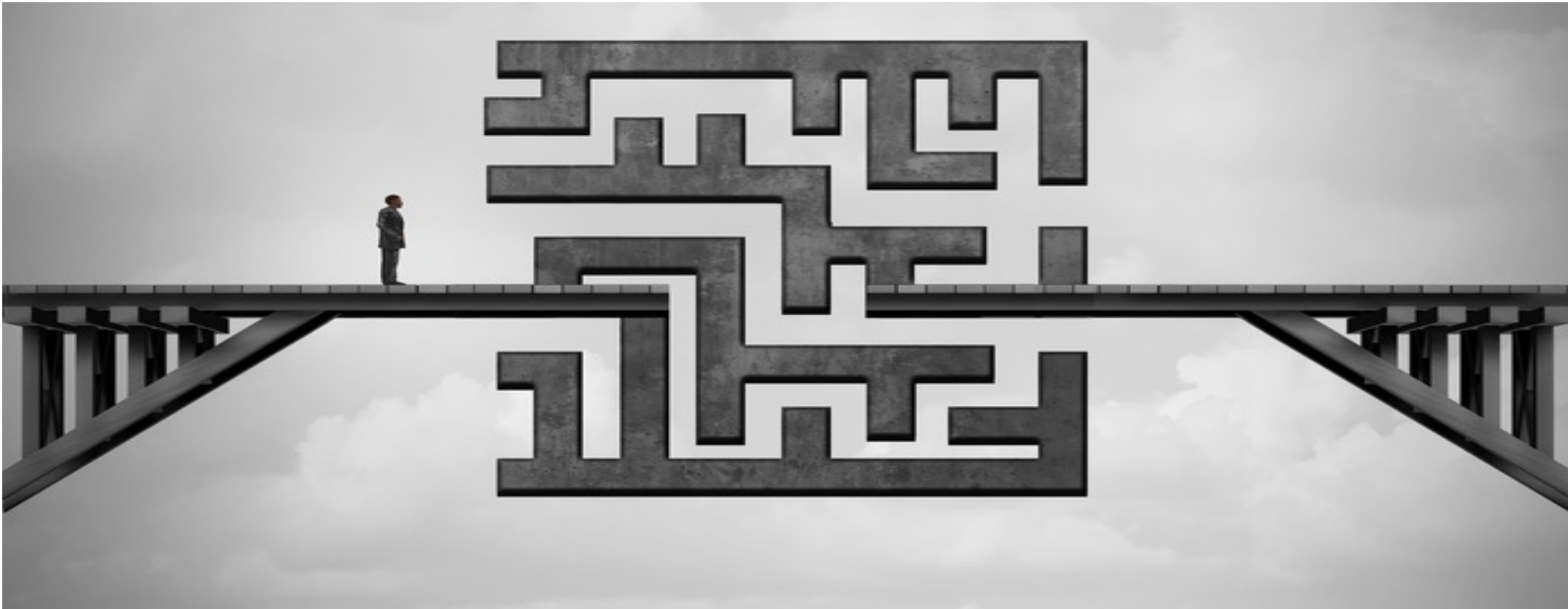
**HELPING PEOPLE CHANGE AND GROW**

**William R. Miller  
Stephen Rollnick**

“Motivational Interviewing is a particular way of talking with people about change and growth to strengthen their own motivation and commitment.”

- Miller & Rollnick

**WHAT CHANGES OR GROWTH CHALLENGES DO YOUR CLIENTS STRUGGLE WITH?**



**WHAT PREVENTS SUCCESS AND KEEPS PEOPLE STUCK?**

# Dysregulation and Motivation

## **Growth and Change Requires**

- A regulated nervous system
- Consider a future life
- Support from others
- Focus and attention
- Hope, confidence and self-efficacy
- Energy
- Positive mindset

## **Stress and Trauma**

- Dysregulates the nervous system
- Keeps people in the present or past
- Decreases social capacity
- Hinders the ability to think deeply
- Fear and hesitation
- Exhaustion
- Negative mindset

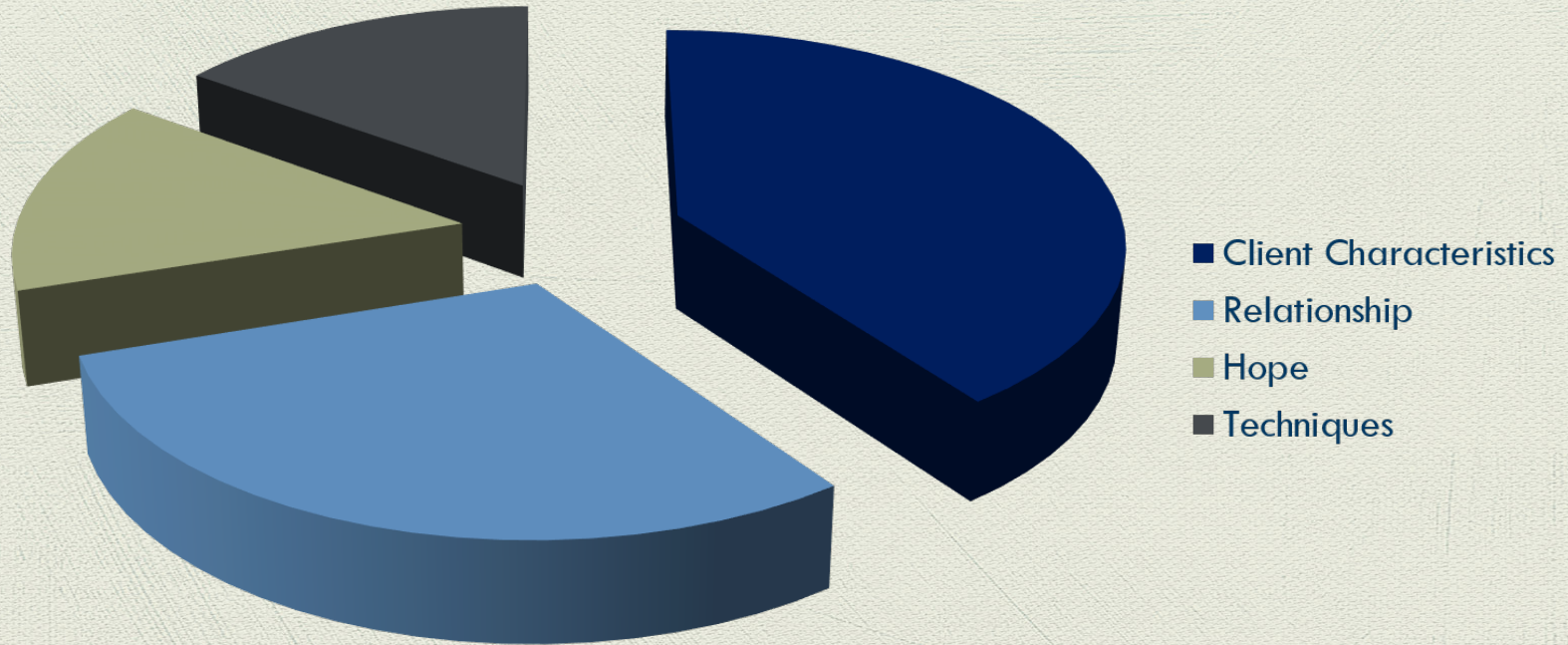
Spirit of  
Partnership

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# Relationships

## Determinants of Successful Client Outcomes



# Defining Roles

The person is in the driver's seat

Clear expectations and boundaries

As the partner, you can only enter the passenger seat if you meet them where they are at

The person is the expert on themselves and their situation

# Guiding Style

Guiding vs Directing / Following

Power of asking permission

Menu of options – Ask – Offer - Ask

Exploring knowledge

# Empowerment

Support works better than confrontation

We should not work harder than the person we are helping  
(mostly)

Avoid the Fixing Reflex

# Motivation

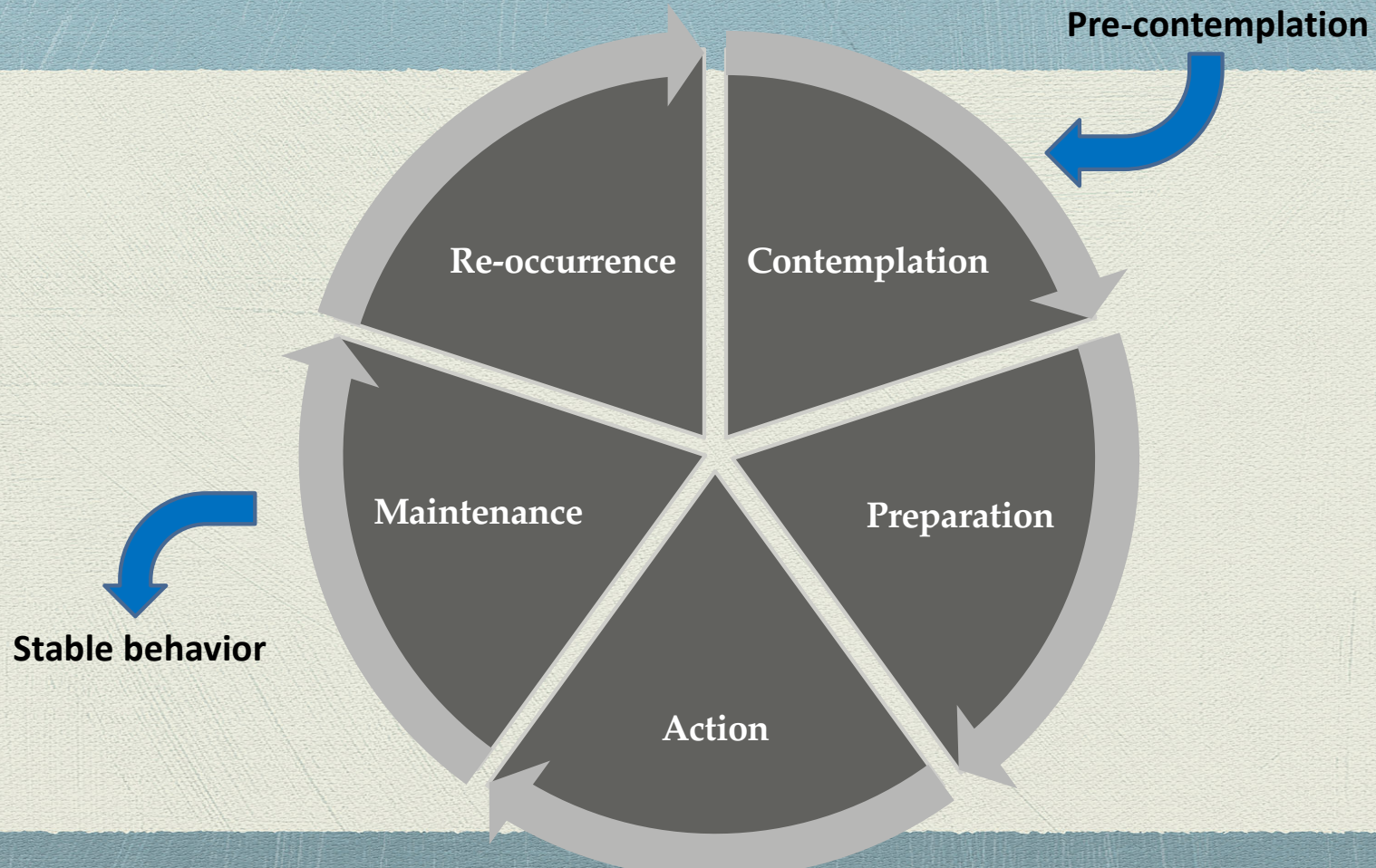
*Motivation is whatever actually gets someone moving: acting, changing, or growing.*

## Change talk

- ◆ Talk about the new behavior
- ◆ Research: Increase in change talk predicts actual change
- ◆ Your goal: Increase change talk

Sustain talk – reasons to stay the same

# Stages of Change Model



# Ambivalence

Wanting more than one thing at the same time, when the desired things are incompatible with each other

Discrepancies are the differences between desired states and current reality

Cognitive dissonance is a type of eustress, or good stress

- ◆ Push: Discontented with the status quo, and / or
- ◆ Pull: Unrealized opportunity to better a situation

When stress becomes too great, people look for paths to resolve discrepancies

# Motivational Interviewing Hill

Preparatory Change Talk:  
**Importance & Confidence**

Mobilizing Change Talk:  
**Testing, Support, & Resources**

(Pre-) Contemplation

Preparation

Action

Miller & Rollnick, 2012